

## INTRODUCTION

### Why 50 DOs & DON'Ts?

Picture this...you are a news reporter geared up to interview frontline supervisors. Your mission is to gather as much leadership advice as you can. Your goal is to write a simple, straightforward piece on leadership: how it's done, day in, day out.

Throughout the day you talk to small groups of supervisors. In total their experience and leadership lessons are almost greater than the number of books in the Library of Congress. As they talk you write furiously to capture the successes and failures. You pay particular attention to their wisdom. You are drawn by their voices—the authentic, down-to-earth practical advice. “This is great,” you say to yourself, “I wish I had known this stuff long before today!”

That's just about what happened. Humanergy's co-founders, John Barrett and David Wheatley, interviewed one hundred veteran, frontline supervisors and asked them two questions:

“What are the basic rules to survive as a leader?”

“What advice would you give to a new leader?”

Capturing the advice verbatim, the result was a list of 150 leadership rules. The list was then distilled to 50 DOs and DON'Ts. *50 DOs for Everyday Leadership* reflects these core essentials to practical leadership—the key attitudes and actions.



The DOs are something you should start or keep doing (like a green light). The DON'Ts are something you should stop or not start (like a red light).

In the six years that have followed these interviews, thousands of leaders have validated their practicality and credibility—that the most successful leaders do the DOs and avoid the DON'Ts.

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### Who should read this book?

*50 DOs for Everyday Leadership* is a practical leadership guide and reference. The DOs and DON'Ts are for new leaders, employees transitioning into leadership roles, leaders who never got the leadership training and advice they needed, and leaders who want a practical refresher in successful leadership behaviors. People who aspire to leadership roles will use this book to understand what it takes to be a leader.

Read and share this book if one or more of these statements apply to YOU:

- “I’m not a leader yet, but I want to be.”
- “I’m good at what I do, so they are putting me in charge of people and increasing my responsibilities.”
- “I’ve been a leader for a while, but never got any (or enough) leadership training and coaching.”
- “I’m a leader, and I need a ‘back-to-basics’ refresher.”
- “My boss gave me this book and told me to read it.”

***You learn something every day  
if you pay attention.***

Ray LeBlond

Director of Communications, British Columbia

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## Using this Book

*50 DOs for Everyday Leadership* is like having a personal leadership coach with you in the trenches. The practical ideas for each DO represent more than a quarter-century of leadership coaching advice and experience.

Consider this book your *field guide*—a tool to help you be more successful and ignite the success of the people and organizations you influence each day.

For every DO there is a DON'T. Each *pair* should be read together to understand its context i.e., the leadership situations where it applies.

And each pair is tied to one of *seven key leadership questions* that are also the chapter headings:

- How do I build trust and credibility?
  - How do I get my people working together as a team?
  - How do I keep perspective on what's important?
  - How do I make sure people get things done?
  - How do I do what's best for the organization?
  - How do I reduce misunderstandings and get people on the same page?
  - How do I continue to improve what my people and I are doing?
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As you read, digest, ponder and use this guide, here are four suggestions to help you personalize, maximize and discipline your success:

- A. Read the book from front to back and pick areas that apply to you, then share the book with your team.
- B. Do the self-assessment on pages 9-10 and focus initially on one strength and one area to improve.
- C. Use the 50 DOs worksheet on page 13 to plan for performance reviews, one-on-one coaching and meetings and to summarize lessons learned at the end of a project.
- D. Keep this book as a reference when you need quick leadership advice.

The following pages guide you through the process of implementing one or more of these four suggestions.

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**A. Read the book from front to back and pick areas that apply to you, then share the book with your team.**

As you read highlight the advice that rings true to you—take notes in the margins and tab with sticky notes.

Add “Your Success” tips on the lines provided. Highlight the “Connected DOs” to help you jumpstart your progress.

Then, LIVE THE DOs!

Model your leadership choices with an attitude of *continuous* and *contagious* personal improvement.

Next, to maximize the results, share this book with your team. Use the following small group exercise to boost your *team’s success*:

- Give a copy of the book to each team member.
  - Ask your team to review the book and highlight what they learned, as well as what surprised them.
  - Schedule a one-hour meeting with your entire team to discuss their DO strengths and challenges and come up with the beginning of an improvement plan.
  - Explain in advance the meeting’s expectations and outcomes.
  - Share specific points from the book that really impacted you and your choices as a leader; explain your commitment to being a great leader and the area(s) you are ready to improve.
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- Divide into pairs; take 30 minutes to discuss two or three key points where each person wants to improve performance.
- Ask each person to individually reflect for ten minutes how she will implement a change in the next month; use the FACET™ tool on page 63 to provide the framework for making the change.
- Ask each person to tell the team the change he would like to make and the FACET™ steps to get there.

