

# Leadership Development Lesson Plan

  
SkillsUSA®

 Middle School  
MOMENTUM





## **Leadership Development**

### Lesson Plan

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# Leadership Development

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Lesson Plan

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# SkillsUSA Leadership Development

## Activity 1: Grow with Leadership Development

**Goal of the Activity:** Students will define leadership, recognize leader behaviors, and identify ways to develop their own leadership skills.

**Activity Overview:** Students will identify leaders and their positive behaviors. After reviewing several leadership definitions, students will write their own definition. Then students will reflect on a personal leadership experience. Following an engaging activity full of movement, students will be guided through a conversation about organizational leadership. Students will conclude by committing to one action to develop their leadership skills.

**Middle School Momentum:** Leadership Development

**Time Required:** 45 minutes

**Suggested participants:** All middle school students

**Materials Needed:** Lesson PowerPoint Slide deck (optional), paper (1 piece per student—their class notebook would work well), sticky notes (1 per student), pen or pencil (one per student), and writing surface.

### Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Identify individuals who are leaders.
2. Describe positive leadership behaviors.
3. Define leadership.
4. Identify ways to develop personal leadership skills.



### Facilitation Instructions

#### Part 1: Leaders and what they do (3 minutes)

**Say:** *“Think about someone you admire as a leader – in school, sports, history, or even family. Consider who they are and why they are a leader.”* (Allow 10 seconds of think time.)

**Say:** *“What behaviors do those leaders demonstrate?”* (Allow several responses; capture those words on the writing surface.)

**Say:** *“Today we’ll explore one component of the SkillsUSA Program of Work: leadership development. One of my goals as an educator is to help you grow as a leader.”*

## Part 2: Define Leadership (10 minutes)

**Do:** Discuss various definitions of leadership including:

- Merriam Webster’s definitions:
  - The office or position of a leader
  - Capacity to lead
  - The act or an instance of leading
- Cambridge definitions:
  - The set of characteristics that make a good leader
  - The position or fact of being the leader
  - The person or people in charge of an organization
- John Maxwell’s definition:
  - Leadership is influence.
- Lisa Cash Hanson’s definition:
  - Leadership is the ability to guide others without force into a direction or decision that leaves them still feeling empowered and accomplished.

**Say:** “You’ve seen how others define leadership. Now, take 90 seconds to create and write your own definition of leadership.” (After 90 seconds, or two minutes, have a few students share with the class.)

**Say:** “Leadership is one Essential Element of the SkillsUSA Framework. It is a Workplace Skill. SkillsUSA defines leadership with five descriptors.”

**Do:** Review the SkillsUSA Framework Essential Element definition for leadership.

Leadership is defined as:

- Building and modeling trust
- Fostering hope
- Expressing compassion
- Establishing stability

**Say:** “How do the behaviors that we listed earlier fit into these descriptors?” (Allow a few responses and discussion.)

## Part 3: Personal Leadership Experience (20 minutes)

### Activity: Leadership Think-Pair-Share

1. Have students silently recall a time they demonstrated leadership, big or small.
2. After 20 seconds, ask them to share with a partner, focusing on what they did.
3. After one minute, invite a few volunteers to share their example and the leadership behaviors they demonstrated with the class.

**Say:** “As leaders, we aim to show positive actions that create positive influence. What challenges have you faced, or might you face, as a leader at school, in SkillsUSA, in sports, other organizations, or at home?” (Allow several responses and discussion.)

**Do:** If time and space allow, use the next activity (Blob Tag) to engage students and conduct a thoughtful conversation about organizational leadership.

### Activity: “Blob Tag” from SkillsUSA Ignite (pg. 140)

1. Give these instructions:
2. One player will start out as “the blob” and attempt to tag other players.
3. When a player is tagged, they become part of the blob by joining hands.
4. If the blob breaks due to a loose grip, it cannot tag anyone else until it reforms.
5. When the blob size reaches four people, the blob is allowed to split in half.
6. The blob continues trying to absorb players until everyone has become part of the blob.
7. Select one student to start as “the blob.”
8. If the activity goes quickly, have students play a second time.



**Say:** “How did you demonstrate leadership in the activity?” (Allow a few responses.)

**Say:** “Did you build positive relationships? How?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “When did you focus on others above self?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “How did you mitigate, reduce, or resolve conflict?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “How did you coach others to high performance?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “What was the goal of the activity?” (Allow for one or two responses.)

**Say:** “How did you mobilize individuals to accomplish the goal?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “The final leadership descriptor is ‘Crafts and articulates a vision.’ Did this occur during the activity? If not, how could it have been incorporated?” (Allow two responses.)

**Say:** “How is Blob Tag similar to leading an organization such as SkillsUSA?” (Allow several responses and discussion of organizational leadership including challenges.)

#### Part 4: Leadership Growth Opportunities (12 minutes)

##### Activity: Leadership Action Wall

1. Instruct students to think of ONE action they can take today that would help them grow their leadership skills.
2. Provide examples if needed:
  - c. Offer help to someone without being asked
  - d. Ask a thoughtful question in class
  - e. Include someone who’s left out
  - f. Follow through on a commitment
  - g. Listen without interrupting
8. Students will write their response on the sticky note.
9. Have students share with the class and post the notes on the wall or on a poster board.



