INPO 15-005
May 2015

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Revision 0

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Introduction

As leaders in the commercial nuclear power industry, we carry a unique responsibility. Every day, we commit ourselves and our organizations to producing electricity reliably while upholding the highest standards of safety and performance. We not only focus on the day-to-day activities but also constantly challenge ourselves to anticipate, prevent, and, if necessary, respond to low-probability, high-consequence events. Our ability to lead our organizations and teams effectively is essential for fulfilling our obligation to all of our stakeholders — our employees, members of the public, regulators — and to each other as part of the global nuclear power community.

Although our industry is characterized by long-term success, plants continue to exhibit performance decline, often slowly, but in some cases, precipitously. At times, site and corporate leaders are either unaware of the declines or are slow to react to them. In addition, the demands of sustaining the highest levels of nuclear safety in an ever-changing business environment continuously challenge nuclear leaders.

Identifying the Standards and Their Applicability

Strong leaders and leadership teams are essential to sustaining high levels of plant safety and reliability. The link between the presence of effective leaders and leadership teams and the resultant high levels of sustainable performance is supported by numerous examples throughout our industry's history.

This document identifies the standards of effective leadership and teams within the framework of the commercial nuclear industry. Leaders and teams are present at all levels of an organization; however, in the context of nuclear power plant performance, the senior leaders at a site set the tone and model the behaviors for their organizations. Similarly, the site senior leadership team models the behaviors for effective teams.

These standards may be applied to other parts of the organization (such as the corporate support functions), but some elements of the attributes may not directly apply.

Relationship to the Performance Objectives and Criteria

This document supports the achievement of the performance objectives and criteria (PO&Cs) by providing more detailed descriptions of, and focus on the attributes of leadership and team effectiveness. This document describes observable attributes seen in effective organizations; the specifics of "how" these outcomes are achieved will vary from plant to plant, based on such variables as the plant's history, culture, and the style of the leaders themselves. In addition, while all of the attributes are important, some will be more critical than others depending on the level of performance and the specific challenges present at a particular site.

Development of the Attributes of Effective Leaders and Teams

INPO has identified that weak leadership teams and weak organizations have continued to challenge industry performance and have been identified as key drivers of plant declines. After reviewing industry strengths and areas for improvement, interactions with high-performing organizations, and applicable research with industry groups and executives, nine leadership attributes and five team attributes were commonly associated with high performance.

While recognizing that other positive attributes may exist, the presence of the following leadership and team effectiveness attributes is foundational for excellent performance.

Leadership Effectiveness Attributes

- Promoting a Clear Vision and Strategy to Achieve Excellence

- Implementing a Strong Talent Management and Leadership Development Strategy

- Fostering a Learning Organization — Continuous Improvement

- Developing an Aligned, Engaged Workforce

- Inspiring, Motivating, and Communicating

- Building and Sustaining Trust With Employees and External Stakeholders

- Providing Effective Coaching and Feedback in an Environment of Healthy Accountability

- Making Effective Decisions and Appropriately Managing Risk

- Achieving Sustainable Results

Team Effectiveness Attributes

- The Team Is Aligned Around a Common Purpose, Vision, and Goals

- Members Are Committed to the Success of the Team

- Team Talent, Roles, and Responsibilities Are Clear

- The Team Creates a Positive Atmosphere of Mutual Trust and Respect

- Team Decision-Making and Conflict Resolution Are Effective

The Ultimate Outcome: Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is the outcome of sound individual leaders, a strong leadership team, and an effective management model including elements such as programs, processes, resources, management controls, and oversight. The following diagram depicts the relationship among effective leadership, teams, a management model, and organizational effectiveness. In general, across the industry, the elements contained within the management model are mature and well defined. When plants are in decline or, conversely, when plants have sustained long periods of strong performance, the management model itself is rarely the driver. Instead, the performance is driven by the effectiveness of the leadership and the team and, by extension, by how well the management model is executed. Said another way, effective leadership and teams are foundational to fostering the environment to implement a highly effective management model and, in so doing, achieving excellent organizational effectiveness.

