

The 7+3 Framework for Biopharmaceutical Leadership: A Quick Reference

Introduction: Leadership as an Experience

Effective leadership in the biopharmaceutical field is not defined by a simple list of personality traits or a particular type of charisma. Instead, this framework, based on a qualitative study of biopharmaceutical executives, presents leadership as an *experience*. This experience is created when a qualified executive gives the optimal response to the complex demands of their organization. The study identified two core, interacting themes that produce leadership behaviors: the sustained effort required of a leader and the abilities needed to meet those demands. This guide outlines this **7+3 framework**, which consists of **3 Commitments** a leader must uphold, **7 Competencies** they must possess, and the additional theme of **Self-Concept**, which shapes a leader's unique approach.

Part 1: The Three Core Commitments

To create the leadership experience, an executive must first anchor their efforts in three foundational areas of sustained investment. These are the Three Commitments.

1. Presence

The biopharmaceutical executive honors their commitment to invest time consistently with key stakeholders. This involves more than just physical attendance; it is about the quality and consistency of a leader's attention.

- **Being Visible:** This means being seen within the organization. A leader's visibility provides a crucial stabilizing influence, especially during periods of uncertainty or turmoil.
- **Being Available:** This involves showing receptiveness to being approached. An 'open-door policy,' combined with open and welcoming body language, signals to the team that their leader is accessible.
- **Being Engaged:** This is the practice of actively listening without a preconceived agenda. By doing so, a leader can truly understand the team's needs and detect important cues that might otherwise be missed.

A leader who masters the commitment of Presence can energize their team in several key ways:

- **Gain Confidence:** Earn the team's trust through demonstrated competence and consistent managerial practices.
- **Appeal to Ideals:** Connect the team's work to its ultimate purpose. Remind subordinates that, as one executive tells their scientists, their work "saves lives every day," reinforcing their significant contribution to both the organization and to healthcare.

- **Focus on Team Objectives:** Detect and reorient individual agendas or egos that may be counterproductive, ensuring the team remains focused on collective goals.
- **Tune in to Mood:** Pay close attention to the team's energy level and overall mood, adapting your leadership approach to be most effective.
- **Challenge with Growth:** Use difficult or "stretch" tasks to motivate people, creating a sense of mission and making achievement more rewarding.
- **Model Behavior:** Exhibit the energy, work ethic, and behaviors you want to see from your team, leading by example.
- **Provide Stability:** Serve as a calming and stabilizing force for the team, particularly when the organization is facing turmoil or restructuring.

*Fulfilling the commitment to Presence requires a mastery of competencies like **Communication** to listen effectively, **Fostering Trust** through accessibility, and **Steadiness Amid Uncertainty** to provide a stabilizing influence.*

2. Stewardship

The biopharmaceutical executive honors their commitment to preserve the integrity and sanctity of their role through appropriate deployment of management authority and organizational resources. This commitment focuses on the responsible use of the power vested in a managerial position.

- **Assigning Tasks:** A leader must clearly define roles and accountabilities for their subordinates. Crucially, they must then grant the autonomy necessary for people to do the jobs they were hired to do.
- **Assigning Objectives:** This involves setting a clear direction for the team that aligns with the overall corporate strategy. The leader must also provide the necessary infrastructure and resources for the team to achieve these objectives.
- **Preserving the Role:** A leader is a steward of their managerial role, responsible for upholding its integrity and ethical standards to serve both the company and the broader biopharmaceutical industry.

*Effective Stewardship hinges on competencies such as **Qualification for Role** to assign tasks correctly, **Autonomy-Cohesion** to empower teams, and **Balanced Execution** to manage resources strategically.*

3. Development

The biopharmaceutical executive honors their commitment to consistently develop current role-based capacities and build future capacities in themselves and their subordinates. An effective leader is a multiplier of talent and potential.

To be effective at development, a leader must hold three core beliefs:

- Believe that people have the ability to grow within and beyond their current roles.
- Act as an active partner—not a bystander—in their people’s development.
- Continuously assess the progress of their people’s development to ensure growth is occurring as intended.

Leaders can use several modalities to facilitate this growth:

Modality	Primary Benefit for the Learner
Funding education	Provides access to additional education and professional programs to build new skills and knowledge.
Peer-to-peer mentoring	Allows subordinates to learn from each other's complementary strengths and experiences.
Individual coaching	Offers personalized guidance to help subordinates think through problems and develop self-awareness.
Training infrastructure	Creates consistent access to professional development programs that reinforce skills and knowledge.
Team-building events	Provides opportunities to clarify roles, build trust, and foster a cohesive and productive environment.
Psychometric assessments	Delivers objective data that can form the basis for a meaningful developmental dialog and track growth.
'Stretch goals'	Pushes individuals out of their comfort zones with challenging tasks to build new capabilities.

*Driving Development is enabled by the **Growth/Cultivation** competency, strong **Communication** for coaching, and the ability to **Foster Trust** with developing team members.*

Part 2: The Seven Core Competencies

While the Commitments define *where* a leader must focus their effort, the Seven Competencies define the specific abilities required *how* to execute those commitments effectively.

Competence is the ability of the biopharmaceutical executive to respond to a situation, a request, or an expectation from their managerial role.

1. **Qualification for Role:** Being capable of performing the tasks assigned to the role, leveraging subject-matter expertise and experience.
2. **Autonomy-Cohesion:** Imparting the right level of autonomy to subordinates while creating cohesive, unified teams.
3. **Fostering Trust:** Fostering mutual trust by being inclusive, sharing information, and matching words with actions.
4. **Steadiness Amid Uncertainty:** Acting effectively and with emotional resilience when faced with incomplete facts, tension, and complexity.
5. **Balanced Execution:** Managing both the immediate demands and the long-term strategic needs of the organization.
6. **Communication:** Expressing oneself clearly and tailoring the message's content, scale, and delivery to the audience and intended result.
7. **Growth/Cultivation:** Growing the skills needed for current duties and developing the potential for future challenges in both oneself and others.

The "+": Self-Concept as a Leader

The "plus" in the 7+3 framework is Self-Concept—the internal lens through which a leader understands their role and applies the commitments and competencies.

Self-concept as a leader refers to an executive's internal identity and awareness of their own leadership style, drivers, and behaviors.

This self-concept primarily originates from one of two sources:

- **Internal Locus:** The leader's identity is formed *prior* to attaining a managerial role, driven by a personal ideal or mission (e.g., seeing oneself as a 'change agent' or 'innovator').
- **External Locus:** The leader's identity is formed *through* the managerial role and its associated responsibilities and expectations (i.e., the role shapes the leader).

Understanding one's own locus of leadership self-concept is not about judging one as better than the other. Rather, it increases self-awareness and helps a leader proactively manage potential blindspots associated with their natural approach.