**Say:** “Why do these actions matter?” (Allow several responses and discussion.)

**Say:** “How will taking these actions today help you grow as leaders?” (Allow several responses and discussion.)

**Do:** Share about the [Adam Schoolcraft Memorial NLSC Travel Grant](#), available only to middle school students, to help them grow their leadership skills.

### Tips For Success:

- ✓ If you have space, even if it requires moving to a different room, use the Blob Tag activity. Students will enjoy “playing” for a few minutes.
- ✓ Check in with students during the next class period about their leadership actions.
- ✓ Incorporate SkillsUSA Framework language, including the Leadership descriptors, into your everyday classroom vocabulary.
- ✓ For an additional leadership lesson, use the Framework Integration Toolkit in Pathful.

### Conclusion:

As educators, teaching classroom content is important, but it’s only part of the mission. Our greatest goal is to help students grow as leaders, developing the skills they need to thrive in any career and make a positive impact on the world around them. When we focus on building leaders, we are preparing students not just for tests, but for life.

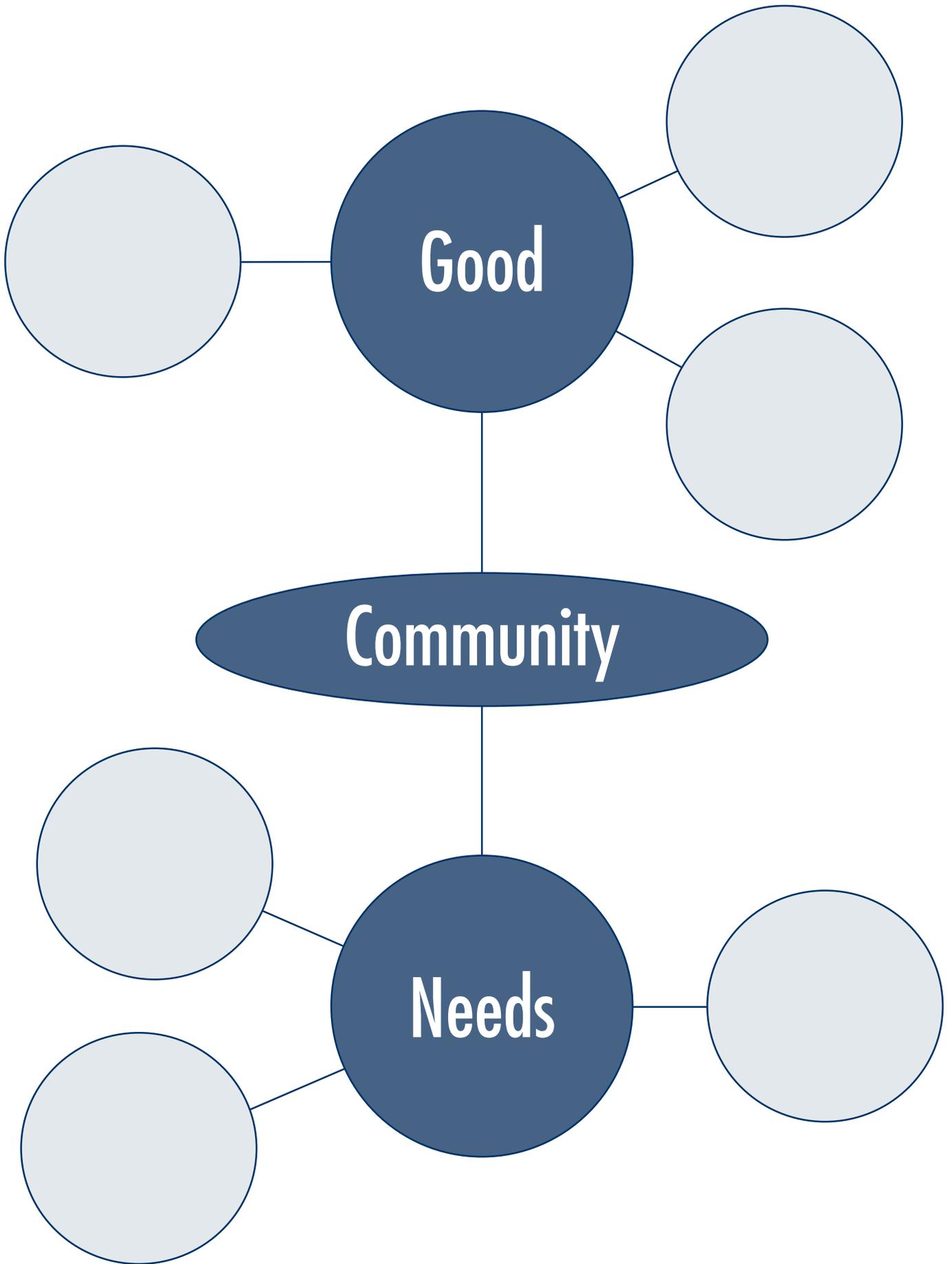
### Expand your Skills

SkillsUSA offers multiple [professional development opportunities](#) for educators. It is important to continue to grow our own skills, too. Each year, challenge yourself to listen to or read at least one personal leadership/growth book.

### Supporting Resources

[pathful.skillsusa.org](http://pathful.skillsusa.org)








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