

The 12 Leadership Derailers: How to dodge derailers that sabotage careers



As leaders, one of the biggest risks we face is thinking it's our success that matters. It's not! It's the success of our team. The better leaders we are, the better our teams will perform. And... we keep our career on track.

To become Fearless Leaders, we need to dodge derailers by aligning our (outside) behaviour with (inside) intention.

Being curious about the intention behind the behavior of other people increases our leadership impact.

The 12 Leadership Derailers

1. Staller – analysis paralysis

Seen as: Taking too long to take action, missing key deadlines, blocker to progress.

Intention: High Quality Outcome

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I perfecting my plan or paralysing progress?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Make a decision with the information you have right now and keep moving forward.

2. Controller – command and control

Seen as: Highly directive, stifling initiative and innovation.

Intention: Control a quality outcome

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I guiding or dictating?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Trust that others too have insight, ideas and a commitment to quality.

3. Cyclone – bull at a gate

Seen as: In a hurry to achieve results, often leaving behind a wake of destruction and disengagement.

Intention: Get things done – now

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I fast tracking progress or causing chaos?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Slow down to speed up.

4. Doer – can't delegate

Seen as: Non trusting, hoarding work and responsibility to the detriment of self and team.

Intention: Quality outcome

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I protecting my team or monopolising action?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Outline the requirement, agree on the support they need from you, and step out of the way.

5. Avoider – conflict averse

Seen as: Reluctant to face tough conversations & situations, often creating challenging team dynamics as a result.

Intention: Keep peace and protect relationships

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I fostering harmony or pushing conflict underground?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Next time you feel uncomfortable in a conversation, stay in it knowing your discomfort offers additional information.

6. Fence-sitter – indecisive leader

Seen as: Unclear leadership and direction, creating bottle necks in progress and frustration for others.

Intention: Get right outcome

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I inviting input, or avoiding decisive action?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Identify your own view and act on that.

7. Know-it-all – closed to other ideas

Seen as: Reluctant to consider new ideas or input from others.

Intention: Back your strengths and deliver quality

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I ensuring success or locked in my own certainty?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Back an idea put forward by someone else – look for reasons why it will work.

8. Guardian – inability to innovate

Seen as: Prefers the status quo, reluctant to change, low focus on innovation.

Intention: Guarantee consistent quality results

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I upholding proven methods or slowing down transformational change?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Try something different.

9. Micromanager – management on a leash

Seen as: Providing excessive supervision, often perceived as stifling and untrusting

Intention: Raise the standard through quality output

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I supporting my team or limiting their growth?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Allow others to make their own mistakes and learn from them.

10. Poker face – showing no emotion

Seen as: Non-expressive communication style, direct verbal communicator, missing nonverbal cues.

Intention: Accurate communication

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I being professional or remaining cold and unreadable?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Tune into the non-verbal cues of others as an additional data source.

11. People burner – poor people skills

Seen as: Prioritising achieving the task over investing in people and building relationships.

Intention: Get results

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I driving results or burning bridges?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** Prioritise connecting with the person before focussing on the task.

12. Tactician – poor strategic thinker

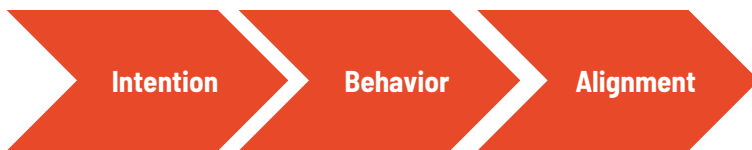
Seen as: Reactive to daily pressures, buried in the day to day, unable to hold the broader, strategic view.

Intention: Deliver outcomes now

- ▶ **Fearless face it:** Ask 'Am I mastering today or losing of sight tomorrow?'
- ▶ **Dodge the Derailer:** What could be possible for the activity in 18 months? How does knowing that impact your work today?

Dodging the Derailer

The best way for you to dodge your derailer will depend on how the derailer presents in your leadership. The suggestions above are intended to provide a starting point only.

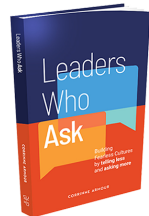


1. Get clear on your **INTENTION**
2. Assess the impact of your **BEHAVIOUR**
3. **ALIGN** your behavior with your intention

Read The Book



'**Developing Direct Reports: Taking the guesswork out of leading leaders**' (Armour, Blundell, Cohen) is written for leaders who lead leaders. An essential handbook outlining the 12 Leadership Derailers, and guiding leaders to increase their own leadership impact and grow their direct reports.



'**Leaders Who Ask: Building Fearless Cultures by telling less and asking more**' (Armour) encourages leaders to increase engagement, build accountability, and boost team performance through coaching capabilities and questioning

Both books are available from all good online bookstores.

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