



**NJSHA**  
**April 2026**

# **The Successful Leader and Advocate: Realizing Your Potential**



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At the end of our time together you will be able to:

- List ways to develop a multi-pronged approach to realize their leadership potential
- Discuss how you might use your potential in actionable leadership and advocacy roles
- List leaders who might mentor you and your roles.

Financial Disclosure:

ASHA pays for hotels and travel  
NJSHA waives registration  
Other book royalties

Personal Disclosure:

VP For Standards and Ethics in AuD,  
ASHA



# When Talking about Leadership

- Consider:
  - It's personal – and involves personal stories
  - Your environment may be a factor
  - Support networks vary
  - Time can be an issue
    - Development
  - Paths may not be clear
  - Memory can fail you and your mentors



## Think about a leader that you really admire.

This can be an historical figure, family member, politician, athlete, colleague.

Make a list of characteristics that you admire.

Which qualities do you share?

Which do you have to develop?

# Starting at the Beginning?

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Consider core leadership skills:

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[Relationship building](#)

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[Agility and adaptability](#)

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[Innovation and creativity](#)

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[Motivating others\\*](#)

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[Decision-making](#)

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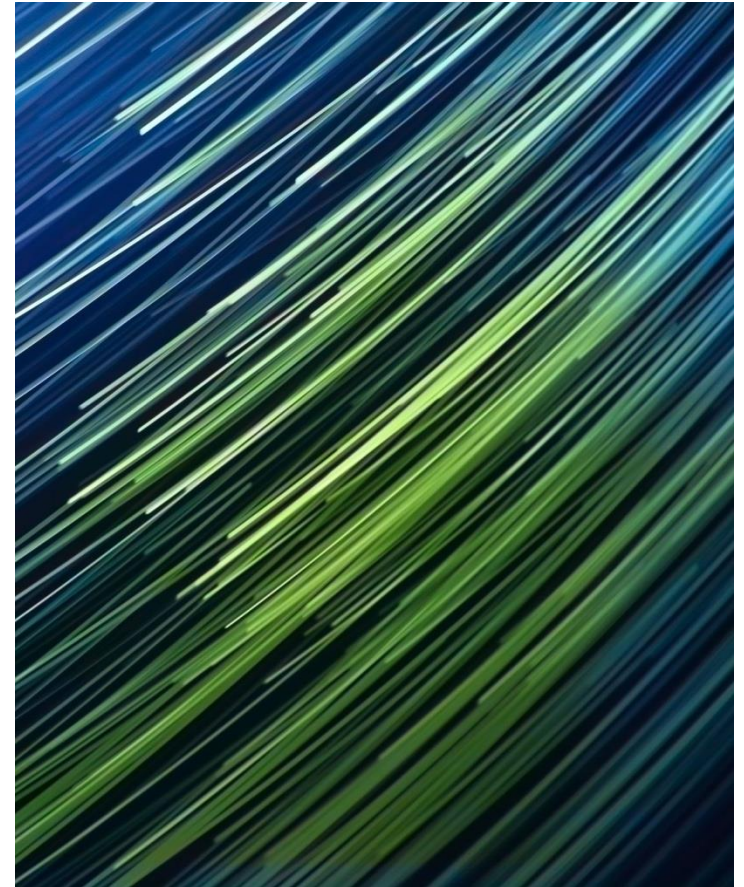
[Conflict management](#)

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[Negotiation](#)

