



Interpersonal Skill Overview in the Creative Economy Entrepreneurs in Jakarta

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ABSTRACT: Entrepreneurial concept and creative economy both have common key points that are creativity and innovation. Entrepreneurs use their creativity to create innovation in order to win the business competition. Creative economy has shifted the manufacturing era to the information services era that based on human resources. Nowadays creative economy increasingly plays an important role for Indonesian economy which can be seen in its contribution to Indonesian GDP, numbers of job field creation and export value. Interpersonal skills is necessary and crucial to determine successful of the business. This research was aims to observe and analyze the interpersonal skill of entrepreneurs in creative industry in Jakarta. This research was descriptive research with quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Quantitative data was obtained through questionnaires distributed to 150 entrepreneurs in creative industry as respondents in Jakarta and qualitative data obtained through interview to 15 selected respondents. Based on quantitative data, this research showed that according to respondents “leaders who have capability to give direction” was considered as the most important factor of interpersonal skill, while the “ability to influence others” was considered as the most important dimension. Respondents considered those interpersonal skills factor and dimension as the prominent element to determine their success in business. While based on qualitative data showed that no interpersonal skill dimension was considered as the prominent one, but each dimension will be proper for each different circumstance that they encounter.

Keywords: Interpersonal Skills, Entrepreneurs, Creative Industry



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INTRODUCTION

Creative economy is a concept in the new economic era that mainly supported by information, creativity and human resources (Santosa, 2020). The creative economy era was existed due to a wave of world economic transformation. Rapid technological development and economic growth encourage a shifting from the manufacturing era with the utilization of natural resources to the

information services era that based on human resources. Kartika et al. (2022) said that the creative economy can be emerged from the development of existing products through innovation process.

Chollisni et al. (2022), as cited from Brouillette (2020) and Florida et al. (2006), define creative economy as one sector of the economy that uses ideas and knowledge of the concept of creativity from humans who act as the main production factor. Chollisni et al. (2022) also said that the creative economy has the basis of human ideas that are new, unique and innovative. More directly, Howkins explained that the creative economy is an activity where input and the output is an idea ([Haya & Tambunan, 2022](#)). So, this creative economy will focus on empowering individual creativity and creation. Thus, creativity in the creative economy is something very important.

In Indonesia, during the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono administration, the creative economy was handled by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. However, in the first term of President Joko Widodo's administration, this creative economy was handled separately by the Indonesian Agency for Creative Economy (BEKRAF). Then in 2019, in President Joko Widodo second term, he merged the Indonesian Agency for Creative Economy (BEKRAF) back into the Ministry of Tourism to become the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy/Tourism and Creative Economy Agency (Kemenparekraf/Baparekraf).

Quoted from Burhanudin et al. (2020), it is said that Bekraf, the Indonesian government developed the creative economy in 16 sub-sectors, including: (1) architecture, (2) interior design, (3) visual communication design, (4) product design, (5) film, animation, and video, (6) photography, (7) crafts, (8) culinary, (9) music, (10) fashion, (11) application and game developers, (12) publishing, (13) advertising, (14) television and radio, (15) performing arts, and (16) fine arts. The creative economy in Indonesia is said to be the backbone of the national economy. As portrayed by UNCTAD in Creative Economy Report, creative industry has potency to push economy development ([Lestari & Zulhelmi, 2023](#)). Quoted from ([Santosa, 2020](#)), in 2016 the contribution of the creative economy sector to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) only amounted to IDR 922 trillion, then rose to IDR 1,009 trillion in 2017 and reached IDR 1,280 trillion in 2022 ([Hendriyani, 2023](#)). From 100 working people there were around 16-17 people work on creative economy sector or around 16.71% and during 2018-2021, the average growth in power work of 5.29% per year with the highest absorption amounting to 56.86% in the subsector culinary in 2021 ([Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif & Badan Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif RI, 2022](#)).

