

UNLEASH POTENTIAL

Leadership strategies for goals that matter

BCBSM FINANCE & ACCOUNTING LEADERS

01 FROM ACTIVITY TO IMPACT

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Strong goals identify the value of work, not merely the deliverable. A report is an activity; a timely, accurate report that helps internal partners understand variances is a contribution.

WHAT TO DO

Ask who uses the work, what decisions it supports, and what would improve if the work were done especially well.

WHAT TO SAY

“When this work succeeds, what becomes easier for the people who rely on it?”

02 THE LINE OF SIGHT

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Translate organizational priorities into team contributions and individual outcomes. Avoid claiming that one person controls a broad organizational result.

WHAT TO DO

Write the chain in plain language: priority → team contribution → role outcome → evidence. Test it with the employee.

WHAT TO SAY

“How does this result connect to what our function needs to accomplish?”

03 BALANCE THE GOAL PORTFOLIO

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Use three categories: run the business, improve the business, and grow the person. A healthy mix protects reliable delivery while making room for better processes and future capability.

WHAT TO DO

Review a set of goals and ask whether it contains only recurring duties. Where appropriate, add one improvement or development outcome.

WHAT TO SAY

“What should we keep doing well, improve, and learn next?”

04 ALIGN: A PRACTICAL CONVERSATION LENS

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

ALIGN stands for Aim, Link, Involve, Gauge and Navigate. It is a workshop conversation aid, not an additional performance management system.

WHAT TO DO

Use the five questions when setting a goal, reviewing progress, or deciding whether the plan should change.

WHAT TO SAY

“Is the outcome clear, relevant, shared, measurable and adaptable?”

THE FIVE ALIGN QUESTIONS

AIM	What result are we trying to achieve?
LINK	Why does this goal matter, and who benefits?
INVOLVE	Who needs to contribute or be involved?
GAUGE	How will we know we are making progress?
NAVIGATE	How will we adapt when circumstances change?

05 AIM: DEFINE THE RESULT

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Name the observable outcome, quality standard, and realistic horizon. Do not assign a numeric target without a credible baseline.

WHAT TO DO

Replace “improve the close” with a defined improvement in recurring rework or handoff quality while preserving controls.

WHAT TO SAY

“What would we actually see happening differently?”

06 LINK: CONNECT TO VALUE

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

The employee should understand the internal stakeholder and why the goal deserves attention now.

WHAT TO DO

Ask what decision the work enables and what problem it helps solve. Keep the claimed impact proportionate to the role.

WHAT TO SAY

“Who benefits, and how would they notice?”

07 INVOLVE: BUILD OWNERSHIP

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Leaders set direction and standards while inviting employee expertise about methods, milestones, dependencies and support.

WHAT TO DO

Map who owns the result, who contributes, and which decisions or resources must come from elsewhere.

WHAT TO SAY

“How would you approach this, and who needs to be involved?”

08 GAUGE: EVIDENCE WITH GUARDRAILS

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Track results, leading signals, and the quality standards that must not be sacrificed. Activity counts alone do not prove impact.

WHAT TO DO

Pair a useful outcome measure with an early progress signal and a control or accuracy guardrail.

WHAT TO SAY

“What would convince us this is getting better?”

09 NAVIGATE: ADAPT RESPONSIBLY

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Goals are working agreements. When priorities or capacity change, revisit the approach while preserving the intended value.

WHAT TO DO

Use brief check-ins to re-scope, re-sequence or recommit; document why a decision changed.

WHAT TO SAY

“Does the goal still represent the right outcome?”

10 COACHING CONVERSATIONS

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Useful coaching asks about outcomes, evidence, obstacles, options and support. Leaders should listen before prescribing solutions.

WHAT TO DO

Try a 15-minute rhythm: scan what changed, coach what is stuck, and commit to the next action.

WHAT TO SAY

“What have you tried, and what would you recommend next?”

11 FEEDBACK THAT DEVELOPS CAPABILITY

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Name the observable behavior and its impact, then discuss a practical next step. Vague labels rarely help.

WHAT TO DO

Replace “be more strategic” with a concrete request such as leading a report with the two decision-ready insights.

WHAT TO SAY

“What could make the takeaway easier for the reader to use?”

12 FAIR CALIBRATION

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Use agreed standards and evidence while considering dependencies and constraints. Watch for recency and visibility bias.

WHAT TO DO

Ask what was expected, what was achieved, what changed, and what evidence supports the judgment.

WHAT TO SAY

“Are we evaluating contribution or simply visibility?”

13 A 30-DAY LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN

THE LEADERSHIP IDEA

Choose one meaningful goal and move from good intentions to a repeatable leadership habit.

WHAT TO DO

Week 1: rewrite the outcome. Week 2: discuss ALIGN with the employee. Week 3: run a coaching check-in. Week 4: review evidence and adjust.

WHAT TO SAY

“What conversation will you have differently this week?”

PERSONAL APPLICATION / 01 / NAME THE OUTCOME

Use the same real goal in all four reflection steps. You can complete this privately and bring any insights you wish into the group discussion.

What task or duty is currently named?

Who benefits from it?

What result would make the value visible?

PERSONAL APPLICATION / 02 / APPLY ALIGN

Use the same real goal in all four reflection steps. You can complete this privately and bring any insights you wish into the group discussion.

What is the Aim and Link?

Who must be Involved?

How will you Gauge and Navigate?

PERSONAL APPLICATION / 03 / DESIGN THE COACHING RHYTHM

Use the same real goal in all four reflection steps. You can complete this privately and bring any insights you wish into the group discussion.

Which two questions will you ask?

What progress evidence will you review?

What support can you provide?

PERSONAL APPLICATION / 04 / COMMIT TO ACTION

Use the same real goal in all four reflection steps. You can complete this privately and bring any insights you wish into the group discussion.

What will you do in the next seven days?

What will you review after 30 days?

How will you know the goal is useful?