

salesforce

# GREAT INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR

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5 characteristics that make good  
individual contributors GREAT



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# LEADERSHIP IS ART & SCIENCE.

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Leadership has always been a competitive advantage at Salesforce; it is a core part of what has made us successful since our founding. Leadership at all levels – Self leadership, Team leadership, and Executive Leadership – is what will prepare us for success in our next chapter. That is why we've updated our Salesforce GREAT Leader Model, to capture behaviors we all need to collectively role model in our next phase. As our company continues to grow expand around the globe, it's more important than ever for all of us to understand expectations of our role and leverage the tools available to bring those behaviors to life.

## About the GREAT Leader Model

The GREAT Model was originally developed in 2014 by the Talent Development Team for the entire organization. Three models were developed. One for individual contributors, one for managers, and one for executives. The GREAT Models outline the characteristics at each level that define what it takes to be great at Salesforce. Five characteristics were identified in the framework as well as the behaviors that are critical to live these characteristics at each level. As we grow and change as a company, we are always looking at what it takes to be great in our changing environment and to clarify these expectations. In 2018, the GREAT Model was updated across the organization to reflect our expectations of great at Salesforce. Each set of behaviors is the foundation for the next level up. As you progress in your career there are additional expectations as you take on more complexity and responsibilities.

The GREAT Individual Contributor Model was developed for individual contributors up to senior directors, non-people managers. It is endorsed by Salesforce leadership and illustrates what great manager leaders do. Most importantly, this model gives you specific tools that can help hone your management skills NOW and inspire those around you to think differently about everything they do.

## Developed for leaders – by leaders

Our team didn't develop this model in a vacuum. Instead, we interviewed leaders, gathered data and insights, and incorporated proven leadership best practices. The result is very Salesforce-specific and helps differentiate good leaders from "Great leaders."

# LEADERSHIP IS ART & SCIENCE.

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## Within this guide, you'll find:

- The key characteristics leaders need to succeed at Salesforce
- Key behaviors associated with each of the core characteristics
- Self-assessment exercises to show your greatest strengths and areas where you can improve
- Actionable development ideas to help you refine your skills

## Start today. Start now.




With hard work, dedication, and self-reflection, leadership can be one of the most rewarding personal and professional experiences of your life.

*Aloha!*





# GREAT INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR CHARACTERISTICS

With the help of many top salesforce leaders, we've distilled the top five characteristics of great individual contributors at Salesforce. This section introduces you to each characteristic and its associated key traits and behaviors. Pay special attention to the behaviors column – you'll be doing a brief self-assessment in the following section.

CHARACTERISTIC	KEY TRAITS	BEHAVIORS
 SALESFORCE SMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Integration</li> <li>• Managing Ambiguity</li> <li>• Compassion</li> <li>• Change Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Knows the business, customer, and industry inside and out</i></li> <li>• <i>Develops creative approaches that drive results</i></li> <li>• <i>Makes decisions that take into account the whole picture of Salesforce and broader industry</i></li> <li>• <i>Produces high-quality work even with incomplete information</i></li> <li>• <i>Embraces and adapts to change</i></li> </ul>
 GET IT DONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive Results</li> <li>• V2MOM</li> <li>• Process Improvement</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Calculated Risk Taking</li> <li>• Resourcefulness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Drives results even under tough circumstances</i></li> <li>• <i>Aligns V2MOM with the direction of the department and team while adding original content and personalization</i></li> <li>• <i>Actively seeks out ways to improve how work gets done</i></li> <li>• <i>Takes on tough challenges and is persistent despite obstacles</i></li> <li>• <i>Tries new things, isn't afraid to fail, and moves forward</i></li> <li>• <i>Finds creative solutions to roadblocks</i></li> </ul>
 WIN AS A TEAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salesforce First</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Productive Conflict</li> <li>• Self-Awareness</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Compassion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Puts the collective good of the company first</i></li> <li>• <i>Builds and leverages strong working relationships across all of Salesforce</i></li> <li>• <i>Steps up to challenge others respectfully when needed</i></li> <li>• <i>Adjusts personal style based on how it impacts others</i></li> <li>• <i>Asks questions and input from others to develop the best solutions and ideas</i></li> <li>• <i>Works to understand others' unique perspectives</i></li> </ul>