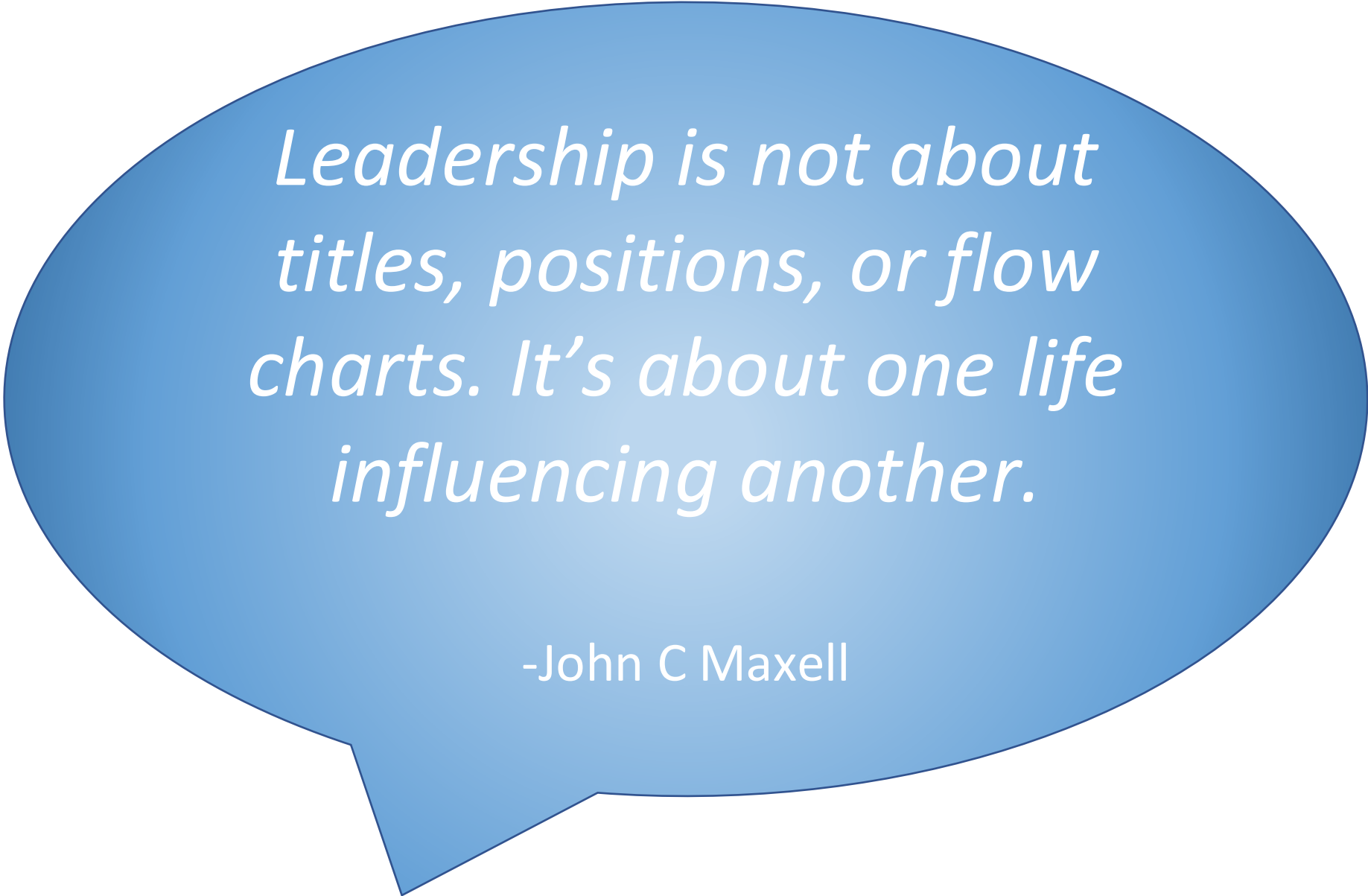
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[Critical Thinking](#)



From: International Institute for Management Development (IMD): <https://www.imd.org/reflections/leadership-skills/>





*Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flow charts. It's about one life influencing another.*

-John C Maxell

# Mythbusters

- People are natural/born leaders – (or they're not!)
- People who lead “fell into good luck” with their roles
- Leaders make it look easy
- Leaders love what they do – mainly because of the control they have
- Leaders get to say and do what they want
- Leaders make all the decisions
- Extroverts make the best leaders
- Leaders get to be in the spotlight
- The main role of a leader is to hold others accountable

See <https://www.franklincovey.co.uk/blog/uk-10-leadership-myths-vs-realities/> for more myths

# Reflect for a Moment

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- What is a long-term leadership goal that you have as you consider leadership in your work or broader profession?
- Do you have any near-term goals?



