

## 4 Ways to Build Leadership Skills Outside of Work

Written by: Trent Johnson | March 24, 2017



When managing a team big or small, leadership is an essential skill. Traditionally managers build leadership skills at work, but there are also opportunities to hone these skills outside of the workplace. Here are four ways you can sharpen your leadership skills during your free time.

### **Participate in a competitive sport**

Any professional athlete will tell you that leadership is the backbone of a successful team. Whether playing or coaching a sport, having a quality leader to rally around can create winning chemistry. Participating in a competitive sport builds leadership skills that are effective both on and off the field. Some of these skills can include teamwork, communication, strategy, and relationship building - all qualities that can transfer directly into the workplace.

### **Volunteer to make a difference**

Granted work takes up a good part of your day, but with a little self-discipline you can carve out some time to give back. Volunteering for an event, serving on a committee, or mentoring a colleague offer quality leadership experiences outside of the workplace. By volunteering for a cause you are passionate about, you can build valuable skills, such as problem-solving and decision-making, while helping others.

### **Engage in face-to-face communications**

Smartphones are an integral part of our lives today, but do you remember what it was like without them? Instead of looking at a screen, people actually talked to one another! If you

put your phone away and make an effort to engage in face-to-face communications, you'll be amazed at the connections you can make with a simple, "Hello, how are you?" These interactions will increase your self-confidence and advance your ability to communicate as a leader.

## Seek Professional Development Opportunities

To remain relevant in today's ever-changing business environment, you must continuously invest [\[DS2\]](#) in yourself. Professional development opportunities that build leadership skills are popular today and present a win-win for both employers and employees. These opportunities include leadership courses, webinars, pod-casts, conferences, and professional certifications, like the Certified Manager<sup>®</sup> certification. Professional development helps to boost your credibility as a leader by formalizing your leadership training.

Leadership skills can help you to grow personally and advance professionally. You can build your leadership skills outside of work by participating in team sports, volunteering to make a difference, engaging in face-to-face communications, and seeking professional development opportunities.

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## About the Author



### Trent Johnson

Trent joined the ICPM staff in May 2016 after earning a Bachelor of Science in Corporate Communication & Integrated Advertising from James Madison University. Trent is responsible for developing and implementing ICPM's marketing strategy to foster brand awareness and increase sales.