

The Executive's Compass: A Monthly Leadership Tracking Journal

Introduction: Charting Your Leadership Journey

Effective leadership is not a static trait you possess; it is a dynamic phenomenon you practice. It emerges at the intersection of two critical dimensions: **Competence**—what you are *capable* of doing when faced with a challenge—and **Commitment**—the disciplined effort you apply day-in and day-out to deliver on that capability.

This journal is not a passive record; it is your training ground. It is a practical tool designed for structured reflection and deliberate action, helping you navigate the complexities of your role with greater intention. Its purpose is to sharpen your self-awareness, help you identify the precise conditions where your leadership is most needed, and translate your insights into behaviors that drive impact. By consistently charting your course, you will forge a more powerful and authentic leadership identity.

1.0 Monthly Framework: Setting the Bearing

This section is the strategic core of your journal. Completing it each month sets a clear direction for your development, ensuring your efforts are focused, deliberate, and aligned with the demands of your role and your organization.

1.1 Monthly Intention Setting

Strategic growth comes from focused effort, not scattered attempts at improvement. Setting a clear monthly intention allows you to concentrate your energy on a specific area of your leadership, yielding more significant and sustainable results. Use these prompts to set your bearing for the month ahead.

- **Month & Year:**

- **My Overarching Theme:** *Based on my current challenges and organizational needs, what is the single most important leadership theme for me to focus on this month? (e.g., "Stabilizing the team through uncertainty," "Driving innovation," "Building cross-functional alignment.")*

- **Primary Commitment Focus:** *This month, I will deliberately practice the commitment of... [] Presence [] Stewardship [] Development.*

- **Primary Competency Focus:** *To support my chosen commitment, I will actively develop the competency of...*

- [] **Qualification for role** - *My capability to perform the core tasks my role demands.*
- [] **Autonomy-cohesion** - *My ability to empower subordinates while building a cohesive, unified team.*
- [] **Fostering trust** - *My capacity to build mutual trust between myself and my team.*

- [] **Steadiness amid uncertainty** - *My capacity to act decisively with imperfect facts and remain effective under tension.*
- [] **Balanced execution** - *My skill in managing both immediate organizational demands and long-term strategic needs.*
- [] **Communication** - *My ability to express myself clearly and appropriately to achieve my intended result.*
- [] **Growth/cultivation** - *My capability to develop the skills my team and I need now, and build our potential for the future.*

With your monthly bearing set, you will now use a weekly cadence of reflection to course-correct, recognize patterns, and maintain momentum.

1.2 The Weekly Cadence (To be completed for Weeks 1-4)

The engine of self-awareness is consistent, weekly reflection. This rhythm allows for timely course-correction, helps you recognize emerging patterns in your behavior and its impact, and prevents valuable lessons from fading with time.

1.2.1 Weekly Reflection Prompts

Week 1: The Commitment to Presence

- *Analyze one situation this week where being physically or virtually 'present' (visible, available, and engaged) acted as a stabilizing influence for my team. What was the impact?*
- *Evaluate my communication 'total package' (words, tone, body language, timing, attire) in a key meeting. Was it congruent with my intended message? Where could it be improved?*
- *Identify one instance where I used email or messaging for a conversation that should have happened face-to-face or via a call. What context or emotional cues were lost?*

Week 2: The Commitment to Stewardship

- *Assess how I balanced granting autonomy with ensuring accountability this week. Did I act as a manager who 'assigns tasks' or an individual contributor who 'shares tasks'?*
- *Analyze a key decision I made this week. Did I provide the necessary infrastructure (resources, policies, support) for my team to execute it successfully?*
- *Reflect on a moment of tension or conflict. Did my actions preserve the integrity of my role and the organization's ethical standards?*

Week 3: The Commitment to Development

- Describe a specific 'stretch goal' I assigned to a team member. How did I frame it as a growth opportunity and ensure they had the support to succeed?
- Evaluate a coaching conversation I had this week using the 'warm-up → core → solutions → summary' framework. Did I guide them to their own solution, or did I simply provide the answer?
- What is one action I took this week for my own leadership development (e.g., reading, seeking feedback, stepping out of my comfort zone)? What did I learn?