# Reflecting on Goals

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- We often want to start big – forgetting the small steps (even micro steps) that might be required
  - Nawaz, 2020





- Volunteer inside and outside of your organizations
- Seek out formal and informal professional development opportunities
- Think “BIG”
- Raise Your Hand
- Say “yes”
- The Shoulder Tap

# Thinking from the Inside Out....

- Your organization
- Your state
- The national level
- Advocacy
- YOU!



# Internal: Program Level Examples

## CLINICAL

- Clinical Director
- Director of Rehabilitation
- Director of Special Education
- Therapy Site Manager/Discipline Manager
- Lead Therapist
- Continuing Education Lead
- Specialty certifications

## ACADEMIA

- Chair/Head
  - Vice/Associate Heads
- Faculty hierarchies
- Clinic director/clinical coordinator
- Director of Undergraduate/Graduate Studies
- Program director
- Online learning director
- Lab director/PI

Titles and roles – think of how they might be formed

# Internal: Beyond Your Program

- Patient Safety
- Quality Improvement
- Healthcare/Education Policy Advocacy
- Operations
- Health/Education Information Coordinator
- Curriculum/Instructional Design Coordinator
- Special Education Coordinator/Director
- School/Dean's Office
- Provost's Office
- President's Office
- Other forms of campus leadership
  - Faculty/Staff senate
  - Other campus offices

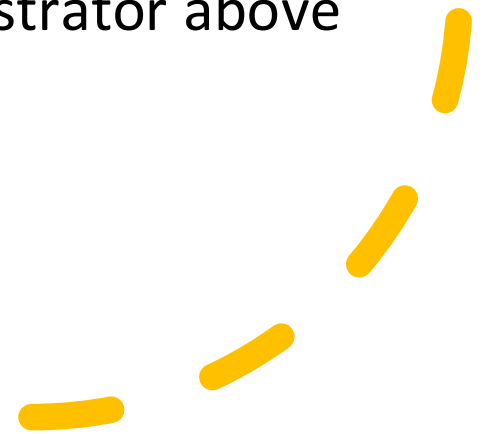


# How Can You Blaze a Trail at an Organization?

- Look for leadership training opportunities
  - Leadership development programs
    - Provost's Fellows
  - Other fellowship/training programs
  - Larger institutions: Certificate programs/education in higher ed, instructional design, healthcare administration, etc
- Get on the any email lists you can to learn about opportunities
- Think you don't qualify?
  - Make absolutely sure – read the fine print
  - Be careful regarding assumptions
  - Ask!

# How Can You Blaze a Trail at an Institution?

- Institutional programs:
  - May be problem-based
    - You might need to bring an issue to the table to influence/solve
  - Require your time and effort
  - Involve networking
  - Require support of your administrator
    - Is this a challenge for you?
  - May require support of an administrator above your program/unit



# How Can You Blaze a Trail at an Institution?

- If you are accepted into a program, complete *all* the pieces
- Determine if any self assessments are available to you:
  - Myers-Briggs
  - Harvard's Implicit Association Tests
  - The IHHP Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Assessment
  - 360 surveys (multi-source assessment)
  - Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior™ (FIRO-B)
  - StrengthFinders
- Follow through on project reports, presentations, etc.