Entrepreneurship and the creative economy have the same key points, namely creativity and innovation. Entrepreneurship essentially talks about bringing innovative ideas into business. The business requires implementation of creativity to take advantage of business opportunities. A businessman as an entrepreneur must have creativity to win the competition. Suryana said that seen from its scope, entrepreneurship has 2 functions, those are: macro function and micro function. According to Anokhin, Grichnik, and Hisrich as cited by Doran J et al (2018) said that, "Entrepreneurship is the main vehicle of economic development". Now, entrepreneurship is widely known as an important aspect of economics. Doran J et al. (2018) said that entrepreneurship can affect economic growth in several ways. These can include knowledge spillovers, increased

competition, and increased diversity in terms of the product and service offering available. Meanwhile, at a micro level, the role of entrepreneurship is to combine resources in new and different ways to create value added.

Furthermore, Marzuki Usman in Suryana (2003) said that in performing out their functions at a micro level, entrepreneurs perform two roles, which are: as an inventor (innovator) and as a planner. One of the roles as a planner is managing the corporate/business organization ([Suryana, 2003](#)). Various studies from Cahayani et. al (2016) and Gunawan et. al on (2015) revealed that the personality aspect of entrepreneurs plays an important role in determining their success.

In general, interpersonal skills are the ability to interact with other people. No success can be achieved alone, everything requires the help of others. These interpersonal skills are closely related to intrapersonal skills, which means the ability to interact with himself. Intrapersonal skills relate to the self-awareness of our strength and weakness and also contribute to a mindset that sees challenge as opportunity. Interpersonal skills are really needed to build positive relationships with other people, which is to communicate and collaborate with other people. In relation with other people, we also must recognize different characteristics of people that we interact with and have ability to listening other people. Actually, the real communication activity is listening to other people, not just saying, or expressing something. Both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, in psychology are included in the soft skills. Interpersonal skills are needed for anybody to lead and manage an organization and intrapersonal skills form the basis of our relationship with others and help us to communicate effectively. For a manager, having interpersonal skills will make him competent in leading and making the organization that he leads to successful. Moreover, for an entrepreneur, having strong interpersonal skills will make his or her business successful. Because, almost in every aspect of business, entrepreneurs must interact with other people, such as with suppliers, customers, distributors, employees, et al.

Interpersonal skills related to the success of the business. Popescu et al. (2020) studied the role of managerial skills in the sustainable development of Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Romania found that the high level of emotional intelligence accompanied by increasing interpersonal skills is a strong argument for the sustainable development of SMEs. Not only can determine the success of a business, prior to the business there is relationship between interpersonal skills and entrepreneurial intention ([Cegarra-Navarro et al., 2024](#)). Previous study from Cahya et al. (2023) about interpersonal skills possessed by entrepreneur at Pesantren Entrepreneur in Kudus are good communications skills, ability to negotiate, able to divide time and solve a business. Another study from Anggraeni & Tarmidi (2021), interpersonal skills for the welfare among micro entrepreneurs in East Bandung during Covid-19 era showed that they good at ability to motivate, presentation skills, communication skills, ability to make relationships and public speaking ability. Study from Umoru & Ademiluyi (2024) proved that interpersonal relationship qualities and competencies identified were indispensable to female entrepreneurship success in contemporary world of business. Moreover, in terms of entrepreneurial leadership, Harrison et al. (2018) identified four distinct entrepreneurial leadership skill categories and one of those is interpersonal skills. Research from Kusbandono et al. (2024) explores the role of interpersonal communication in cultivating leadership that impacts business performance indicate that interpersonal

communication plays a crucial role in shaping effective leadership and evolving entrepreneurial contexts. Interpersonal communication serves as a foundation for supporting long-term business success and growth.

Although many study about interpersonal skills have been done, with the increasing trend of creative economy that many entrepreneurs run business in creative industry however we notice that mapping of interpersonal skill among creative economy entrepreneurs may not been done before. This becomes the novelty of this article research. Article of a study of interpersonal skills among young entrepreneurs in Jakarta conducted by Gunawan and Cahayani concluded that interpersonal skills were considered as a very important aspect for respondents in running their business ([Gunawan & Cahayani, 2023](#)). According to the research, the interpersonal skills most needed for young entrepreneurs in Jakarta are “influencing others” and “the ability to understand and work with others”. It is hoped that this research will contribute to increase knowledge about entrepreneurship, especially regarding the interpersonal skills of creative economy entrepreneurs in Jakarta.

