

The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



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HELPING
GOOD LEADERS
BECOME GREAT

Session 9: Ready, Willing, Able & Fit

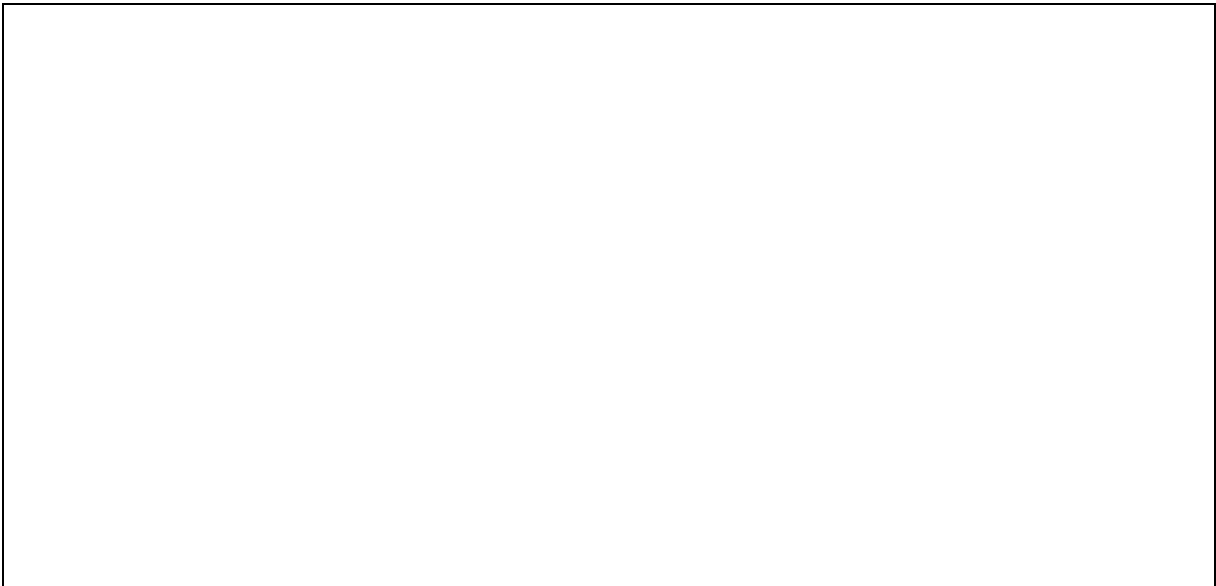
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

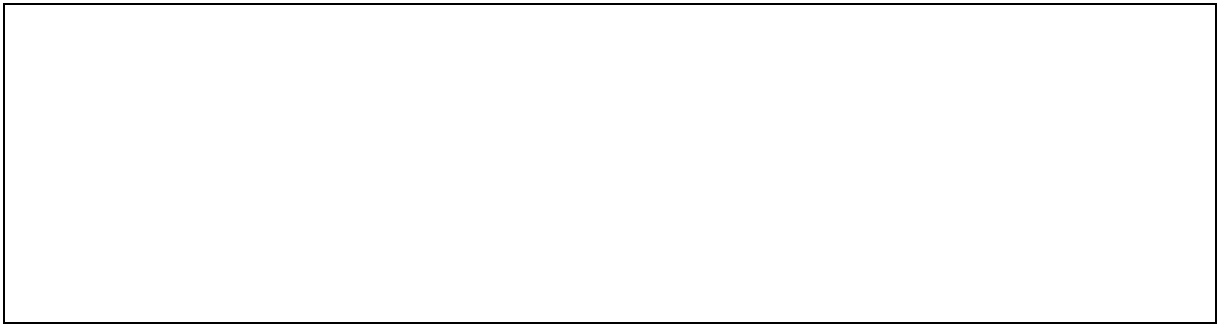
By the end of Session 9, you will be able to:

- Save time by recognizing the four states of Ready, Willing, Able and Fit
- Apply Ready, Willing, Able and Fit when leading and coaching your team


Reality Check

1. What did you learn from **Session 8: The Ins and Outs of Commitment**? Also note any successes, updates, and challenges you encountered from the previous session. Jot down any improvements you'd like to make.