# State-Level Leadership

- State associations

- A wide variety of roles and responsibilities
- Some state association work will dovetail with national organizations – examples:
  - ASHA State based Advocacy Networks
    - ASHA State Education Advocacy Leaders (SEAL)
    - ASHA State Advocates for Medicare Policy (StAMP)
    - ASHA State Advocates for Reimbursement (STAR)

- State/regional boards

- Licensing
- Population-focused

# State-Level Leadership

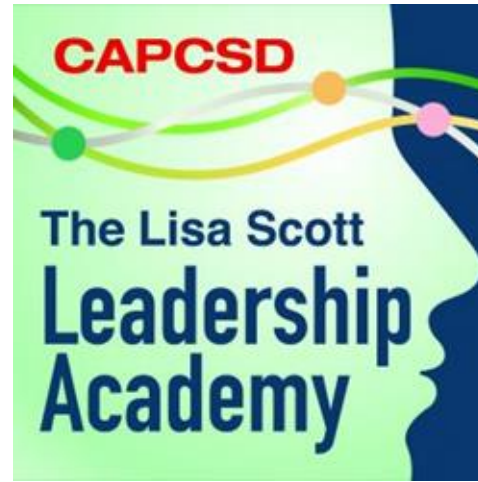
- Often these are shoulder-tap opportunities
- Remember: You don't have to have all the answers
- Remember: You can be clear on what time commitments you *\*can\** make
- Imposter syndrome is real for some of us!



**Career  
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NOW

The ASHA Leadership Academy is where you can deepen your knowledge of leadership through webinars, mentoring, and more. Just log in or create a free account to get started. [More Information](#)

Question? Reach out to ASHA staff at [governance@asha.org](mailto:governance@asha.org).

### Assessments

The beginning point for developing leadership skills is to identify current strengths and growth opportunities. The ASHA Leadership Academy accomplishes this through the use of assessments. You can access [free assessments](#) to identify leadership strengths and areas of opportunity. In addition, the provided assessments correspond to the Leadership Academy webinars which are free to view.

### Webinars

Learn at your own pace, interest, and budget! Consider these [webinars](#) as an introduction to key leadership concepts needed for anyone wishing to advance their leadership skills. Registration is free for each 1-hour webinar. You can also take a low-cost assessment to earn ASHA CEUs.

### Leadership Pathways

Members take many different [leadership paths](#) that lead them to volunteering for ASHA. Some members may volunteer for a community-based group or serve their state speech-language-hearing association. Still others may volunteer for a related professional organization or engage with ASHA in short, specific microvolunteer activities. No matter how different those paths may look and how varied people's levels of effort may be, all volunteering is important—and ASHA recognizes that. Visit the video links below to discover the volunteer leadership pathways of four members.



“The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.”

RALPH NADER



# Advocacy

***Advocacy is at the heart of leadership and needs to be communicated with heart.***

## Advocacy Priorities for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists



# 2025-2026 Public Policy Agenda

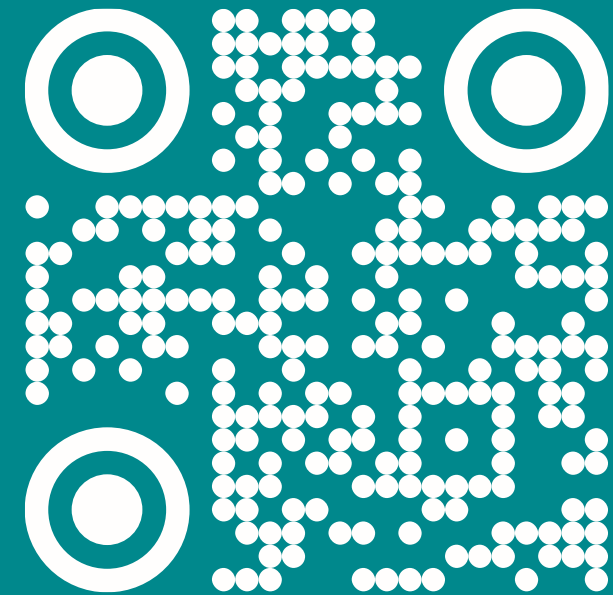
- Identifies **what ASHA should prioritize each year** based on member input
- Serves as the **guide for advocacy** efforts undertaken by ASHA
- Priorities focus on issues related to: (1) **payment and coverage**, (2) **service delivery and access**; and (3) **workforce**
- Includes **state** and **federal legislative** and **regulatory** activities