When you see successes in the next month, acknowledge them! Likewise, if your team is slipping back into negative habits, point it out firmly, but sensitively.

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**B. Do the self-assessment and focus initially on one strength and one area to improve.**

Complete pages 9-10. Pick a DO in which you are successful. Also, pick a DON'T that needs improvement—one that challenges you, yet isn't too hard to improve. (For a downloadable Self-Assessment worksheet, visit [www.humanergy.com](http://www.humanergy.com).)

For the DO you do well, read the related DO page tips and pick one or two ideas to continue your path of success. For the DON'T that needs improvement, choose one or two ideas to help you manage it.

Here's an example: A successful DO for you is *DO 16—Solicit ideas from others to shape decisions*. You will start asking each team member to come to a meeting prepared with two possible solutions to a pressing problem.

A DON'T where you need to improve is *DON'T 22—Let disruptive people have an audience*. You will start using meeting best practices to minimize conflict up front. And, you'll practice the phrase "I see you are upset..." to calm an employee who is frustrated.

To help you achieve the results you want, use the FACET™ tool on page 63. The following page shows what your FACET™ might look like.

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## FACET™ Example

- **FOCUS: DO 22**—Defuse situations and deal with people one-on-one.
  - **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Ask James and Raakesh to check your progress once a week.
  - **CONSEQUENCES:** When you successfully manage one-on-one interactions for one week, reward yourself with an extra round of weekend golf. However if you lose control of your staff meeting, penalize yourself by not playing any golf for one week.
  - **EASIER TO DO:** Use a meeting facilitator to minimize conflict up front, focus the discussion and keep meetings on topic.
  - **TRACKING:** Keep a daily tally of your progress in your planner.
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**C. Use the 50 DOs Worksheet to plan performance reviews, one-on-one coaching and meetings and to summarize lessons learned at the end of a project.**

Fill in the worksheet on page 13 when you are preparing for a performance review, coaching session or meeting and pulling together lessons learned when a project ends. (You can download a copy of the 50 DOs worksheet at [www.humanenergy.com](http://www.humanenergy.com).)

For performance reviews and one-on-one coaching sessions, share with an employee what DOs you think she does well and the ones she can improve.

For improvement areas, use the 50 DOs worksheet to describe the issue/opportunity and the DOs that apply. Create an action plan with her, including a follow-up session to review progress and decide the next steps.

The following table is an example of a 50 DOs worksheet action plan.

What is the issue or opportunity?	Which DO(s) apply?
Earlene doesn't speak up in meetings and share her ideas; she has a hard time being assertive and difficulty admitting when she's used poor judgment.	30 Face up to issues and deal with them.
	4 Do what's right—stick to decisions or admit mistakes.
	31 Fight for doing the right thing—if you know about it, you are responsible for it.
What is my action plan?	
Share one idea in weekly team meetings; Pedro will remind me.	
Apologize when I make a mistake; Karen will remind me.	
Schedule a meeting with Yuri and Kim to discuss the overtime issue.	

For meetings:

- Before the meeting use the worksheet and decide what DOs apply to each agenda item.
- During the meeting share your pre-work with your team.
- Then create action steps to address each issue.

For lessons learned at the end of a project:

- Write a lesson learned in the “What is the issue or opportunity?” box.
  - Choose which DOs apply.
  - Use the action plan for future projects to decide how your team will repeat what went well and avoid what didn't work.
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## 50 DOs Worksheet

Copy and use this worksheet to plan for performance reviews, one-on-one coaching and meetings and to summarize lessons learned at the end of a project (download at [www.humanenergy.com](http://www.humanenergy.com)).

What is the issue or opportunity?	Which DO(s) apply?
What is my action plan?	
How did I do?	What are my next steps?
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**D. Keep this book as a reference when you need quick leadership advice.**

When you need leadership advice, use the seven leadership questions (the chapter headings) to guide you to the appropriate DOs that link to your specific leadership challenge. Then read the tips on those DO pages to get you started.

- **How do I build trust and credibility?**  
(DOs 1 - 8 starting on page 22)
  - **How do I get my people working together as a team?**  
(DOs 9 - 17 starting on page 44)
  - **How do I keep perspective on what's important?**  
(DOs 18 - 23 starting on page 72)
  - **How do I make sure people get things done?**  
(DOs 24 - 29 starting on page 88)
  - **How do I do what's best for the organization?**  
(DOs 30 - 35 starting on page 104)
  - **How do I reduce misunderstandings and get people on the same page?**  
(DOs 36 - 41 starting on page 120)
  - **How do I continue to improve what my people and I are doing?**  
(DOs 42 - 50 starting on page 142)
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