

**FUTURE**

**STATE**



**21ST CENTURY  
LEADERSHIP SKILLS:  
THE HEART  
OF ORGANIZATIONAL  
TRANSFORMATION**

**SAN FRANCISCO  
BUSINESS TIMES**

**2017**  
CORPORATE  
PHILANTHROPY  
AWARDS HONOREE



## **The pace of change that leaders today must understand, confront and adapt to in order to build and sustain thriving businesses and social enterprises is unrelenting.**

Every day leaders learn about a myriad of emerging trends that are certain to impact revenue, profit, the workforce and the stock price...be it Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence, Automation, Big Data, the ever-changing regulatory landscape, Digital Transformation, Millennials, Holocracy, Agile, leaders must be ready to lead and drive change throughout their organizations in order to remain viable in the 21st century.

And the attributes that are needed today are not the same skills that were taught just a few decades ago. Of course leaders still need to understand finance, marketing, and management skills, but today, there is also a set of new skills that are being defined as 21st century leadership skills. These

skills are especially tuned to ensure that leaders can meet the demands of a time of great change and ambiguity, as well as the convergence of a number of cultural and societal shifts that have the potential to disrupt and destabilize businesses of all sizes.

No longer does the command and control model of leadership and management seem to work. The best and brightest in our workforce expect to be able to contribute fully to the setting of vision, values, strategic direction and to be able to bring their full selves, and their full lives to their work. Work life balance has been replaced with living a life that works in all areas – social, personal, and professional,

We have observed that the most successful leaders of the 21st century share a set of common attributes that when combined make them especially adept at leading teams through this time of change. Leaders that are unprepared or unwilling to adapt find themselves struggling to create productive, inspiring and effective workplaces with team members who are passionate about the success of the enterprise.

In the following pages, we will provide you with a self-assessment tool and recommendations to further evolve your skills, and ready your organization for inevitable change.

# THE ATTRIBUTES OF A 21ST CENTURY LEADER

So, what are those unique attributes that leaders must have to propel their organizations to success and remain relevant in the current market? We feel there are 5 attributes that leaders need to develop now more than ever before:

1. Purpose Driven: Can clearly articulate personal passions, commitments, and values. Naturally looks at how business decisions impact a broad set of stakeholders that extend beyond shareholders to the environment, employees, and the community. Purpose driven.
2. Self-Aware: Understands one's strengths and weaknesses and can express vulnerability. Deepens self-awareness with mindfulness techniques. Able to support others in their ability to become more self-aware and help them work to their strengths.
3. Creative: Thinks about opportunities and solutions multi-dimensionally and brings new perspectives, ideas, and ways of thinking, to the table. Highly adaptable, flexible. Manages anxiety well. Transparent in their decision-making process.
4. Connected: Recognizes own implicit bias and adjusts. Equitable, fair and values relationships. Curious and generous to hearing new points of view. Puts forging relationships above their personal needs.
5. Change Agent: Has the courage to make a difference in the face of adversity. Steps up to the challenge of bringing new ways of working, ideas, and mindsets to reality through a strong commitment to the future.

The assessment tool below can help you determine where you are at on the path to becoming a 21st Century Leader and help identify opportunities to help you continue down the path to realize your vision.

# ASSESSMENT TOOL

## PURPOSE DRIVEN

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU DEMONSTRATE THIS BEHAVIOR?**  
(1 = rarely, 5 = often)

### BEHAVIORS

Personal passion and purpose is clear to self and others

The purpose of the organization (or initiative) is published, known by all, and core to the operations of the business (or initiative)

Business practices are socially and environmentally sustainable and serve the needs of the team. Performance against these metrics is assessed independently, i.e. through bcorporation.net

Apply a stakeholder view of what's important to the business (or initiative), looking beyond shareholders to the needs of the environment, the community, and the team

Does not sacrifice the vision or the integrity of the purpose to achieve short term results

### TOTAL

# ASSESSMENT TOOL

## SELF-AWARE

### BEHAVIORS

HOW OFTEN DO YOU  
DEMONSTRATE THIS  
BEHAVIOR?  
*(1 = rarely, 5 = often)*

Shows vulnerability, acknowledges and cleans up mistakes readily and often

Recognizes the unique contributions of others, individuals, and teams as essential to own success

Knows personal strengths and weaknesses and shares them freely, soliciting feedback and coaching

Knows strengths and weaknesses of key team members and encourages transparency on these topics to better support team collaboration, empathy, and support

Practices mindfulness techniques to recognize triggers and thoughts and to bring a new level of awareness and presence to every interaction

**TOTAL**

## CREATIVE

### BEHAVIORS

HOW OFTEN DO YOU  
DEMONSTRATE THIS  
BEHAVIOR?  
*(1 = rarely, 5 = often)*

Able to see challenges as opportunities and address opportunities from all angles. Deep understanding of the customer and what makes them tick

Low level of anxiety; presence of mind to think creatively when others are operating from fear