# COLLECTING INPUT

- Conversations with advocacy related **boards and committees**
- Online **CEO chats** and **townhalls**
- **Social media** interactions
- **Member-initiated** contact
- Updates from staff on trends they are tracking in **audiology, schools, clinical practice, and health care**

**Plus: assistants and certification**

- Advocacy priorities **online survey**



# PAYMENT AND COVERAGE PRIORITIES

The *2025-2026 Public Policy Agenda* acknowledges ASHA's ongoing work with government payers (Medicare, Medicaid, Tricare) and private insurers, and the Association's efforts to develop useful tools and resources that help members understand and navigate case-level nuances of billing, coding, and payer/practice management challenges. Beyond the ongoing work, and in partnership with members, ASHA will continually engage in efforts with state- and federal-level legislators, regulators, payers, and agencies to:

- **PROTECT AND IMPROVE PAYMENTS**
- **ADVANCE EFFORTS TO SECURE COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE**
- **EXPAND AND PERMANENTLY COVER TELEHEALTH SERVICES**
- **ASSESS AND ADVISE ON VALUE-BASED CARE**

# SERVICE DELIVERY AND ACCESS

ASHA responds to member concerns regarding challenges affecting service delivery through monitoring and responding to legislative and regulatory changes that can impact licensing requirements and/or the scope of practice for the professions. In partnership with its members, ASHA will:

- **SUPPORT ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY POLICIES**
- **SUPPORT EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION INITIATIVES**
- **SECURE THE INTEROPERABILITY OF LICENSURE STANDARDS**





## WORK FORCE PRIORITIES

The *2025 Public Policy Agenda* prioritizes workforce improvements that will address the challenges that (a) detract from members' ability to provide services effectively and efficiently and (b) negatively impact their health and well-being. These improvements include long-term, partnered (ASHA and membership) initiatives targeting inadequate

- **GROW, DIVERSIFY, AND RETAIN PROVIDERS**
- **SUPPORT SALARY SUPPLEMENT INITIATIVES**
- **MONITOR AND ENGAGE ON THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**
- **CHAMPION SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS FACING SCHOOL-BASED MEMBERS**

# PARTNERING IN ADVOCACY

## ASHA Actions

- Organize state and federal legislative and regulatory advocacy
- Collaborate with state associations
- Network with other stakeholders

## Members' Actions

- Engage in grassroots state and federal advocacy
- Organize municipal/district advocacy
- Get involved with ASHA



## Member Needs and Challenges

This figure depicts the ways in which ASHA and its members can work collaboratively to address the needs and challenges outlined in this public policy agenda.

### ASHA Actions

#### Organize state and federal legislative and regulatory advocacy

- Facilitate letter-writing campaigns and petitions
- Meet with lawmakers
- Meet with regulatory agencies



#### Collaborate with state associations

- Provide organizational and advocacy support
- Provide advocacy grants to support state efforts



#### Network with other stakeholders

- Team up with other organizations such as: Academy of Doctors of Audiology, American Academy of Audiology, American Physical Therapy Association, American Occupational Therapy Association
- Represent ASHA—and its members—in various coalitions such as the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities, Early Childhood Personnel Center, Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus, National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services, Professional Certification Coalition



### Member Actions

#### Engage in grassroots state and federal advocacy

- Meet with lawmakers and attend briefings
- Invite elected officials to visit your place of work
- Visit ASHA's Take Action site to send prewritten letters to your elected officials and sign petitions (when applicable) on issues impacting the professions and those we serve



#### Organize municipal/district regulatory advocacy

- Meet with local school board or other organizational leaders
- Spread awareness within your community



#### Get involved with ASHA

- Utilize resources and tools
- Volunteer on a board, committee, or council
- Learn about ASHA-PAC