Week 4: Synthesis & Self-Concept

- Analyze a challenge I faced this week. Did my response primarily stem from my personal values and mission (internal locus) or from the explicit demands of my role (external locus)?
- What potential blindspot did my leadership self-concept reveal this week in how I managed up, down, or laterally?
- Reviewing the past month, which of the seven competencies was my greatest strength, and which requires more focus in the month ahead?

1.2.2 Daily Check-In & Wins Log

At the end of each day, take two minutes to complete the following entry.

Day	My Energy & Wellbeing (1-5)	Today's Key Leadership Win	The Competency it Demonstrated
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

While your weekly cadence provides a structured rhythm, leadership moments are rarely predictable. Use the following logs to capture critical events *as they happen*, ensuring your end-of-month review is built on precise data, not hazy recollection.

1.3 Key Logs for the Month

Documenting critical events in the moment is essential for preventing the recall bias that clouds judgment. These logs serve as the raw data for your end-of-month review, allowing for a more accurate and insightful analysis. Make a new entry whenever a relevant event occurs.

1.3.1 Challenge & Learning Log

- **Challenge Date:**
- **Situation Description:** *Objectively describe a significant challenge, conflict, or project setback.*
- **My Actions & Rationale:** *Detail the steps I took and why. What assumptions was I operating under?*
- **Outcome:** *What was the result of my actions?*
- **Learning Extraction:** *What is the core leadership lesson from this event? What will I do differently next time?*

1.3.2 Feedback Log

- **Feedback Date:**
- **Received From (Name/Role):**
- **The Feedback (Verbatim if possible):**
- **My Analysis:** *What does this feedback reveal about how my 'Presence,' 'Stewardship,' or 'Development' is perceived? Which competency does it relate to?*

1.3.3 Key Decision Log

- **Decision Date:**
- **The Decision:**
- **Context & Imperfect Facts:** *What was the situation? What information was missing or uncertain when I had to make the call?*
- **Rationale & Process:** *Explain the logic behind the decision. Who did I consult?*
- **Outcome & Reflection:** *Record the result and assess the quality of the decision in hindsight.*

1.3.4 Relationship Building Log

Stakeholder (Name, Role)	Type (Up, Down, Lateral)	Goal of Relationship	Last Interaction (Date & Notes)	Next Action & Target Date

With your logs populated throughout the month, you are now prepared to move from data capture to insight generation.

1.4 End-of-Month Review & Synthesis

Data without synthesis is just noise. This final review is where you connect the dots from the entire month. It is the deliberate practice of converting your experiences—the challenges, the wins, the feedback—into strategic insight that will define your leadership trajectory for the month to come.

1.4.1 Evaluating My Commitments

- **Presence:** *How did I balance being present for my team with delegating effectively? In emotionally charged situations, did I maintain a stabilizing presence? How many ideas did I receive from my team, and what did I do with them?*
- **Stewardship:** *Did my subordinates have a clear understanding of their roles and accountabilities? What infrastructural gaps did I identify, and what actions did I take to address them? How did I convey the importance of ethical conduct and adherence to our organization's policies?*
- **Development:** *What developmental activities did I sponsor to improve both current performance and future potential on my team? What feedback did I solicit for my own performance, and how did I use it? What blindspots in my leadership approach did I uncover this month?*

1.4.2 Planning for Next Month

- **Key Insight:** *What is the single most important insight I learned about my leadership this month?*
- **Carry-Forward Goal:** *What is one specific challenge or growth area from this month that I need to continue focusing on next month?*
- **Next Month's Preliminary Intention:** *Based on this review, my initial thought for next month's primary Commitment and Competency focus is:*

With this month's review complete, you have recalibrated your compass. You are now ready to begin the next cycle with renewed focus, deeper insight, and a clearer path forward.