Leadership
Effectiveness

+

Team
Effectiveness

Management Model
Supporting High
Performance

Organizational
Effectiveness

Defined Model
Processes
Procedures
Resources
Management Systems
Internal Oversight
Independent Oversight
Board of Directors
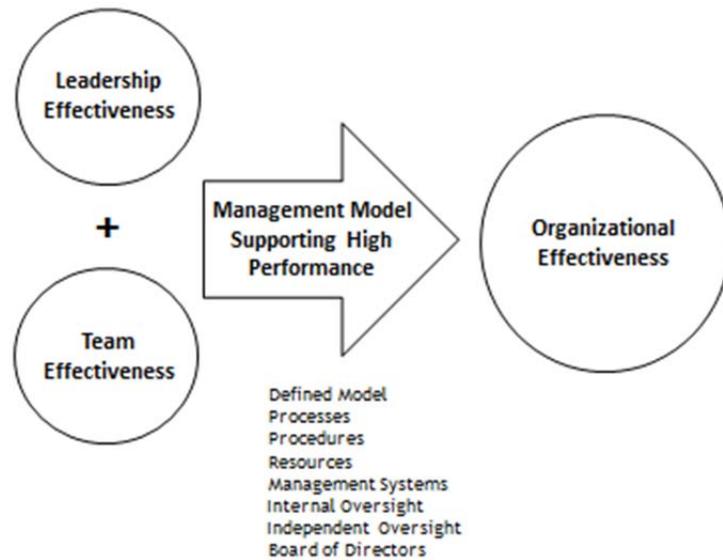
How to Use this Document

While this document provides a detailed description of leadership and team effectiveness attributes and outcomes, it is not intended to be a "checklist." It is not required that the wording used to describe the attributes be duplicated in site- or company-specific documents; however, it is expected that these attributes be present and evident in the daily activities, behaviors, and outcomes of your organization.

Expected actions are to compare these attributes to the current content of your competencies and leadership/team effectiveness models and to close identified gaps. Also, these attributes and associated discussion questions could be used in midcycle assessments, training, and other forums to identify actions needed to improve performance.

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Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Leadership Effectiveness Attributes

Effective leaders are critical to the success of the organization as well as to the success of the collective world nuclear industry. Leadership skills can be and must be developed at all levels within an organization and throughout an individual's career. Senior leaders have the responsibility to ensure leadership talent development is a high priority.

The following attributes are most important to be demonstrated by the senior leaders of the organization. However, leaders at all levels of the organization, including individual contributors leading work teams, are more effective when they exhibit most, if not all, of these attributes.

The leadership effectiveness attributes are grouped based on how they relate to essential outcomes, as illustrated in the Leadership Effectiveness Attributes diagram on Page 21. These outcomes are as follows: Set Direction, Maximize Competence, Engage the Workforce, Cope With Risk, and Achieve Sustainable Results.

When considering outcomes and their corresponding individual attributes, the observable behaviors for each level of the organization will be different. For example, under "Set Direction," some outcomes associated with the attribute of promoting a clear vision and the strategy to achieve excellence are different for the senior leadership team, department managers, first-line supervisors, and corporate leaders.

    a. The site vice president and the senior leadership team establish, communicate, and reinforce the strategic direction and goals for the site.

    b. Department managers communicate the site strategy and goals and establish, communicate, and reinforce department-specific goals and actions supporting the station strategy.

    c. First-line supervisors communicate department goals and actions to their employees and align their priorities and activities to ensure successful completion.

    d. Leaders at all levels of the organization demonstrate alignment to the site strategy and goals by holding themselves and others accountable to support the strategy and activities associated with the strategy.

    e. The corporate leadership team establishes, communicates, and reinforces the strategic direction and goals of their nuclear fleet.

Similar examples exist for each of the attributes.

