



# LEADERSHIP RANK

*Students choose their top five leadership traits and narrow them down to one that is most important to them.*

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will test their own ideas on leadership
- Students will consider other's perspectives on leadership
- Students will discuss leadership characteristics that are most important to them.

## MATERIALS

- Notecards or small pieces of paper (5 for each student)
- Leadership Qualities List for each student, or displayed
- "Leadership Is..." list from previous sessions (optional)

## TIME

30 min

---

## LESSON INTRO

This activity asks students to narrow down their personal ideas on effective leadership to find their top priority. Through this lesson, the facilitator will ask students to "discard" traits that are least important to them. See Facilitator Tips for helpful notes. The reflection of this activity should not be skipped.

## LEADERSHIP RANKING STEP BY STEP

1. Begin by revisiting the class list of leadership characteristics created from a previous session. If that lesson was not taught, simply use the leadership qualities list instead, and give time for students to look it over.
2. Ask students to choose their **5 most important leadership characteristics** from the list, the handout, or from their own experience. If students want to use leadership characteristics that are not found on the list, that is great! The list is there as a resource.  
You want students to identify traits and characteristics that they feel are the most important aspects of a leader.
3. Students should write one leadership characteristic on each notecard.
4. Once everyone is confident of their top five, ask students to hold their "cards" in their hand like playing cards. Say: You should be holding the five most important characteristics of a leader...

5. ...Pause for effect. Ask students to now discard one of their cards. This should be the trait that is least important to them of the five.
6. Pause again. You will ask students to discard ANOTHER card. Ask students to get rid of one more of their characteristics that is least important out of the four left.
7. Next, you will ask students to narrow down their cards to three. Their top three characteristics.
8. Keep going. Have students keep two cards that are their definite top two most important leadership characteristics.
9. Now. The final step. Have students choose one of their two remaining cards as the most important leadership trait.
10. Whew! Congratulate the students for doing that difficult mental exercise.

## VARIATIONS

As with many of the activities in this section, changing the theme of the activity to meet other goals can be effective. Instead of leadership, use your school values, virtues, or another theme that the group is working on.

## FACILITATOR TIPS AND NOTES

1. For maximum effect, the facilitator should add in an element of drama to this process. Pausing, pacing, and tone can create an atmosphere of intrigue that can lead to a more engaging environment.
2. You may find students protesting that it's too hard to keep narrowing these down! That's ok! Keep it lighthearted and use student struggle as part of the reflective discussion at the end of the activity.

## REFLECTION & WRAP UP

1. Reflecting on student's process is where the impact of this activity lies. Invite students into a discussion using these prompts (in this order, more or less).
  - What was your last remaining card? (List these on the board as students share)
  - Share how you chose your top quality out of so many options. Explain why your choice is most important to you.
  - Share which qualities were the first ones that you got rid of. Explain why you discarded those first.
  - How easy/difficult was it for you to select and rank these qualities in this way? Why?
  - Which two cards were the hardest to choose between? Why?
  - Notice what the class/group chose as their collective top characteristics.
  - What does this say about our group?
  - Does it point out our strong areas? Weak areas?
2. Students can take their "final" card—the one with their most important leadership trait—and decorate and embellish the word. Put these up in the class, or tape them on binders, as a reminder of the individual values that each student brings to the community.

## NOTES

**Educational Standards:** CASEL: Self-Awareness, CASEL: Relationship Skills, P21: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, P21: Leadership and Responsibility, CCRS:SL6 Adapt Speech