This research aims to observe and analyse the interpersonal skill of entrepreneurs in creative industry in Jakarta. More detail several points highlighted as this research questions are:

1. What kind of specific interpersonal skills that needed to run business regarding to the perception of respondents in creative economy.
2. What interpersonal skills dimension that needed to run business regarding to the perception of respondents in creative economy.
3. How respondent’s perception in more detail or deeper about the role of interpersonal skills that determine the success of business.

Johnson (2012) defines interpersonal skills as our ability to interact with others effectively. Lwin et al said that individual with high interpersonal skill can be a socially conscious adult and can adapt easily, successful at work, and able to get emotional and physical well-being ([Lwin et al., 2008](#)). Development of interpersonal skill is an effort that must do by every person by train his/herself how to communicate effectively, learn to work with other people, learn to understand other people's thoughts, feelings, and intentions, develop character that supports activities in building relationships with other people. Bradberry and Greaves (2009), they define interpersonal skills as "the ability to connect with others in a way that builds trust, respect, and collaboration”.

More definition of interpersonal skills from different perspectives.

- From communication studies perspectives in communication studies, interpersonal skills encompass a range of competencies such as active listening, empathy, assertiveness, and non-verbal communication. These skills are essential for effective interpersonal interactions ([DeVito, 2016](#)).
- From psychological and behavioral science perspective: psychological theories emphasize the role of interpersonal skills in social interactions, relationship dynamics, and personal well-being. These skills include empathy, conflict management, and social influence ([Myers & Twenge, 2016](#)).
- From leadership and management perspective: in leadership and management contexts, interpersonal skills are crucial for effective leadership, teamwork, and organizational success.

These skills include communication, conflict resolution, and influencing others ([Northouse, 2018](#)).

- From education perspective: interpersonal skills are often taught and developed through education and training programs, focusing on improving communication effectiveness, teamwork, and interpersonal relationships ([Beebe et al., 2018](#)).
- From business and organizational behavioral perspective: in business and organizational behavior, interpersonal skills are critical for effective communication, negotiation, customer service, and building collaborative networks ([Robbins & Judge, 2019](#)).

From various definitions above, we can summarize that interpersonal skill has several characteristics, i.e.:

- Communication skills, according to DeVito (2016) is the ability to convey information clearly and effectively through verbal and non-verbal means, and to listen actively to others. Effective communication is fundamental to building relationships, resolving conflicts, and collaborating successfully.
- Active listening, Brownell (2012) said this is the skill of fully concentrating on what is being said, understanding the message, and responding thoughtfully. Active listening demonstrates respect, builds rapport, and promotes effective communication by ensuring messages are accurately received and understood.
- Conflict resolution, Folger et.al (2013) defined this as the ability to identify sources of conflict, address disagreements constructively, and find mutually acceptable solutions. Effective conflict resolution minimizes disruptions, enhances collaboration, and strengthens relationships.
- Assertiveness, Smith (2011) defines assertiveness as expressing one's own needs, opinions, and feelings in a clear, direct, and respectful manner. Assertiveness promotes self-confidence, establishes boundaries, and facilitates honest communication in interpersonal interactions.
- Adaptability is the ability to change or be changed to fit altered circumstances ([Kellerman, 2010](#)). Paris (2010) also said it is the ability to adjust behavior and improving communication with others. Adaptability enhances interpersonal effectiveness by promoting understanding and flexibility in diverse social contexts.

Goleman (2002) explains that interpersonal skill dimensions are: empathy, personal relation, and social responsibility. Empathy is an ability to be aware, understand, and appreciate others feeling by having sensitivity to the feelings, understandings, and thoughts of others. Interpersonal relationships are the ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying/beneficial relationships. Social responsibility is the ability to demonstrate oneself by collaborating and participating in social groups. De Janasz et al. (2014) explains four dimensions of interpersonal skill:

1. Ability to understand and work with others.

In this life, like or not, we must work with other people that have differences in many aspects. How to interact with other people that have different characteristics, value, and lifestyle requires individuals to manage themselves and help others achieve their goals.

2. Listening.

Listening is the important element to develop and improve interpersonal relation.

3. Communicating.

The form and way to communicate influences the behavior of individuals and other people, so effective communication is needed. Effective communication means building better human relations.

