

# Traits of an Inclusive Leader

## Active Listening

**Looks Like:** Maintaining eye-contact, nodding, and facing the speaker.

**Sounds Like:** “Hey, I think I hear what you’re saying, you said...(paraphrase the information).”

**Feels Like:** Feeling respected, acknowledged, and understood.

### Keep in mind while practicing this trait...

Active listening requires speaking at the right time to show you understand what you are hearing, and by asking questions and summarizing to indicate you understand.

## Empathy

**Looks Like:** Acknowledging an individual’s unique circumstances as they arise.

**Sounds Like:** “Thank you for sharing what you’re dealing with personally. How can I support you? What do you need from me?”

**Feels Like:** Feeling heard and supported.

### Keep in mind while practicing this trait...

It is important to show support for Team Members who are going through difficult personal circumstances without sacrificing the needs of the business.

## Open-Minded

**Looks Like:** Considering diverse perspectives; being curious.

**Sounds Like:** “Bob, help me understand why you want me to send my managers to another store.”

**Feels Like:** Feeling respected, encouraged to share, included.

### Keep in mind while practicing this trait...

Open-minded leaders ask questions to get information, and are willing to broaden their understanding.

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## Adaptable

**Looks Like:** Embracing change and remaining calm under pressure.

**Sounds Like:** “We cleared Electrical, now I need you to shift and process Linens.”

**Feels Like:** Being flexible and empowered to navigate changes.

**Keep in mind while practicing this trait...**

Adaptable leaders strive to maintain high standards while adjusting strategies to fit changing circumstances.

## Collaborative

**Looks Like:** Working together, sharing credit for success.

**Sounds Like:** “I’m dealing with an issue and need to reach out to my support partners.”

**Feels Like:** Feeling valued, part of the team, and motivated to contribute.

**Keep in mind while practicing this trait...**

Collaborating as a leader means more than just bouncing ideas around your close circle of colleagues. Seek out perspectives, ideas, and feedback from those around you. Ask for others to share their thoughts, and value their contributions.

## Self-Awareness

**Looks Like:** Team Members view their leader as a sound, confident decision-maker.

**Sounds Like:** “I know I’m sounding very stern right now, but this is a decision I have to make.”

**Feels Like:** Feeling confident in how you are perceived by others.

**Keep in mind while practicing this trait...**

Be aware of how your behaviors have an impact on others, and how you’re viewed by your team, leaders, and colleagues.