



I am a natural-born leader



I am a natural born leader

It's a thing you might hear from applicants for jobs in your workplace, "I am a natural born leader". And it's a statement that is rarely questioned as you nod sagely. We can debate the accuracy of this statement along the lines of nature versus nurture. But that's not what is actually important.

When we hear this statement, it is taken as short-hand for a person having a series of skills and attributes, ie competencies, which enable them to do the task of leading.

We explored some of these competencies in our [Lab Manager Conversations series](#).

What do experts say are the competencies of good leaders?

According to a [McKinsey](#) analysis of academic research and surveys of leaders across the world, there are four types of behaviours that account for 89% of leadership effectiveness:

- being supportive
- operating with a strong results orientation
- seeking different perspectives
- solving problems effectively

These behaviours require a broad range of skills and they are not only technical in nature. Some of the competencies which successful, modern leaders need are empathy, compassion, vulnerability, and self-awareness.

Side note: an interesting read on leadership is contained in the [Harvard Business Review article](#) by W C H Prentice published in 2004. The language is a little dated with reference to "him" and "man", but the underlying message provides some insights into what skills a modern leader needs to demonstrate.

That's all great, but what does this have to do with me?

How does this fit in with the demands of a quality management system? It's a great question, and not just because you're over the pontification in this article.

Management systems are processes for achieving a desired output or goal. It could be as simple as being able to deliver reliable and accurate test or calibration results. It might be to have competent staff.

It's this system that delivers competent staff where the question of leadership comes in. Good leadership demands certain competencies in people in those positions. Just like the ability to weigh a sample accurately is a competence for laboratory testing staff, the ability to seek and listen to feedback from others is something that is a key competence for managers, team leaders and coordinators.

It's something we should have in documented competence requirements that a management systems standard like ISO 17025 and ISO 15189 demands, such as in clause 6.2.2 of ISO 17025.

How can we help?

As well as providing [training](#) in some of the technical skills for lab leaders, we also provide services in mentoring new and existing leaders into developing the necessary competencies to achieve success. We're developing a new course on lab leadership and if you would like to keep up to date on it's release, join our special mailing list [here](#)! Plus, through our MAS Family network, we provide a place of connection with other lab leaders.

Why not get in touch with us to explore how you can become a great “natural born” leader? Contact Maree at maree@masmanagementsystems.com.au, or call her on 0411 540 709 for a confidential discussion.

Remember, you don't have to do this alone!