



**SLI COACHING
& CONSULTING**
Serve. Lead. Inspire.

Intent vs. Experience Leadership Reflection Worksheet

One of the most important leadership questions we can ask ourselves is not *what we intended*, but **how people experienced us**.

Good leaders often have good intentions.

Great leaders develop the awareness to understand **how their leadership is actually experienced by others**.

Use the questions below to reflect on your leadership interactions and identify opportunities for growth.

Part 1: Clarifying Your Leadership Intent

Start by identifying the leader you *intend* to be.

When people interact with me as a leader, I want them to experience:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Examples might include: respected, supported, trusted, challenged, encouraged, empowered.

Reflection Question

What leadership values are most important to you?

Part 2: Examining Leadership Experience

Think about a recent interaction with your team.

Examples could include:

- A team meeting
- A difficult conversation
- Providing feedback
- Addressing a problem or mistake
- Making a decision that impacts others

Describe the situation:

What was your intent as the leader in this situation?

How might others have experienced you in that moment?

Part 3: The Intent–Experience Gap

Sometimes our leadership intent and the experience others have are not the same.

What might have created a gap between your intent and their experience?

- ☐ Lack of clarity
- ☐ Tone or delivery
- ☐ Time pressure
- ☐ Lack of listening
- ☐ Jumping too quickly to solutions
- ☐ Limited input from others
- ☐ Other: _____

What signals might suggest that the experience was different than your intent?

Examples:

- Silence in meetings
- Limited feedback
- People avoiding difficult conversations
- Reduced engagement

Reflection:

Part 4: The Servant Leadership Lens

Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership philosophy challenges leaders to ask:

Are those being served growing as persons?

Reflect on your leadership using this lens.

After interacting with you, do people feel:

- ☐ More confident
- ☐ More capable
- ☐ More heard
- ☐ More supported
- ☐ More empowered

Which areas might need improvement?

Part 5: The Leadership Experience You Want to Create

Return to the question:

How do you want people to experience you?

Complete the sentence:

When people leave an interaction with me as a leader, I want them to feel...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Part 6: Your Leadership Commitment

Identify **one leadership behavior** you will intentionally practice over the next 30 days.

Example behaviors:

- Asking more questions before offering solutions
- Inviting input before making decisions
- Practicing active listening
- Providing encouragement and recognition
- Creating space for disagreement

My 30-Day Leadership Commitment

I will intentionally practice:

How will I know if my leadership experience is improving?

Final Reflection

Leadership is not defined by what we intended.

It is defined by **the experience we create for others.**

As you continue to grow in your leadership journey, regularly ask yourself:

How do people experience me?

And perhaps even more importantly:

Is that the experience I intend to create?