

# leader6

## ASCEND DISCOVERY PROGRAM

# Deciphering the Hidden Expectations That Will Determine Your Success

This document guides you in identifying and aligning the expectations that will shape your success as a leader. Clarifying expectations, both explicit and implicit, constitutes a fundamental step often overlooked in leadership transitions.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

As you discovered in your training, 37% of leadership failures are attributable to misunderstandings about the real expectations of the role according to the DDI International study. The success of your leadership depends on your ability to understand and respond not only to clearly formulated expectations (explicit), but also to those that remain implied or un verbalized (implicit).

Explicit expectations generally represent the visible part of the iceberg (approximately 30% of what will determine your success), while implicit expectations constitute the submerged part, which is larger and potentially dangerous. The latter may vary according to stakeholders, evolve over time, and create areas of ambiguity in your role if they are not clarified.

This guide will help you conduct a structured interview with your superior and create an expectations alignment matrix, two essential actions for building solid foundations for your leadership.

### INTERVIEW GUIDE: THE SEVEN ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Instructions for the Interview

- Schedule a dedicated interview with your superior (45-60 minutes)
- Explain the objective of the interview: to better understand the expectations related to your role
- Use the questions below to structure your conversation
- Take detailed notes, particularly on hesitations and nuances
- Ask for concrete examples to clarify ambiguous answers
- After the interview, synthesize the identified expectations and share this document with your superior for validation

### THE SEVEN ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

For each question, note your superior’s response, the examples mentioned, and your observations on non-verbal language or hesitations that could reveal implicit expectations.

**Question 1 :**  
**Which aspects of my role do you consider most critical for the success of the team/department?**

Response	Examples cited	Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)
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**Question 2 :**  
**What are the most common mistakes  
that new leaders make in this role?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

**Question 3 :**  
**How would you define an “excellent”  
versus a “good” leader in this position?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

**Question 4 :**  
**Are there any sensitive files or “minefields”  
that I should be aware of?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

**Question 5 :**  
**What are your own objectives**  
**and how can I help you achieve them?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

**Question 6 :**  
**How do you prefer to be informed**  
**about problems or challenges?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

**Question 7 :**  
**What informal criteria do you use**  
**to intuitively evaluate a leader's performance?**

Response

Examples cited

Observations (hesitations, emphasis, etc.)

## EXPECTATIONS ALIGNMENT MATRIX

Instructions for creating your matrix

- Use the information gathered during the meeting with your supervisor
- Add the formal elements from your job description
- Integrate expectations you've identified from other key stakeholders

Specific Expectation	Stakeholder(s) Involved	Type	Importance	Current Clarity	Actions Required to Clarify or Align
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### MATRIX ANALYSIS GUIDE

After completing your matrix, use the following questions to guide your analysis:

#### 1. Identification of alignment zones:

- Which expectations are shared by multiple stakeholders?
- Is there consensus on the most important expectations?

#### 2. Identification of contradictions:

- Are there contradictory expectations between different stakeholders?
- How can you resolve these contradictions?

#### 3. Clarification of unclear areas:

- Which expectations require additional clarification?
- Where and how will you seek this clarification?

#### 4. Action planning:

- What are your three immediate priorities for aligning expectations?
- How will you communicate and maintain this alignment over time?

### REFLECTION ON KEY LEARNINGS

After completing your expectations alignment matrix, take a few moments to reflect on what you've learned:

1. What was the most surprising or concerning expectation related to your role?
2. Which stakeholder have you successfully identified that wasn't previously obvious to you?
3. How will this exercise influence your leadership approach?

### CONCLUSION

By simultaneously clarifying what is said and unsaid, you build a solid foundation for your leadership. Expectations alignment is not a one-time exercise, but a continuous process that requires regular communication and periodic reassessment as the organizational context evolves. Use this document as an open tool that you can revisit and update throughout your progression in your leadership role.

## PERSONAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS