



Leadership behaviour summaries for planning

Strategy behaviours

S1. Explain the why

This behaviour creates clarity and trust by consistently articulating purpose. Leaders explain not just what is changing, but why it matters, so decisions feel coherent rather than arbitrary.

S2. Tell the story

This behaviour connects strategy to lived experience through narrative. Leaders use stories to link priorities, values, and day-to-day practice into a shared sense of direction.

S3. Seek the brutal facts

This behaviour grounds decision-making in reality rather than optimism or assumption. Leaders actively surface evidence, challenge comfortable narratives, and face what is really happening.

S4. Uphold values

This behaviour uses values as practical decision filters, especially under pressure. Leaders act consistently with stated principles, even when choices are difficult or unpopular.

S5. Establish collective goals

This behaviour aligns effort around shared priorities rather than imposed targets. Leaders involve others in shaping goals, creating ownership and collective responsibility.

S6. Focus on the main thing

This behaviour brings disciplined prioritisation to leadership work. Leaders protect attention, time, and energy for what will make the greatest difference.

S7. Communicate often

This behaviour keeps priorities visible through frequent, consistent communication. Leaders reinforce messages over time so they translate into action, not just awareness.

S8. Find the lead measures

This behaviour makes progress visible by identifying predictive actions. Leaders focus on the small inputs that drive outcomes, rather than waiting for lagging results.

S9. Leverage marginal gains

This behaviour drives improvement through small, repeatable changes. Leaders focus on steady progress that compounds over time rather than dramatic one-off initiatives.

S10. Sustain change

This behaviour protects improvement once initial enthusiasm fades. Leaders embed routines, follow-up, and reinforcement so change becomes normal practice.

S11. Break through limits

This behaviour challenges assumptions about what is possible. Leaders question inherited constraints and encourage fresh thinking that raises ambition.

S12. Lead for lasting excellence

This behaviour balances urgency with sustainability. Leaders prioritise quality and long-term impact over short-term wins.

S13. Aspire to greatness

This behaviour deliberately raises expectations across the organisation. Leaders normalise high ambition and refuse to settle for comfortable plateaus.

S14. Anticipate unintended consequences

This behaviour applies systems thinking to decision-making. Leaders consider second-order effects and avoid solving one problem while creating another.

S15. Plan with a premortem

This behaviour strengthens planning by anticipating failure in advance. Leaders surface risks early so problems are prevented rather than managed later.

Culture behaviours

C1. Hold high standards

This behaviour clarifies what good looks like and protects it consistently. Leaders address slippage quickly so expectations remain credible.

C2. Set high floor, no ceiling

This behaviour combines consistency with ambition. Leaders establish clear minimum expectations while actively encouraging excellence beyond them.

C3. Establish routines

This behaviour reduces variability by embedding predictable ways of working. Leaders use routines to free attention for judgment and improvement.

C4. Maintain consistency

This behaviour builds trust through predictable follow-through. Leaders respond reliably so expectations hold over time and under pressure.

C5. Celebrate success

This behaviour reinforces what matters by recognising effort and progress. Leaders notice and acknowledge success deliberately and authentically.

C6. Seek inspiration

This behaviour keeps practice outward-facing and dynamic. Leaders learn from elsewhere and adapt ideas thoughtfully to their own context.

C7. Engage parents

This behaviour builds trust through purposeful partnership with families. Leaders communicate clearly and consistently to support shared responsibility for pupils.

C8. Create moments

This behaviour strengthens culture through meaningful shared experiences. Leaders design moments that build pride, belonging, and identity.

Leadership behaviours

L1. Lead by example

This behaviour establishes credibility through visible action. Leaders model the behaviours they expect, making standards tangible rather than aspirational.

L2. Be positive

This behaviour sustains morale through realistic optimism. Leaders acknowledge challenges while maintaining belief and forward momentum.

L3. Get the steps in

This behaviour keeps leaders connected to daily reality. Leaders are visible, present, and informed through regular time in the work.

L4. Make it happen

This behaviour turns intent into execution. Leaders remove barriers and drive action so plans translate into results.

L5. Stack the chairs

This behaviour signals humility and shared responsibility. Leaders use small acts of service to flatten hierarchy and strengthen teamwork.

L6. Leaders eat last

This behaviour builds trust through care and sacrifice. Leaders prioritise others' needs, creating psychological safety and loyalty.

L7. Co-create what matters

This behaviour increases commitment through involvement. Leaders shape priorities with others so ownership replaces compliance.

L8. Don't drop the ball

This behaviour builds reliability through consistent follow-through. Leaders close loops so trust is maintained.

L9. Use the checklist

This behaviour protects quality through standardisation. Leaders ensure critical processes do not rely on memory or individual preference.

L10. Pass the baton

This behaviour strengthens capacity through genuine delegation. Leaders transfer responsibility fully, not just tasks.

L11. Learn to bend

This behaviour balances adaptability with principle. Leaders adjust their approach calmly without losing direction.

L12. Control the controllables

This behaviour protects focus under uncertainty. Leaders concentrate their effort on what they can influence rather than what they cannot.

Teams behaviours

T1. Know your team

This behaviour improves decisions through understanding people. Leaders recognise individuals' strengths, needs, and motivations.

T2. Ask first

This behaviour builds trust through listening. Leaders seek insight before acting rather than imposing solutions.

T3. Get the right people on the bus

This behaviour maximises impact through thoughtful deployment. Leaders align roles with strengths and fit.

T4. Create a team

This behaviour builds collective responsibility. Leaders establish shared purpose, norms, and ways of working.

T5. Mastering conflict

This behaviour uses disagreement productively. Leaders address tension openly so issues are resolved, not avoided.

T6. Be wonderful to work with

This behaviour models professionalism and respect. Leaders contribute positively to the working environment.

T7. Hold meetings for impact

This behaviour turns time into progress. Leaders design meetings that lead to decisions and action.

T8. Create actions

This behaviour converts discussion into commitment. Leaders ensure clarity about who will do what, by when.

T9. Go back and check

This behaviour reinforces accountability through follow-up. Leaders revisit actions so progress is sustained.

T10. Embracing accountability

This behaviour maintains standards through constructive challenge. Leaders hold themselves and others to account clearly and fairly.

Yourself behaviours

Y1. Protect your sleep

This behaviour safeguards decision-making and emotional regulation. Leaders prioritise rest so performance remains strong.

Y2. Give yourself permission

This behaviour supports sustainability through boundaries. Leaders release unhelpful guilt and work in healthier ways.

Y3. Manage emotions

This behaviour keeps leadership calm and purposeful. Leaders regulate emotional responses, especially under pressure.

Y4. Humility

This behaviour sustains learning through openness. Leaders seek feedback and remain willing to grow.

Y5. Organise for clarity

This behaviour reduces overload through simplification. Leaders design systems that make thinking clearer.

Y6. Prioritise what matters

This behaviour aligns effort with values and impact. Leaders make deliberate choices about time and attention.

Y7. Think long, act daily

This behaviour connects strategy to daily habits. Leaders link small actions to long-term direction.

Y8. Sharpen your tools

This behaviour strengthens leadership through continual development. Leaders invest in skills, knowledge, and craft.

Y9. Build habits that last

This behaviour turns intention into routine. Leaders create repeatable practices that endure over time.