Agile, adaptable, able to let go of previously held limiting beliefs; flexible

Action oriented, comfortable making a decision and moving forward, even in the face of ambiguity and incomplete data

Highly collaborative, seeks feedback and input from internal and external resources to augment and expand own thinking, bring forward new ideas, and break down silos

**TOTAL**

# ASSESSMENT TOOL

## CONNECTED

### BEHAVIORS

HOW OFTEN DO YOU  
DEMONSTRATE THIS  
BEHAVIOR?  
*(1 = rarely, 5 = often)*

Recognizes own implicit bias and adjusts;  
equitable, fair

Assumes good intent, sees the good in others

Generous, open, shares freely. Not competitive,  
low ego, direct and transparent, confident in  
self

Values personal relationships, spends time  
getting to know people for who they are, not  
just what they do

Curious – asks a lot of questions, listens  
intently, learner’s mind

**TOTAL**

## CHANGE AGENT

### BEHAVIORS

HOW OFTEN DO YOU  
DEMONSTRATE THIS  
BEHAVIOR?  
*(1 = rarely, 5 = often)*

Brings a sense of urgency, shows compelling  
case for the change, clarifies the vision

Demonstrates leadership, increasing trust  
and team work with an engaged and aligned  
organization

Excellent communication skills: address  
resistance; engage people

Finds opportunity for quick wins; shows new  
direction, practice behaviors, celebrates  
success

Models the cultural shifts visibly, shows new  
behaviors

**TOTAL**

## Score of 40 or under:

### You might be a bit old school

If you are modeling your leadership style off of how you think you should act or more traditional command and control models, you are missing opportunities to truly connect and bring forth the best in others. Look for opportunities to increase your own self-awareness first, and then truly work to connect with your team to tap into their passions and strengths to achieve your extraordinary shared vision of success. We are here to [help you](#) on this journey.

## Score of 41-85:

### You are on your way with opportunities to improve

You likely are pretty open about your strength and weaknesses, and you are working to bring your full self and best self to your role as a leader. Up next, make sure that the vision for your work, the big why, is not only powerful for you, but truly resonates with your team. Create the purpose and vision for your initiative or your company with your team members, and you will be unstoppable.

[Let us know](#) if we can help.

## Score of 86-125: **Congrats, you are a master, ready to coach others!**

Your organization or team are firing on all cylinders! Congratulations for doing the work on yourself to be truly self-aware, present, connected, and creative and for digging deep to find true meaning and purpose for your organization. Now it is up to you to develop the next generation of leaders. [Let us know](#) how it goes!

# RESOURCES

If you are looking to move your 21st century leadership skills forward across these five domains, we have curated a list of some of our favorite resources for you to consider.

## Purpose Driven

- [What are B-Corps?](#)
- [The B-Corp Impact Assessment](#)
- [Simon Sinek: Start with Why](#)
- [Simon Sinek: Find your Why](#)

## Self-Aware

- [Brene Brown: The Power of Vulnerability](#)
- [The Tilt 365 Assessment](#)

## Creative

- [Think Wrong](#)
- [Creative Confidence](#)

## Connected

- [Crucial Conversations](#)
- [Give and Take](#)
- [Leaders Eat Last](#)

## Change Agent

- [The Heart of Change, John P Kotter](#)
- [The Lonely Role of a Change Leader](#)
- [The ADKAR Model of Change Management](#)

# THE HEART OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP

Our organization, **Future State**, is an employee owned, woman-led, purpose-driven, **certified B- Corporation**. We help organizations through large scale change bringing an interdisciplinary and human centered approach to organizational transformation. Our most successful projects have one very important player right in the middle of the mix – the change leader or change agent.

So why does a consulting company that helps organizations go through change care so much about honing these 21st century leadership skills? The thing is, without self-awareness, a compelling purpose, strong relationships, and creative problem solving skills, you cannot successfully lead your organization through change. But, when you bring these attributes, it is also one of the most rewarding opportunities that one can have in one's career – to see that a change is needed and to move forward in pursuit of that new future despite the barriers and obstacles in your path.

*“A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He/She does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his/her actions and the integrity of his/her intent.”*

- Douglas MacArthur

The role of change leader is not usually something that one is assigned to take on –it is in the core of who one is. To be a bold change agent

takes courage, it takes commitment to a possibility, a future that others cannot see. It often requires ruffling feathers and a sense of urgency when others see no danger, no need to change.

Change agents are often seen as a threat or as an alarmist by their peers. In fact, they are just the first to see the challenges on the road ahead, and they have already envisioned a new future where these challenges have been met and overcome. They are optimistic at their core.

Only with 21st century change leaders at the helm of transformational change will the individuals impacted by the change be guided through the various stages of loss and uncertainty that come with it and emerge engaged in and contributing to the shared vision for the future.

We are committed to supporting and enabling bold 21st century leaders - those agents of change whose visions positively impact the world.

To learn more about how we help leaders develop the 21st century leadership skills needed to successfully lead change in their organization and in the world, please reach out to [info@futurestate.com](mailto:info@futurestate.com) today.