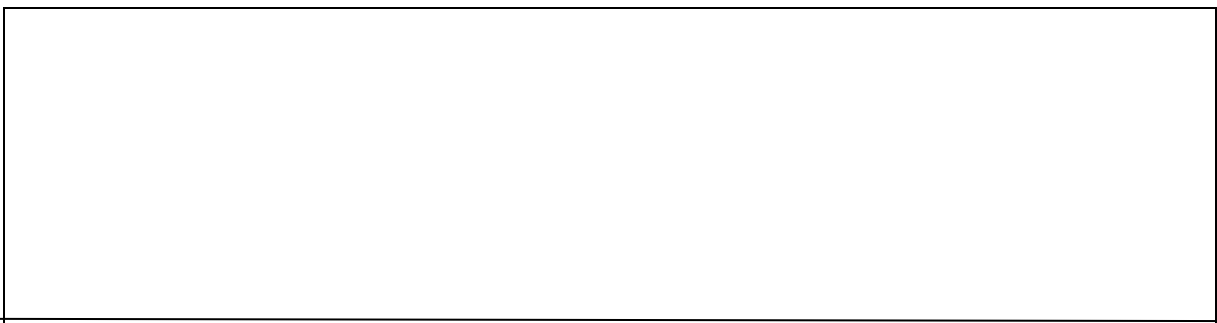




2. Take an inventory of your team. Who on that list can you honestly say “I am more committed to their success than they are!”? How is that person robbing your attention, your energy, your time and your team? What are your options?



3. Given the priorities, goals, and results you are expected to deliver in an environment where time is scarce, who should get the biggest share of your time and attention? *Hint:* Save yourself heartache and burnout and give the bulk of your energy to the people on your team who are engaged and committed to their own success!



4. What kind of results could you create if your entire team were committed and aligned with achieving meaningful results?

Session 9 Lesson – Ready, Willing, Able & Fit

- Watch the video

Who on your team has it all, meaning they are Ready, Willing, Able and Fit?

It seems like a simple question, but it's often overlooked. Ask yourself, is a coaching commitment worth the time and energy you are going to invest, or will you be beating your head against the wall? It is a grave leadership misstep to care more about a person's success than they do — which is not to be confused with believing in a person more than they do!

Definition

When someone is Ready, Willing, Able and Fit, working with them seems effortless. They buy into and add to the vision of your team, are easy to coach, and eager to work through any challenges they face as they accomplish their objectives. They almost seem to lead and coach themselves with minimum feedback and direction from you. Don't be lulled into thinking they don't need you! The biggest complaint from top performers is, "Why do I get so little attention? Most of the efforts and resources go to the non-performers...and I'm a better bet!"

Much of ready, willing, able and fit can be assessed through observation and ongoing interactions — through language, behaviors, actions and mannerisms.

Be aware of these four different states:

- Ready – Is the timing right? Are they engaged and productive?
- Willing – Is the person motivated to take on challenge? Are they eager to play?
- Able – Does the person have the capability and skills?
- Fit – Is the person 'right' for the role or for your team?

To determine a person's state of *readiness*, imagine a bull rider poised and ready to burst out of the gate. Before the bell rings and the gate blasts open, the bull rider is asked if he is ready. That gate is not opened until the cowboy says "Yes!" If you looked in his eyes there would be no doubt he's completely in the game, heart, head, soul and body. When you are coaching people on your team, do you check to see if they are present, engaged and prepared to act? This is necessary to begin the process of growth and movement to higher levels of performance.

Readiness can fluctuate from day to day, depending on events at work or home. Positive situations and setbacks can equally impact a person's emotions. Some people bounce back quickly and are always ready for the next challenge. Others need time to process before they can reengage. When discerning if a person is ready, willing, able and fit, learn to sort out daily fluctuations from their usual behavior.

Willingness boils down to being favorably disposed and consenting with energy. Imagine a keen student in a classroom shouting, "Pick me!" Willingness indicates openness to new assignments, challenges, and coaching, with a sense of enthusiasm.

Ability, or being able, is about ensuring the person can rise to the occasion. You need to determine if the person has the skill, experience or talent needed to accomplish what's being asked of them.

Fitness is simply about determining if the person is right for the role and for your team. They may be ready, willing and able, but have something going on that makes them the wrong person for the job, for you or for your team. It's about knowing this person will thrive, add to the team dynamic, and objectives will get accomplished with no fuss, drama or unrealistic effort.