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Set Direction

LE 1. Promoting a Clear Vision and Strategy to Achieve Excellence

Leaders promote a clear and compelling vision and strategy to achieve organizational alignment, establish common priorities, and foster continuous improvement. They set a personal example by their own behaviors.

a. Goals are clear and represent industry excellence in nuclear safety and plant reliability.

b. Leaders demonstrate, by words and actions, their full commitment to the vision and strategy.

c. Leaders, managers, and employees understand their roles in the strategy.

d. Leaders understand and appropriately consider the financial impacts of their strategic plans.

e. Leaders effectively communicate, demonstrate, and reinforce behaviors and standards reflective of the pursuit of excellence.

f. Leaders recognize and reinforce the importance of team effectiveness.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How do leaders know employees understand the vision of excellence and the strategy?

2. Can employees explain how their actions align with the vision and strategy?

3. What evidence demonstrates that leaders are committed to the vision and strategy?

4. How are resources balanced to support the vision and strategy?

Maximize Competence

LE 2. Implementing a Strong Talent Management and Leadership Development Strategy
Leaders implement a development strategy that creates an organization comprised of diverse, qualified, capable, and proficient individuals able to sustain long-term performance.

a. Leaders fill key positions with well-qualified, prepared candidates who have the behaviors, necessary technical expertise, and experience to be successful.

b. Leaders include diversity as an integral factor in talent management and leadership development.

c. Leaders ensure subject-matter expertise, qualifications, and certifications are vested in a broad number of individuals.

d. Leaders use development plans and mentoring to both improve employees' performance in current roles and to prepare them for future roles.

e. Leaders are personally engaged in succession planning activities and manage risks associated with staffing changes.

f. Leaders monitor individual and leader performance and adjust talent and resources as necessary for organizational success.

g. Leaders support healthy pipelines in the organization and proactively identify individuals with leadership potential.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. Are important organizational and leadership pipelines meeting the business needs of the organization?

2. Do employees understand the opportunities for advancement, and are they positively engaged in their own development plans?

3. How are leaders engaged in the talent management and leadership development activities?

LE 3. Fostering a Learning Organization – Continuous Improvement

Leaders foster a learning organization that recognizes small signs of decline and uses appropriate methods for aggressively closing performance gaps.

    a. Leaders actively seek and act upon independent input.

    b. Leaders staff internal and external oversight organizations with highly competent personnel who deliver quality feedback.

    c. Leaders demonstrate a bias for prompt action in response to signs of decline, even when small, without rationalization.

    d. Leaders promote and reward prevention and detection behaviors throughout their organizations.

    e. Leaders use benchmarking, self-assessments, operating experience, and training to improve performance.

    f. Leaders understand and mitigate proficiency challenges.

    g. Leaders teach the organization by sharing knowledge gained from industry training, communicating lessons learned from industry meetings, and imparting professional and leadership experiences.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. What is the evidence that external oversight organizations give timely and accurate feedback and that leaders act on this feedback?

2. How do leaders know their picture of performance is accurate?

3. How do leaders promote a questioning attitude and reward prevention and detection behaviors in the organization?

4. In which specific areas have leaders personally intervened to teach the organization or to promote improved performance?

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Engage the Workforce

LE 4. Developing an Aligned, Engaged Workforce
Leaders develop an aligned and engaged workforce who understands their role in meeting organizational goals and is willing to strive for and sustain excellence.

    a. Leaders align individuals to a common mission and goals.

    b. Leaders develop a workforce who understands the importance of their actions on plant operations.

    c. Leaders openly communicate, demonstrate, and reinforce alignment with cross-functional priorities.

    d. Leaders create an environment that encourages employees at all levels to identify gaps and to make improvements to activities, processes, and working conditions.

    e. Leaders listen, actively seek input and demonstrate through their actions that they value diverse input.

    f. Leaders celebrate individual and team successes.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. What is the evidence that leaders are aligned with cross-functional priorities?   Is alignment to cross-functional priorities also evident at lower levels of the organization?

2. Are there any initiatives to improve activities, processes, or working conditions? Were these initiatives selected, in part, from the input or feedback from affected employees?

3. How do leaders obtain employee input? Are there instances in which employee input was used?

4. Do employees believe their input is welcomed and their contributions are appreciated?

5. How do senior leaders know that managers actively seek diverse perspectives and are effective at resolving conflicts?

6. How effectively do middle managers and supervisors translate organizational goals and priorities to work group behaviors?

