

# FIVE FATAL FLAWS *that Must Be Fixed*

If you don't attend immediately to your fatal flaws, they will derail any expectations you may have for being perceived by others as a great leader. You cannot hide fatal flaws because they are so significant that others will observe them almost immediately.

## **1. Inability to learn from mistakes**

The single biggest cause of failure as a leader is not recognizing mistakes, acknowledging them, learning from them, fixing them, and being ever alert not to repeat them.

## **2. Lack of core interpersonal skills**

Individuals who are abrasive, insensitive, brow-beating, cold, arrogant, and bullying are on a quick road to failure. No amount of other talent and ability is capable of surmounting this fatal flaw. No combination of intelligence, hard work, business savvy or administrative skills can cover up the lack of interpersonal skills.

## **3. Lack of openness to new or different ideas**

Individuals who reject suggestions from peers or subordinates, insist on doing things their way, and are generally closed to new thinking, are a major turnoff to others. Their behavior creates a climate of stagnation, curtails the development of others, negatively affects morale, and escalates turnover.

## **4. Lack of accountability**

Great leaders not only feel responsible for their own productivity and performance, but also assume responsibility for their entire work group. Because great leaders model personal accountability, they can expect accountability by others-and provide all the necessary support others need to meet accountability expectations.

## **5. Lack of initiative**

Individuals who fail to produce results specifically because they take no action "to make things happen" are totally the opposite of what organizations need and expect. Organizations want "leaders" who champion a number of initiatives that improve overall organizational performance.

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# FIXING *the* FIVE FATAL FLAWS

## What Fatal Flaws Have in Common

1. They are obvious to anyone with even a casual connection to the leader in question.
2. They are not intellectual but instead are emotional and interpersonal deficiencies.
3. They are primarily marked by an inability to do something.

## How to Identify Fatal Flaws

1. Ask a trusted coworker, supervisor or mentor if they see any of the fatal flaws in you.
2. Undergo a 360-degree feedback process.

## A Simple Solution

1. Get regular feedback from a trusted coworker, supervisor or mentor.
2. Commit to fixing any fatal flaws by “doing the opposite.”
3. Record your commitment in your Personal Development Plan.

## Examples of “Doing the Opposite”

1. Inability to learn from mistakes – Take responsibility for and learn from your mistakes
  2. Lack of core interpersonal skills – Communicate and connect with people
    - Smile
    - Don’t criticize, condemn or complain
    - Give honest and sincere appreciation
    - Become genuinely interested in other people
    - Learn and use people’s names
    - Be a good listener and encourage others to talk about themselves
    - Talk in terms of the other person’s interests
    - Sincerely make the other person feel important
  3. Lack of openness to new ideas – Take time to consider new ideas with an open mind
  4. Lack of accountability – Take responsibility for the performance of your team
  5. Lack of initiative – Take the initiative to improve your team’s performance
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