5 ways to Find Gaps in Ready, Willing, Able and Fit

There are five main ways you can assess your team member and support her:

1. **Feedback:** For someone already on your team; give them specific feedback on what they are doing, both effectively and ineffectively. Explain what you are looking for with regards to ready, willing, able and fit. This of course will bring clarity about where they need to make an adjustment. When looking to hire someone new, ask behavioral interview questions like: "Give me an example of a time when you got frustrated on a project? What happened? How did you successfully complete the assignment?"
2. **Questions:** A provocative question can provide great insights into whether a person is ready, willing, able or fit. I know I've asked a good question when someone responds with "I haven't thought of that before." Go to the C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model suggested questions in the Bonus Section. Try a few questions from each stage in order to help you discover where they stand, on ready, willing able & fit. This will make you much more effective in building a high performing team.
3. **Statements:** Pointing out exactly what you see with regards to where they are in each area of ready, willing, able & fit will help them step up where they need to. Speaking the truth and delivering it with grace is an essential part of your role as a leader. An example of this is: "You have said that communication is very important to you, yet when you became frustrated with your team, you stopped responding to their e-mails."

4. Challenges: Challenge them to push their limits and to improve their game. “What more could you do to make this project stand out?” “What do you think you’re ready to take on that would scare you a little bit but add to your resume?”
5. Ideas: Use what you learned in **Session 2: Create a Culture of Innovation**. Brainstorm with your team for solutions, plans and ideas. Ask “What experiences can we create for our clients for them to become raving fans?” or “How can we get our work showcased in Forbes magazine?”

Finally, remember that if a person is new to a role or industry, it would make sense that a gap is simply a lack of experience. If this is not the case, the most common reason for a gap in these four areas is fear of failure or embarrassment. Sometimes it can also be a lack of motivation, i.e., *will* – the goal just does not matter enough for the person to want to accomplish it. Meaning they might not be willing to work that hard, probably because they are not aligned with your teams vision.

When leading and coaching, determine what is causing any gaps that show up within your team and decide what kind of investment should be made to overcome them. Remember, it can be very subtle – you’ll need to be vigilant.

What’s ahead for Session 10

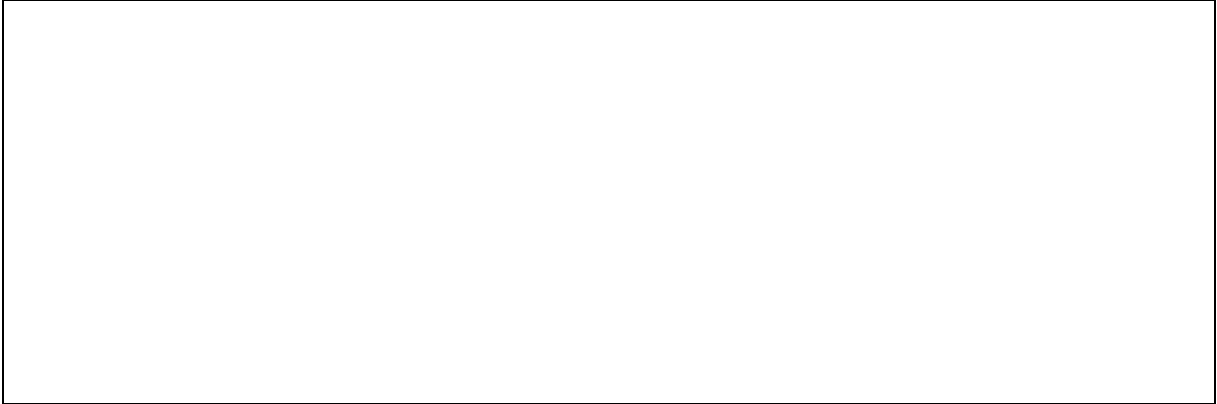
Get ready to **Pull it all Together**. In the next session we are going to recap the key concepts from each session we have covered and tie it all together for you.

Exercises:

1. List the people in your organization and identify if they are Ready, Willing, Able and Fit. Keep *right action* in mind as you answer this question.

2. Identify those who are missing one or more of the key states (being ready, willing, able or fit). With this knowledge, determine how much time you will invest in them. What is your plan for working with colleagues or direct reports who do not share the same commitment as you?

3. Perform a **SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis** on yourself, your team, and then with your entire organization. Better yet, let your team perform a SWOT on themselves and the team! (See the SWOT Worksheet in the Bonus Section)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a SWOT analysis. It occupies the central portion of the page below the instruction.

Session 9: Ready, Willing, Able & Fit - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 9 are:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Here's how I plan to apply what I have learned:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Key Terms (See Glossary)

- Ready
- Willing
- Able
- Fit
- SWOT Analysis

Extra Notes...

