

Questions Leaders Should Ask

1. **Managing Time:** How do you split your time between focusing on business/transactions versus managing? Does it vary by time of year and/or business conditions? Do you track how you spend your time?
2. **Management Task Priority:** What are your three most important management tasks (in order)? (e.g., Mentoring, Recruiting, Team Building, Doing Business/Transactions, Developing Strategy, etc.)
3. **Vision/Strategy:** How do you develop and communicate vision and strategy for your business? How often do you articulate your strategy to your people? If asked, would your employees be able to repeat it? How many business priorities should you have? (i.e., 3 to 5 or 10 to 15)
4. **Feedback:** Do you provide people with timely and direct positive and constructive feedback? Do you tell people things they do not want to hear? Do you wait for annual performance reviews to do so? Do you have 5 or 6 people who will tell you the truth (whether you like it or not)?
5. **Succession Planning:** Have you selected a successor? How have you done so? If you have not, what has made it challenging? How important is it to pick one?
6. **Getting Things Done:** How do you avoid being a bottleneck in getting things done and/or making decisions? What tasks can you delegate and which must you do yourself? How do you balance your work life and personal life?
7. **Evaluation:** How often do you look at your business with a “clean sheet of paper” – ask whether what you are doing still makes sense? On what basis do you make that judgment?
8. **Alignment:** Is your culture, recruitment, compensation criteria, promotion criteria, and organizational design consistent with the key success factors that drive effectiveness in your business? Do you focus on this?
9. **Leading Under Pressure:** What creates pressure for you (bad business environment, a mistake, ambition, insecurity, intimidating situation)? Do you hide, keep quiet, evade – or do you stand up in these situations?
10. **Being Yourself:** Are you comfortable at work? Do you let your natural personality show at work? Have you developed your own style? Do you confront / disagree / speak up / “make waves” as appropriate? Are you too politically correct?