# GREAT INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR CHARACTERISTICS

CHARACTERISTIC	KEY TRAITS	BEHAVIORS
 <p>MOTIVATE &amp; CHAMPION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Ownership</li> <li>• Gratitude</li> <li>• Growth Mindset</li> <li>• Authenticity</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence</li> <li>• Inspiration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invests in own development and looks for opportunities to develop and coach others</li> <li>• Takes accountability of a project regardless of the outcome</li> <li>• Displays gratitude and appreciation towards others for their help</li> <li>• Approaches obstacles as an opportunity to develop and learn</li> <li>• Shows consistency between words and actions</li> <li>• Able to understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people</li> <li>• Brings fresh, creative ideas to the table</li> </ul>
 <p>COURAGEOUS COMMUNICATOR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact</li> <li>• Boldness</li> <li>• Vulnerability</li> <li>• Humility</li> <li>• Candid Conversations</li> <li>• Listening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailors message and style to the audience while remaining authentic, consistent, and transparent</li> <li>• Shows courage to tell people the truth, even when it's uncomfortable</li> <li>• Seeks help from others without ego in the way</li> <li>• Strikes a balance between confidence and humility.</li> <li>• Comfortable giving and receiving constructive feedback, and having difficult conversations</li> <li>• Paraphrases colleagues input to check for understanding</li> </ul>

	KEY TRAITS	BEHAVIORS
 <p>VALUES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Customer Success</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Equality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity - lives it in a way that's true for you</li> <li>• Focusses on customer success to drive mutual growth</li> <li>• Alignment - Reflects the values in your decisions</li> <li>• Accountability - Advocates value driven behaviors</li> </ul>

## SECTION REFLECTION

Before moving onto the next section in this guide, ask yourself:

- ☐ Was I surprised to see any of these characteristics in the top 5? Why?
- ☐ Are there additional key traits I associate with each characteristic? Why?
- ☐ Which characteristic do you feel is your top strength? Your area for improvement?

# INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

You probably have a good sense of what you're good at and where you have opportunity to improve. Now, it's time to take it one step further with a self-assessment exercise. Check the box that best describes how effective you are (today) related to each statement. As shown in the model, the first behavior in each characteristic reflects a behavior expected of all employees across levels. Take your time. Be honest. Then tally your scores.

## CHARACTERISTIC #1: SALESFORCE SMART



5 = Very Effective; 4 = Effective; 3 = Somewhat Effective; 2 = Ineffective; 1 = Very Ineffective

5	4	3	2	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knows the business, customer, and industry inside and out
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develops creative approaches that drive results
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Makes decisions that take into account the whole picture of Salesforce and broader industry
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Produces high-quality work even with incomplete information
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Embraces and adapts to change
TOTAL <input type="text"/> ÷ 5 = <input type="text"/>					

## CHARACTERISTIC #2: GET IT DONE



5 = Very Effective; 4 = Effective; 3 = Somewhat Effective; 2 = Ineffective; 1 = Very Ineffective

5	4	3	2	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drives results even under tough circumstances
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aligns V2MOM with the direction of the department and team while adding original content and personalization
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actively seeks out ways to improve how work gets done
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Takes on tough challenges and is persistent despite obstacles
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tries new things, isn't afraid to fail, and moves forward
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finds creative solutions to roadblocks
TOTAL <input type="text"/> ÷ 6 = <input type="text"/>					

# INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

## CHARACTERISTIC #3: WIN AS A TEAM



5 = Very Effective; 4 = Effective; 3 = Somewhat Effective; 2 = Ineffective; 1 = Very Ineffective

5	4	3	2	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Puts the collective good of the company first
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Builds and leverages strong working relationships across all of Salesforce
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Steps up to challenge others respectfully when needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjusts personal style based on how it impacts others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asks questions and input from others to develop the best solutions and ideas
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Works to understand others' unique perspectives
TOTAL <input type="text"/> ÷ 6 = <input type="text"/>					