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

LE 5. Inspiring, Motivating, and Communicating
Leaders, by commitment and example, create an environment where individuals are engaged, inspired, and motivated.

  a. Leaders create a positive environment where employees want to do their best.

  b. Leaders communicate important issues and key operational decisions in a clear, straightforward, and timely manner to all stakeholders.

  c. Leaders demonstrate resilience, positively motivating employees — especially during periods of plant challenges, significant events, or extended recovery periods.

  d. Leaders practice and develop the skills necessary to make decisions and to communicate effectively during periods of high stress.

  e. Leaders monitor for and correct working conditions that can inhibit employees from achieving their best performance.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

  1. What evidence shows that employees are engaged and motivated to contribute their best to the station? Are there examples that tie employee engagement to actions or behaviors of leaders? What have leaders done to engage and align employees around important decisions?

  2. Think about a recent period of high stress or organizational challenge. What did leaders do to engage and motivate the individual members of the team?

  3. What does the most recent culture survey and trend tell you about employees' perspectives of their work environment?

LE 6. Building and Sustaining Trust with Employees and External Stakeholders
Leaders build and sustain trusting relationships with employees and external stakeholders by listening, acting, and communicating with integrity while ensuring the purpose of goals and strategies is well understood.

  a. Leaders set a personal example by modeling desired behaviors and maintaining high standards of integrity.

  b. Leaders seek out and are receptive and responsive to differing ideas, concerns, questions, and opinions.

    c.   Leaders openly encourage and act upon feedback about their own behaviors and actions.

    d.   Leaders develop and sustain healthy relationships with regulators, community leaders, neighbors, and other external stakeholders.

    e.   Leaders recognize and act upon their obligation to be influential as members of the broader nuclear industry.

    f.   Senior station and corporate leaders interact proactively and positively and explain the "why" behind important actions and decisions whenever possible.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How were diverse perspectives included when goals and implementation plans were developed?

2. What feedback on their own behaviors and actions have leaders received and acted upon? Can leaders describe those situations?

3. Why do leaders think that healthy relationships exist with employees, regulators, and other stakeholders? How do they know?

LE 7. Providing Effective Coaching and Feedback in an Environment of Healthy Accountability
Leaders provide candid and timely feedback, reinforce positive behaviors, correct shortfalls, and nurture ownership — creating a culture of healthy accountability to improve performance. Coaching is used for motivation as well as for accountability.

    a.   Leaders are visible in the field and actively provide constructive feedback.

    b.   Leaders use constructive coaching and mentoring to motivate and to develop other leaders.

    c.   Leaders reinforce positive behaviors and results as well as provide candid feedback on performance gaps and development areas.

    d.   Leaders use appropriate management systems and follow up to ensure important items are resolved in a timely manner, even where strong personal relationships exist.

    e.   Leaders hold employees and each other accountable for compliance with programs, processes, procedures, and expectations.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How do leaders provide coaching and feedback? How do they know this is effective?

2. How do leaders know that individuals throughout the organization understand what they are accountable for?

3. What is the evidence that leaders foster desired behaviors and resolve performance issues?

Cope with Risk

LE 8. Making Effective Decisions and Appropriately Managing Risk
Leaders ensure decisions are made at the appropriate organizational level and involve diverse perspectives to make certain that potential unintended consequences are recognized and that risk is appropriately managed.

a. Leaders use appropriate technical and nontechnical expertise to inform the decision-making process.

b. Leaders ensure that affected stakeholders understand decision-making roles and responsibilities and ensure that the ultimate decision-making authority is clear.

c. Leaders encourage a questioning attitude and seek diverse input.

d. Leaders are directive when required.

e. Leaders consider cumulative impact when making decisions.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How do leaders know that decisions are made at the appropriate level and that diverse and appropriate expertise and perspectives are considered?

2. What decision-making model(s) do leaders use? Does the model define the roles and ultimate decision-making authority? Are there recent instances in which decision-making was effective? Can the leaders identify situations in which it was ineffective and identify the lessons learned?