4. Influencing others

Persuasion is the process of influencing behaviour, beliefs, or the attitude of other people to act as expected.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive study method by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data or by using mixed method. The descriptive method was chosen because it can explain the data in more detail.

Respondents and Sampling Techniques

Researchers collected quantitative primary data by distributing questionnaires. The respondents for quantitative survey in this research were 150 creative economy entrepreneurs in Jakarta. The sampling technique used for determining respondents is purposive, quota and accidental sampling. Purposive sampling was used to determine creative economy entrepreneur respondents according to 17 creative economy subsectors. Quota sampling was used to get respondents in 5 regions of Jakarta, i.e North, East, West, South and Central Jakarta with 30 respondents in each region. Meanwhile, accidental sampling was used to find any respondents who were available.

For qualitative data collected through interview to 15 selected informants. These selected informants were determined solely based on those who are willing to be interviewed (convenience sampling) and they have employees (purposive sampling).

Data Analysis

The quantitative data analysis used is descriptive analysis by using mean score technique. Respondents were asked to rate each question in the questionnaire according to their opinion/perception in 1-5 scale (1 = strongly disagree/not important, 2 = disagree/not too important, 3 = quite agree/quite important, 4 = agree/important, 5 = strongly agree/very important. Next for each question will calculate the mean score, then calculate overall mean score for each dimension tested. The mean score and overall mean score can be interpreted as below:

Score 4.21 – 5.00	: strongly agree/very important
Score 3.41 – 4.20	: agree/important
Score 2.61 – 3.40	: quite agree/quite important
Score 1.81 – 2.60	: disagree/not too important
Score 1.00 – 1.80	: strongly disagree/not important

For qualitative research, the data analysis used is content analysis. The purpose of qualitative data analysis is to obtain data in more depth to complete quantitative data analysis (not only explicit data from interview results but also implicit data)

Operationalization

In this research, researcher refers to the theory of De Janasz et.al (2014) where interpersonal skills consist of four dimensions, namely:

1. Ability to understand and work with others.

To describe this dimension, we use several statements as follows:

- Able to know and understand personal characteristics of each employee.
- Able to identify self-efficacy employees.
- Develop interaction to maintain good relationship with employees.
- Able to be bridging differences between employee and becoming mediator when conflict happen.
- Be tactful in resolving conflict.

2. Listening ability

To describe this dimension, we use several statements as follows:

- Listen to information conveyed by employees for the smooth running of business activities.
- Listen to ideas and suggestions put forward by employees for the progress of the company.
- Care about emerging issues among employees and respond quickly.
- Listen to employee complaints and give maximum attention to these complaints.
- Able to analyse and manage information received from external parties (customers, suppliers, etc.) for company progress.

3. Communication skills

To describe this dimension, we use several statements as follows:

- Able to communicate formally and informally in maintaining good relationships with internal and external parties.
- Able to convey non-verbal communication (body movements) to strengthen verbal (oral) communication.
- Able to convey opinions clearly.
- Always respond well to the person I am talking to.
- Try to provide comments or opinions during the conversation.

4. Ability to influence others

To describe this dimension, we use several statements as follows:

- Encourage employees to work hard and be diligent.
- Invite employees to obey company regulations.
- Able to motivate employees to achieve the best results.
- Try to be a leader who provides good work direction.
- Enable all employees to work together for the progress of the company.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The author needs to report the results in sufficient detail so that the reader can see which statistical analysis was conducted and why, and later to justify the conclusions.

Profile of the majority of respondents can be described as follow: male (53%), education background less than or equal to high school or equivalent (51%), aged 31 years or more (51%), married (61%), had worked before doing business (67%), having business experience 5 years and more (54%), have experienced failure in business (68%), employ less than 5 employees (61%) and

selling online (63%). Furthermore from 17 sub-sectors in the creative industry respondents dominated by fashion (32%) and culinary (23%) entrepreneurs.

Table 1 shows the average mean score of each statement of respondents' perceptions regarding the interpersonal skills needed by entrepreneurs in managing the business. From the 20 statements asked, only 4 statements were in the "important" scale, the remaining 16 statements were in the "very important" scale.