## CHARACTERISTIC #4: MOTIVATE & CHAMPION



5 = Very Effective; 4 = Effective; 3 = Somewhat Effective; 2 = Ineffective; 1 = Very Ineffective

5	4	3	2	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Invests in own development and looks for opportunities to develop and coach others
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Takes accountability of a project regardless of the outcome
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Displays gratitude and appreciation towards others for their help
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Approaches obstacles as an opportunity to develop and learn
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shows consistency between words and actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Able to understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brings fresh, creative ideas to the table
TOTAL <input type="text"/> ÷ 7 = <input type="text"/>					



# INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

## CHARACTERISTIC #5: COURAGEOUS COMMUNICATOR



5 = Very Effective; 4 = Effective; 3 = Somewhat Effective; 2 = Ineffective; 1 = Very Ineffective

5	4	3	2	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tailors message and style to the audience, uses storytelling to deliver effective presentations and messages
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shows courage to tell people the truth, even when it's uncomfortable
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seeks help from others without ego in the way
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strikes a balance between confidence and humility
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comfortable giving and receiving constructive feedback, and having difficult conversations
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paraphrases colleagues input to check for understanding
TOTAL <input type="text"/> ÷ 6 = <input type="text"/>					

## SECTION REFLECTION

Before moving onto the next section in this guide, ask yourself:

- ☐ Which three statements caused you to stop and think the hardest?
- ☐ Which characteristic had the highest score? The lowest?
- ☐ Did any of your scores surprise you? Why?
- ☐ Who can I share my assessment with to get an additional perspective?

# DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

Now that you have a better sense of what behaviors make individual contributors successful at Salesforce, and how you're measuring up in each category, it's time to get to work. This section provides actionable development ideas that will help you build, practice, and internalize these traits you need to be a great individual contributor.

## CHARACTERISTIC #1: SALESFORCE SMART



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge</li><li>• Innovation</li><li>• Integration</li><li>• Managing Ambiguity</li><li>• Change Management</li></ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Job shadow people in departments you're interested in learning more about.</li><li>• Offer your expertise to solve a specific business problem, in or outside your function.</li><li>• Create a book club in your organization about business or technical topics.</li><li>• Talk to external peers in other industries/professions to gain perspective.</li><li>• Review org charts to see how different departments are organized.</li></ul> <p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read key business literature to stay on top of trends and developments (ask your peers what they read).</li><li>• Ask a colleague to provide input or feedback on your work to gain a different perspective.</li><li>• Get involved in an initiative that is changing a process or approach to learn about how to best manage change.</li><li>• Read blogs related to your industry to stay on top of new trends. Follow competitors on LinkedIn, Twitter, or other forums to continue to stay on top of trends in the industry.</li><li>• Discover Peter Drucker's take on management with this <a href="#">MBA-focused curriculum</a> created in partnership with the Drucker School of Management.</li></ul> <p><b>Attend:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attend external conferences or do research to understand the broader industry. Apply this information to a decision you are responsible for making.</li></ul>

# DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

## CHARACTERISTIC #2: GET IT DONE



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive Results</li> <li>• V2MOM</li> <li>• Process Improvement</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Calculated Risk Taking</li> <li>• Resourcefulness</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a time management system.</li> <li>• Seek input on your working drafts (proposals, presentations, etc.) from a peer or mentor.</li> <li>• If you aren't sure about the reason for a given task, ask your manager.</li> <li>• Lend a hand on a team task, whether or not it's your responsibility.</li> <li>• Clarify priorities with your manager any time you aren't certain.</li> <li>• When you catch yourself shooting an idea down or "going by the book", consider if that is a habitual response that may not serve every situation.</li> <li>• Initiate a project to improve a process.</li> <li>• Ask your manager to give you a task you've never done before or to work on something that would be a new challenge for you.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Crucial Accountability</i></li> <li>• <i>Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity</i></li> <li>• <i>7 Habits of Highly Effective People</i></li> </ul>