3. How do leaders ensure that risks are appropriately characterized, managed, and reviewed in aggregate?

Achieve Results

LE 9. Achieving Sustainable Results
Leaders achieve sustainable results by shaping organizational behaviors and by relentlessly reinforcing high standards to achieve ownership and accountability for performance.

    a. Leaders assign clear responsibility and appropriate authority for achieving strategic goals.

    b. Leaders act with a sense of urgency to arrest performance declines.

    c. Leaders intervene when ownership of issues is uncertain or when progress toward achieving results is inadequate.

    d. Leaders understand the capacity of their organizations and ensure resources are effectively used.

    e. Leaders create an environment where individuals see themselves as part of a larger team — a team demonstrating both a collective ownership of the mission and a collective accountability for its success.

    f. Leaders understand the need for, and are capable of, adapting their leadership behaviors to maximize team effectiveness across a wide band of performance.

    g. Leaders have the courage to make difficult or unpopular decisions and to challenge the status quo.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How do leaders ensure that ownership and accountability are understood and exercised at all levels of the organization?

2. When have leaders seen the need to intervene in order to arrest declining performance? Was the decline recognized by normal oversight activities or by some other means? What was the outcome?

3. How do leaders drive for maximum results without overwhelming the capacity of their organization to produce quality results?

4. What is the evidence that leaders adapt their behaviors appropriately to different situations and across a wide band of performance?

5. Do leaders proactively make adjustments to processes and procedures to mitigate risks to the organization?

6. Are there instances in which leaders have shown the courage to challenge the status quo or to make an unpopular or difficult decision? What was the outcome?

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Team Effectiveness Attributes

Leaders have an obligation not only to do their best as individuals but also to ensure that they perform effectively as team members to achieve organizational results. Effective leadership teams are able to accomplish more collectively than individual leaders will accomplish separately. When teams demonstrate collective ownership of the mission and collective accountability for success, the organization has increased capability to perform at an excellent level.

Leadership team effectiveness is a key driver in achieving sustained excellent plant performance; thus, the following attributes are most important to be demonstrated by the senior leadership team.

TE 1. The Team Is Aligned Around a Common Purpose, Vision, and Goals

The leadership team aligns itself, its organizations, and its priorities around a common purpose, vision, and goals to achieve organizational results.

   a. Team members clearly articulate a shared vision of excellence.

   b. Team members share common guiding principles and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

   c. Team members commit to shared goals and to each team member's success, including alignment of activities in their core business.

   d. Team members demonstrate collective ownership for overall station performance, including improving the effectiveness of the entire organization — not just their responsible area.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

   1. Can team members at all levels of the organization articulate their role in working as a team to achieve the station mission and goals? Are goals and metrics between departments and organizations aligned to support the entire organization — not just their functional area?

   2. How do team members at various levels demonstrate collective ownership for overall station performance — not just within their functional area?

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

TE 2. Members Are Committed to the Success of the Team
Teams are most effective when members are committed to the success of the team by accepting personal accountability for the collective outcomes.

   a. Team members demonstrate ownership for goals and share mutual accountability to achieve team and organizational objectives.

   b. Team members provide support and are accountable for the success of their teammates as well as themselves.

   c. Team members hold themselves and each other accountable for meeting internal and external commitments.

   d. Team members give each other positive and critical feedback to improve performance and team functioning.

   e. Team members work together to mitigate risks to the plant, to the organization, and to the overall enterprise.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

   1. Do employees describe the leadership team as committed to achieving success as a team?

   2. Through meetings and observations, do team members demonstrate their commitment to the team through discussions, body language, and actions?