Table 1
Mean Score of Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Interpersonal Skills That Needed in Business

No	Statements	Mean Score	Interpretation
1	Able to know and understand personal characteristics of each employee	4.30	very important
2	Able to identify self-efficacy employees	4.28	very important
3	Develop interaction to maintain good relationship with employees	4.40	very important
4	Able to be bridging differences between employee and becoming mediator when conflict happen	4.24	very important
5	Be tactful in resolving conflict	4.51	very important
6	Listen to information conveyed by employees for the smooth running of business activities.	4.34	very important
7	Listen to ideas and suggestions put forward by employees for the progress of the company	4.27	very important
8	Care about emerging issues among employees and respond quickly	3.75	important
9	Listen to employee complaints and give maximum attention to these complaints	3.97	important
10	Able to analyse and manage information received from external parties (customers, suppliers, etc.) for company progress	4.37	very important
11	Able to communicate formally and informally in maintaining good relationships with internal and external parties	4.36	very important
12	Able to convey non-verbal communication (body movements) to strengthen verbal (oral) communication	3.89	important
13	Able to convey opinions clearly	4.25	very important
14	Always respond well to the person I am talking to	4.34	very important
15	Try to provide comments or opinions during the conversation	3.47	important
16	Encourage employees to work hard and be diligent	4.39	very important
17	Invite employees to obey company regulations.	4.53	very important
18	Able to motivate employees to achieve the best results	4.55	very important
19	Try to be a leader who provides good work direction	4.58	very important
20	Enable all employees to work together for the progress of the company	4.52	very important

The top three statements with the highest mean score were "try to be a leader who provides good work direction", "able to motivate employees to achieve the best results", and "invite employees to obey company regulations". Meanwhile, the bottom three statements with the lowest mean score were "able to convey non-verbal communication (body movements) to strengthen verbal (oral) communication", "care about emerging issues among employees and respond quickly", "try to provide comments or opinions during the conversation".

Table 2 shows mean score of respondents' perceptions regarding the dimensions of interpersonal skills needed by entrepreneurs to manage the business. The overall mean score for all dimensions showed that respondents' perceptions were in "very important" scale. More details from those 4 dimensions of interpersonal skills tested, there were 2 dimensions that resulted in "very important" scale and the other 2 dimensions were in the "important" scale. The dimension of interpersonal skills that respondents considered most important was "ability to influence others", while the one that received the lowest mean score was "communication skills". This is in line with the results in table 1. The top three statements with the highest mean score were grouped in the "ability to influence others" dimension. On the other side 2 of the 3 statements that have the lowest mean score were grouped in the "communication skills" dimension.

Table 2
Overall Mean Score of Respondents' Perceptions Regarding the Four Dimensions of Interpersonal Skills that Entrepreneurs Needed in Business

No	Dimension	Overall Mean Score	Interpretation
1	Ability to understand and work with others	4.35	very important
2	Listening ability	4.14	important
3	Communication skill	4.06	important
4	Ability to influence others	4.51	very important
Total Overall Mean Score		4.27	very important

The following are the profiles of the selected 15 informants interviewed for qualitative analysis:

1. Types of creative industry: culinary (40%), handcraft (27%), design (13%), fashion (7%), photography (7%), and publishing (6%).
2. Gender: female (67%) and male (33%).
3. Education background: equal to higher school and lower (67%), higher than high school (33%).
4. Age: lower than and equal to 30 years (33%), 31 to 35 tahun (7%), higher than 35 years (60%).
5. Business experience: equal and lower than 5 years (33%), higher than 5 years (67%).
6. Number of employees: lower than 5 employees (53%), 5 to 10 employees (27%), higher than 10 employees (20%)

Regarding the interpersonal skills possessed by the informants, especially in overcoming conflicts, 12 informants said they tried to talk about conflicts that occurred in their companies and tried to find solutions together. This shows that the 12 informants have interpersonal skills to understand and cooperate with others, especially by trying to be a mediator when conflicts occur. It also shows that the 12 informants have good listening skills, because to be a good mediator, then you must listen and understand, not just hear what each party said and want, verbally or nonverbally. According to Brownell (2012), it is called as active listening. According to Folger et.al (2013),

these 12 informants also have conflict resolution characteristics because they are tried to address disagreements constructively. While the other 3 informants, although they do not have very good listening skills and the ability to understand and cooperate with others, but the 3 informants have other interpersonal skills, that is call as assertiveness. According to Smith (2011), assertiveness promotes self-confident that can make those 3 informants to influence others, by giving direct reprimands, making decisions related to conflict resolution, and appoint 1 person who is trusted to handle the problem or conflict.

