

# 21 Distinguishing Qualities of Great Leader Volunteers



## The LEADER Volunteer

A board or committee member who lifts up the organization, enabling it to become *high-performing and self-renewing*.



## The PLACEHOLDER Volunteer

A board or committee member who weighs down the organization, causing it to become *reactive and static*.

|           |  |   |
|-----------|--|---|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Looks to the future and thinks strategically.</b>   | Operates within the pressures of the moment and fixates on tactics.   |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Creates conditions conducive to renewal, improvement and change management.</b>                         | Is locked in and protective of the status-quo.  |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Possesses uncompromised integrity.</b>  | Avoids, stretches and manipulates the truth.  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Has the courage and will to make the tough decisions.</b>   | Aims forever and never shoots.  |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Puts duty and the greater good before self.</b>   | Puts self-interest first.   |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Bases decisions and actions on bedrock values, continually striving for clarity and buy-in.</b>         | Uses popularity, expediency or both to make decisions and take action, forever chasing consensus and certainty. |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Focuses outward and on opportunities.</b>   | Focuses on problems and finger-pointing.  |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Confronts and resolves conflict.</b>  | Avoids conflict at all costs.   |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Is comfortable delegating power.</b>  | Likes to control and dominate.  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Holds self and others accountable for delivering on promises and performing against assigned tasks.</b> | Passes the buck and makes excuses while placing high priority on being liked and staying popular.               |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Generously shares information, resources, praise and credit.</b>  | Keeps everything close to the vest, protecting both credit and the limelight.                                   |

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| <b>12</b> | <b>Views staff as partners who are critical to organizational success, nurturing a climate of common expectations, trust, collaborative planning, joint evaluation, strong communication and mutual respect.</b> | Views staff as subordinates who are paid help.                                  |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Has enthusiastic followers having earned the respect and trust of colleagues, professional peers and staff.</b>   | Has dispassionate and reluctant underlings.                                     |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Is self-aware.</b>  | Is self-important.  |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Views volunteer service as an honor, possessing passion and conviction for the organization's vision and purpose.</b>   | Views volunteer service as a stage and is driven by ego, self-interest or both. |
| <b>16</b> | <b>Values and embraces diversity.</b>  | Is threatened by differences from self, the majority or the established.        |
| <b>17</b> | <b>Is visible, available and on the front line.</b>  | Is aloof, inaccessible and on the sideline.                                     |
| <b>18</b> | <b>Possesses mental toughness and resilience.</b>  | Cracks under the real or perceived pressures of the moment.                     |
| <b>19</b> | <b>Understands the commitment of time, energy and other requirements before accepting position, taking appropriate action when unable to fulfill service commitment.</b>   | Is enamored with the position's limelight, trappings or personal benefits.      |
| <b>20</b> | <b>Fosters open, candid and constructive debate and deliberation.</b>  | Shoots from the hip, creating chaotic discourse and criticism.                  |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Focuses on and lives by principles and values.</b>  | Is interested in and obsesses over policies and procedures.                     |