

Leadership Skills for the Year 2030

What will be the hot leadership skills of the future? The ability to thrive amid uncertainty? To handpick talented employees in a remote region of China? Or just to stay awake as you're asked to globe-trot three continents in three days?

In a new book titled "Leadership 2030," the management consulting firm Hay Group identifies six mega trends that will shape the kind of leaders companies will need in the future. The authors predict that the time of the heroic leader is coming to an end. The reign of the alpha male — of the dominant, typically male leader who knows everything, who gives direction to everybody and sets the pace, whom everybody follows because this person is so smart, intelligent and clever — this time is over.

The future will demand a new kind of leader who focuses much more on relationships and understands that leadership is not about themselves. Rather than an egocentric leader, the authors coin the term "altrocentric" to define a leader who focuses on others. Such a leader doesn't put themselves at the very center. They know they need to listen to other people. They know they need to be intellectually curious and emotionally open. They understand that they need empathy to do the job, not just to be a good person.

The authors see Asian management practices and models becoming more prevalent and influential in western culture. This "affiliated" leadership style is one that focuses on the emotions at work: How do people relate to each other? Is there a positive climate? Are people having fights? Do I as a leader intervene if there are conflicts? The authors learned from their research that this style is much more common in Asia than it is in most of the West, but they see this as something that will become more dominant as Asian companies continue to grow.

In the book, the authors also describe a significant decline in physical loyalty between people and organizations. Leaders will find it increasingly difficult to formally bind people to their organizations, so they shouldn't try. This is a battle that leaders can only lose. Loyalty doesn't need to mean "I have a fixed contract with a company." Network arrangements will likely determine who you work with on a much more regular basis in the future. They call it personal loyalty. Leaders need to develop personal relationships with crucial individuals,

The authors conclude that we have to face up to change because change is inevitable whether we like it or not. They firmly believe that one of those times is now. One of the key takeaways from the book is that leaders need to continually question the status quo. The business world is changing and the skills in practice today will not necessarily be the ones required for success in the future.