## CHARACTERISTIC #3: WIN AS A TEAM



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salesforce First</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Productive Conflict</li> <li>• Self-Awareness</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Compassion</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with peers or managers in other departments or functions you impact (or are impacted by) to increase work effectiveness.</li> <li>• Ask your manager and peers for networking suggestions.</li> <li>• Seek feedback from peers and clients about what you could do better.</li> <li>• Take others across the organization out to lunch to build your network and create new business relationships.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training/Assessments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take an assessment (like MBTI, DISC, or SCARF) to understand your work style. Share your insights with your team and peers, and consider where you may need to make adjustments to meet another's style.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Hit the trail</a> to reflect on the value of diversity and inclusion at work and what you can do to promote equality.</li> </ul>

# DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

## CHARACTERISTIC #4: MOTIVATE & CHAMPION



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Ownership</li> <li>• Gratitude</li> <li>• Growth Mindset</li> <li>• Authenticity</li> <li>• Emotional Intelligence</li> <li>• Inspiration</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge a peer's great work and say thanks.</li> <li>• Get involved in a mentoring relationship.</li> <li>• Volunteer to organize a team event to celebrate success on a project.</li> <li>• Ask your manager for opportunities to lead projects, initiatives or events, regardless of high profile the project may be.</li> <li>• Schedule informal 1:1s with your peers to get to know them on a more personal level. Meet with no agenda and chat about life, work or anything else that is top of mind.</li> <li>• Ask your manager to schedule quarterly career-focused conversations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take advantage of Trailhead resources and other internal training and online resources to develop yourself.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carol Dweck's <i>Mindset: The New Psychology of Success</i>, which shows how success in school, work, sports, the arts, and almost every area of human endeavour can be dramatically influenced by how we think about our talents and abilities.</li> </ul>

## CHARACTERISTIC #5: COURAGEOUS COMMUNICATOR



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact</li> <li>• Boldness</li> <li>• Vulnerability</li> <li>• Humility</li> <li>• Candid Conversations</li> <li>• Listening</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek coaching on your presentations from a peer who is skilled at it.</li> <li>• Ask for and give feedback. Try using the SBI (situation/behavior/impact) model.</li> <li>• The next time you make a mistake, share what happened and what you learned with your team.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vital Smart's: <i>Crucial Conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high</i></li> </ul>

# DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

## SALESFORCE VALUES



Key Traits	Development Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Customer Success</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Equality</li> </ul>	<p><b>Do:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devote 5 minutes in each one-on-one meeting with your manager to give and receive feedback.</li> <li>• Read articles and/or attend training on workplace equality and/or unconscious bias.</li> <li>• Read articles and/or attend trainings on design thinking, creativity and/or innovation.</li> <li>• Complete an individual and/or team styles or psychometric assessment.</li> <li>• Make it a priority to volunteer. Try scheduling a team volunteering event.</li> <li>• Attend, and encourage others to participate, in a wellness or mindfulness course.</li> <li>• Organize a team outing or other way to bring fun into the culture. Think outside the box (beyond Happy Hours) to volunteering, outdoor activities, a potluck, etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles and/or attend trainings on how to build trust and communicate transparently.</li> <li>• <i>Thanks for the Feedback</i> by Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Trailhead modules to learn more about our product as well as how to give feedback and avoid unconscious bias.</li> </ul>

## SECTION REFLECTION

Before moving onto the next section in this guide, ask yourself:

- ☐ How many of these development ideas have you already completed?  
How many are you planning to complete?
- ☐ Are you willing to carve out the time and effort required to put these ideas into action?
- ☐ Pick two to three new development ideas to focus on first—including at least one from your weakest characteristic (according to your self-assessment).
- ☐ Think about what would be the easiest first step and start there.

# READY TO TAKE ACTION? WE CAN HELP.

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Overwhelmed by the work you need to do? Not sure where to begin? Or perhaps you feel pretty good about how you stack up to the GREAT Individual Contributor Model, but you want to polish up a few specific skills? Read below to determine how to continue your journey.

## HOW TO CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

- Talk to your manager about investing in your development, whether that is through internal training opportunities or a stretch assignment.
- Ask about resources you can tap into to further develop your capabilities, like a mentoring relationship or any function-specific development resources.
- Do a job shadow to learn more about other positions within your company that you are interested in, or to share your knowledge with others.

## STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact [TalentDev@salesforce.com](mailto:TalentDev@salesforce.com)

