

Gaining Self-Awareness through Your Genuine Identity Profile

Creating your Genuine Identity Profile can be a helpful exercise to gain self-awareness. There are five key components to developing your genuine identity profile but the requirement for each of those components remains constant: you have to be totally honest with yourself right from the start.

The first component is writing your statement of self-identity. This can be a sentence or two summarising your identity as you currently perceive it. Once completed and if so inclined, share the statement with people in your close circles whom you trust and respect and tell them what you're trying to do. See how they react to your statement and solicit their input to help you refine your statement of self-identity. Ask them to be honest with you and explain that this is a learning and development exercise and their honest input will help you to grow as a person. Do this with several people and record the feedback you get. Then review all the comments and update your statement of identity if you think appropriate with your newly gained insights. Now comes the hard part...ask yourself if you agree with all the feedback you received? It may be easier to dismiss things you did not see or realise for yourself but before being so quick to dismiss anything, really reflect on the things you did not see or realise before and question in your mind why you did not see these elements while other people did. This personal reflection is a powerful and liberating activity as it helps you gain insights and a context for who you really are.

The next thing you can do to help you gain self-awareness is making a list of your core values. Lists such as this can be long and rambling, so the task at hand here is for you to determine your top 8-10 core values that you consider are the fabric of your being. After listing your top core values, make a note next to each core value on how you define it, what it means to you personally, and why it's important to you. Don't be fooled, this task may sound easy to complete but many people find it difficult to limit their list to just the top 8-10. And now comes the really hard part, once you've completed your list of your top core values, try ranking them in importance - number 1 being your most important core value and then going sequentially. Make a note of how long it takes you to complete this portion of the task and once completed, reflect on the time it took you to finish this job. Did you get through it very quickly? Did it take you longer than you imagined it would? Were you conflicted while completing this exercise? Do any of your core values surprise you? Does the ranking surprise you in any way? Most importantly, when you go through the list of your core values, you know you've completed the task correctly if for each of the values, you can see a plethora of examples from your daily life for each of the values you've identified as core to you. Once you are satisfied with your list add the list of your core values below your statement of identity and see how your genuine identity profile starts to take shape.

The third thing you can do to gain a better awareness of your genuine identity is to identify the things in life that are most important to you. Similar to the core values list, you have to really be vigilant and select only the top 3-5 things of importance, for if the list is too long, the importance of each gets diluted. Once you have listed

the top 3-5 things of true importance to you, explain why each of these are important and then rank the list with number 1 being the most important thing to you. Once completed, add the list to the bottom of your genuine identity profile.

The fourth thing needed to help you complete your genuine identity profile is a statement or short list of items articulating how you want to live your life. For example, do you want to get ahead no matter what the cost to other people or do you want to move forward in life in an ethical and meritocratic way? Okay, this was a very leading question, but you get the idea. Will you sacrifice whatever you need to in order to succeed or will you make considered decisions in alignment with your core values to help your move in the direction you want go in life, albeit perhaps at a slower pace? Remember that there is no right answer, just your answer and it's important to be genuinely honest with yourself about how you want to live your life.

Finally, the fifth element needed to complete your genuine identity profile is a statement of the impact you want to have in society. This may not be easy for many people, especially if you've never stopped to think about this before. One way to articulate this statement is to ask yourself "how do I want to be remembered?" and then use your answer as your statement of impact.

Once all the above have been completed, take a look at it in its entirety and reflect on your genuine identity. Self-awareness is the first step on any leadership journey. Good luck with your own personal journey to leadership and success!

If you would like to get in touch to share your leadership journey with us, please email us at inquiry@coachingleaderstosuccess.com