   3. Describe how team goals are talked about and aligned.

   4. How do team members demonstrate support for each other?

TE 3. Team Talent, Roles, and Responsibilities Are Clear
Teams are proficient when requisite knowledge and skills are available, and team members are prepared to execute their roles and responsibilities precisely.

   a. Team member capabilities are complementary, balanced, and result in team proficiency.

   b. Team members maintain awareness of team and individual proficiency challenges and act to mitigate gaps.

   c. Team members reinforce the importance of individuals executing their team roles and challenge those who do not meet the intent or who step out of their assigned roles.

    d. Team members understand different individual styles (for example, the tendency to behave, contribute, and interrelate with others in a particular way) and interact in ways to sustain optimal team dynamics.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. Are team roles clearly described, and do members understand their role on the team? If vacancies exist on a team, is it clear who is acting in the vacated role? Is the team still effective with a missing team member?

2. Does the team demonstrate diverse thinking and interact in ways that sustain optimal team dynamics during problem-solving and collaborative discussions?

3. Do teams use results from leadership assessments, personality profiles and other tools to assess incumbent and new team members? Are these results openly communicated and used as input for development actions to improve both individual and team effectiveness?

TE 4. The Team Creates a Positive Atmosphere of Mutual Trust and Respect
Leaders create a level of trust within the team and with external organizations such that team decisions and results are understood and accepted as fair and appropriate and support organizational goals.

    a. Teams demonstrate excellent internal and external communication skills.

    b. Team members critique their successes and shortfalls in order to improve performance.

    c. Team members communicate in a mutually supportive, respectful, open, honest, and complete manner.

    d. Team members motivate each other, avoid negative competition, and readily assist other members when needed.

    e. Teams promote a positive atmosphere through celebration and collegial fun.

    f. Team members put effort into building team cohesion.

    g. Team members communicate unified support for team decisions to their organizations.

    h. Team members "walk their talk," and actual behavior aligns with stated values and expectations.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How are disagreements and differences on the team handled? Are specific behaviors identified for these situations?

2. During observations, are team discussions respectful, and are members assisting each other?

3. Describe a recent team celebration or recognition.

4. Do team members recognize their role to support overall team objectives? Are they willing to assist each other positively to complete tasks in a timely manner to meet the overall team objective?

5. Do team members self-assess and seek feedback from others regarding their performance and how they can improve?

TE 5. Team Decision-Making and Conflict Resolution Are Effective
Teams effectively leverage the collective talent of diverse team members to make sound decisions.

a. Team members communicate assertively — not aggressively, express concerns without blaming individuals, listen thoughtfully, and use challenges to positively influence better team outcomes.

b. Team members resolve conflicts promptly, openly, and respectfully. Different conflict resolution techniques are used depending on the issue, such as consensus, compromise, negotiation, authoritative command, or delegation.

c. Team members identify and communicate conflicts potentially impacting team effectiveness.

d. Teams leverage diverse member styles, strengths, and perspectives to optimize results and avoid groupthink.

e. Teams make timely decisions commensurate with the level of risk.

f. Teams address emergent issues and adjust to unexpected outcomes.

g. Team members support decisions and remain receptive to new information that could challenge the bases for prior decisions.

Key discussion questions on this topic include the following:

1. How do team members actively seek diverse perspectives, prevent groupthink, and resolve potential conflicts?
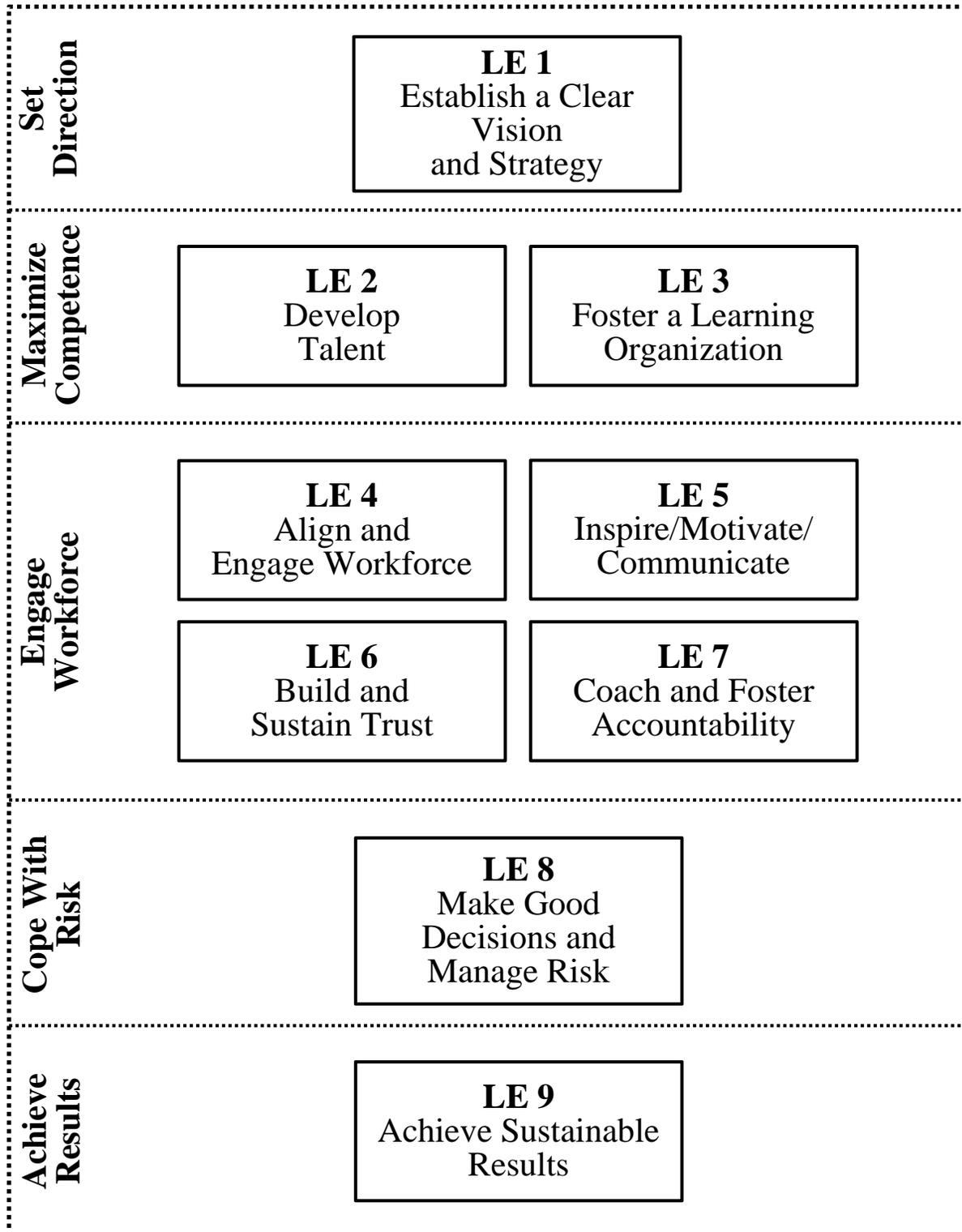
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2. Do team members actively communicate their support for team decisions to their organizations in a manner that demonstrates full support for the decision?

3. Can the following team behaviors be observed during team meetings?

- Team members actively listen (no one interrupting and all members encouraged to share viewpoints).

- Conflict is effectively and professionally resolved.

- If decisions can't be made or if actions are needed, a clear action, owner, and due date are assigned.

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Leadership Effectiveness Attributes Diagram

The Leadership Effectiveness Attributes in this document are grouped based on how they relate to essential outcomes: Set Direction, Maximize Competence, Engage the Workforce, Cope With Risk, and Achieve Sustainable Results.

Set Direction	**LE 1** Establish a Clear Vision and Strategy	
Maximize Competence	**LE 2** Develop Talent	**LE 3** Foster a Learning Organization
Engage Workforce	**LE 4** Align and Engage Workforce	**LE 5** Inspire/Motivate/Communicate
	LE 6 Build and Sustain Trust	**LE 7** Coach and Foster Accountability
Cope With Risk	**LE 8** Make Good Decisions and Manage Risk	
Achieve Results	**LE 9** Achieve Sustainable Results	

Leadership and Team Effectiveness Attributes

Acknowledgements

The following individuals served on an expert panel to review and provide input to this document:

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