Regarding interpersonal skills in listening to complaints or criticism from consumers or employees, the 11 informants answered that they consider the criticism or complaint important so that they will listen and try to overcome the matter that is the subject of criticism from consumers or employees. The other four informants were also not antipathetic to criticism, they were willing to listen to and accept criticism or complaints, but they first assessed whether the criticism was data-based, objective, for the good of the business or not, before deciding to follow up on the criticism. This shows that the 15 informants have the ability to listen, or according to Brownell (2012), as already said before, all informants have ability of active learning, and in this case of listening to complaints or criticism, especially 4 informants, they have ability to responding thoughtfully.

As MSME owner, our informants must motivate and lead their subordinates. So, it is a must for them for having ability to influence their subordinates. Ability to influence other is one of 4 dimensions of interpersonal skills. According to Nourhouse (2018), interpersonal skills that are crucial for effective leadership, teamwork, and organizational success including influencing others. Regarding the ability of informants to motivate subordinates, there are 7 informants who solely rely on money as a way to motivate subordinates, especially in the form of bonuses. They still strongly believe that money is the most powerful way to keep employees motivated to work. There were 3 informants who did not associate the act of motivating employees with money. The three ways of the informant to motivate include: in the form of workload, where when the employee is seen to be unmotivated at work, given work that is not too heavy, because it is possible that the employee is tired or has a problem so that if given heavy work will cause mistakes. The remaining five informants combine money and things outside of money, such as outings, as a way to motivate employees. Those five informants who combine money and things outside of money have adaptability characteristics ([Kellerman, 2010](#)). They try not only one way to motivate subordinates, but combine some way to motivate subordinates depends on situations. This adaptability characteristics can enhance interpersonal effectiveness by promoting flexibility in diverse social contexts.

So it can be said that the 15 informants have different interpersonal skills in managing employees and dealing with consumers, and none of them are better or worse than the others, because of the choice of communication media they use, the conflict resolution techniques they choose, their opinion on whether or not it is important in terms of how to deal with complaints or criticisms or suggestions from consumers or employees, Everything is adjusted to the field conditions they face.

CONCLUSION

As the conclusion, from the research result we saw that the interpersonal skill is considered important or needed to run a successful business according to creative economy entrepreneurs in the Jakarta. Several points of conclusion can be drawn to answer the research questions above are:

1. In the perception of respondents, creative economy entrepreneurs, interpersonal skills that needed in business are "try to be a leader who provides good work direction", "able to motivate employees to achieve the best results", and "invite employees to obey company regulations".

2. Most important interpersonal skills dimension that needed to run business according to the perception of respondents in creative economy is “ability to influence others”. Despite the most important dimension of interpersonal skill is ability to influence others, however “capacity to be a leader who provides good work direction” considered as most crucial thing to do. In terms of achieving target or objective, the entrepreneurs should be able to motivate (influence) and be the leader who gives direction to do any action to achieve the objective. On the other side when facing the conflict, the entrepreneurs as the leader should be able to influence all sides and manage the conflict well. In other words, entrepreneurs should give direction to keep aside individual direction and motivate them to work together as a team to achieve the objective. Even though communication skills have lowest score in this research, but the respondents said that their still consider that communication is important aspect in business.
3. Qualitative analysis result showed that no specific interpersonal skill emerge as the prominent one. However, the interest thing is informants said that all dimensions of interpersonal skill is important and which one is more prominent depends on the situation that they are facing.

Based on the conclusion, we saw that success of a business not only because of individual effort but it is teamwork, all come together as a team and the entrepreneur as the boss should become the leader. So as the suggestion, we recommend the entrepreneur not too far get involved in daily business operation and keep aside the leadership. Instead, they should act as the leader who give direction, motive all staffs, communicate well, and be able to manage every situation or circumstance under their control.

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