# MEMBER ADVOCACY ACTIONS



**Sharing your stories** helps support ASHA's advocacy efforts

**Joining the advocacy efforts** with your state association

**Connecting with lawmakers and policymakers**

- Build relationships
- Serve as a subject matter expert for when they have questions about the professions
- Invite them to your place of work

# GET INVOLVED!

## TAKE ACTION

Learn the issues and **TAKE ACTION** by sending a prewritten email (that you can customize) to your elected officials in **less than 5 minutes**

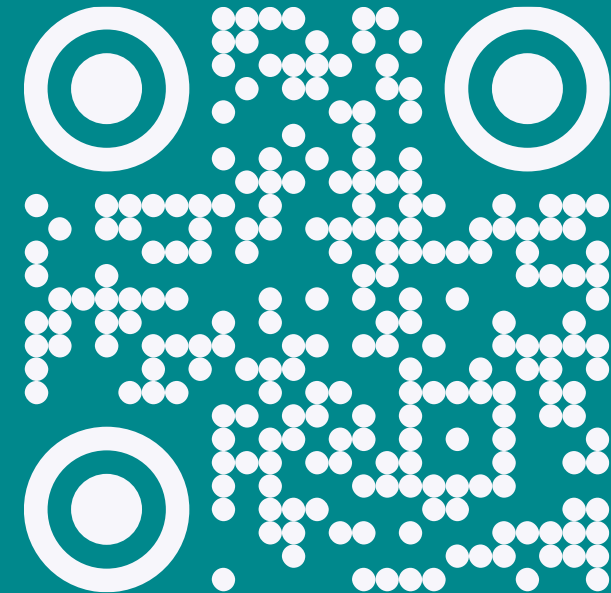
## RAISE AWARENESS

Encourage others to be active advocates through your:

- professional networks
- social connections
- formal presentations



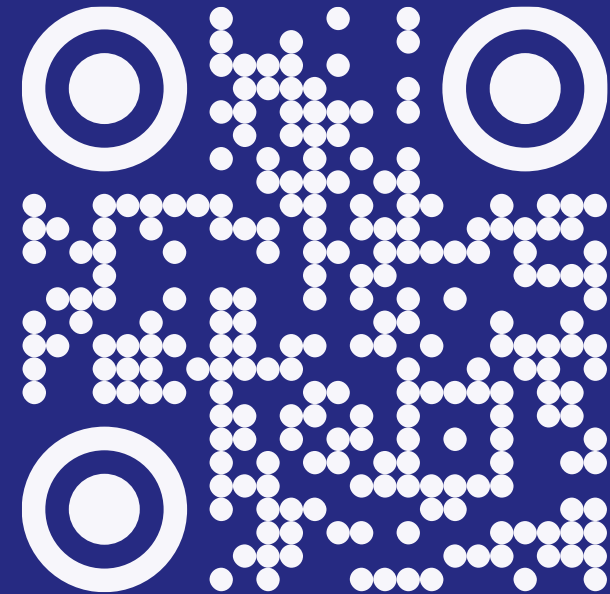
**TAKE ACTION NOW!**



# ASHA-PAC

- All funds raised through ASHA-PAC are **voluntary**
- **Cannot** be funded through association dues
- ASHA-PAC is **non-partisan**
- **Does not** endorse presidential candidates

**ASHA MEMBERS  
LEARN MORE!**



# Reflect for a Moment

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- What is a long-term goal that you have as you consider leadership in your work or broader profession?
- Do you have any near-term goals?
- What's your plan?
  - Where are you looking?
  - Do you have small steps?



# Effective Leadership: You Have What It Takes

**YES!**



# Starting at the Beginning?

- Consider core leadership skills:

1. Relationship building
2. Agility and adaptability
3. Innovation and creativity
4. Employee motivation
5. Decision-making
6. Conflict management
7. Negotiation
8. Critical Thinking

From: International Institute for Management Development (IMD):  
<https://www.imd.org/reflections/leadership-skills/>

“If you aim at nothing, you’ll hit that mark 100% of the time”