

[Self-Awareness Is the Key to Becoming a Good Leader](#)

It takes effort to be mindful about yourself and your surroundings.

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A leader is considered to be an epitome of confidence, courage and compassion. A person who holds the entire organization together and a source of inspiration and guidance for its people. In just 2 lines, you can realize the heavy lifting that a leader needs to do.

Being a leader is not just about having business acumen and devising strategies, it is also about how you set an example for your people by walking the talk and guiding them towards the common vision which will lead to their and organization's success. The question here is – how can you be a leader who can meet these expectations? **The answer lies in 'you', the one factor which is constant in anything you do.** In my 30 years of experience, I can tell you that building self-awareness has been one of the important factors that has helped me deliver these expectations to some extent. And believe me, I'm still learning something new about myself every day.

I firmly believe that self-awareness is a constant learning process, one fine day you can't say you know it all and are perfect...no one is. **This is the first step towards self-awareness, to know and accept that you don't know everything.** There's no harm in doing so and no one will look down upon you as a leader if you don't know a particular thing. For instance,

although I'm aware about the market happenings across the globe, I rely on my market visits to get a pulse from the ground about prevalent market realities, which are always in a state of flux. Don't shy away from asking help or going back to basics or wiping the board clean, **it's only when you're honest about what you know, ready to learn what you don't, can you get clarity and make informed decisions.** Learning is a journey and it never stops, it's a constant pursuit, and you learn from everything and everyone, the important part is what to assimilate and what not to, this I feel is one of the most critical aspects of self-awareness. We are after all a sum total of our conversations, our learnings and our experiences, all of which we can call upon as and when the situation demands for us to do so.

Additionally, it's important for you to keep improving yourself and I feel you can do so by asking 'what' to be better. If I don't achieve the results which I expected to, I ask myself what steps I can take next time to achieve my targets. When the Covid-19 pandemic was at its peak and I saw the impact it had on my people & society, I didn't sit watching the negative news which was doing the rounds and brood over why was it happening. Instead, I thought what can I do to make lives simpler and better for them? We started vaccination drives and mental health support for our employees. We also distributed advanced life support ambulances so that people get appropriate medical support when they're in critical condition. This helps you cultivate solution driven mindset, rather than ruminating over the problem statement. **Asking yourself what can be done in a particular situation, helps you know what you can do better and act upon it.** This sense of purpose develops over time, when you start looking at work as an act of service, it makes it slightly easier to improve upon ways of achieving this purpose. Ultimately the purpose of improving is not just focused on what you want to achieve, but also to where it ultimately leads. The constant pursuit of being a better human being should be the legacy that all of us should aim for as eventually when we do that we would lead with our hearts in the right place, with empathy and righteousness.

One of the crucial facets to self-awareness is taking constant feedback. **One way to understand yourself is to also know how others perceive you. It helps you be empathetic and also connect with your people.** It's only when you know what people expect from you, can you deliver on their expectations. It's only when you know there's an issue, can you fix it. In every discussion I've with my people, one question which I never forget to ask is 'what do you think?' It gives me a different perspective and helps me understand their thoughts. Thus, enabling me to identify and fill the blind spots, be aware of the unaware and take effective decisions considering various perspectives. Whilst how other perceive you is important, its not the most important thing! As long as you are able to be aware of the decisions you take and the repercussions they have and you take full responsibility for them, I feel this overpowers any perception anyone may hold of you, good or bad.

With my experience, I can tell you that self-awareness is not an easy characteristic to build. It takes effort to be mindful about yourself and your surroundings. However, once you initiate this process (I'm not asking you to master it), you'll have clarity and confidence to lead your people to success. Don't forget the power for here and now, and believe that life and decisions thereof, aren't some magnanimous series of events, but are actually small moments which we sometimes tend to overlook and ignore. Also know that, there's no end point to

self-awareness as your thought process keeps evolving with different kinds of people you meet and interact with and the experiences you have. So keep exploring yourself to be a good leader, at the end of the day the best vision and foresight are often found on the journey we take within. I believe, it's not necessary to know everything to be a good leader! The humility to accept your vulnerabilities, the spirit to constantly learn and allowing others who know more on a subject to lead, is what makes you successful.