



Do you feel the pressure to decide quickly and usually go with the first solution that comes to mind?

Solving complex problems requires time, and it's unlikely that the first solution that comes to mind is the right one. That's why thinking through solutions is such an important leadership skill. As a leader, you face many problems on a daily basis, and it can be difficult to devote time and energy to finding the best solution to every problem, even when you have done your research. In our research and testing of nearly 800 executives for Martin Lanik's bestselling book *THE LEADER HABIT*, we discovered the behaviors that effective leaders practice when they think through solutions. To turn these behaviors into habits requires deliberate practice —on average, 66 days.

Thinking Through Solutions

means carefully evaluating multiple solutions to a problem based on clear criteria.

5-MINUTE LEADER HABIT EXERCISES

1. Brainstorm three solutions: After proposing a course of action (in an email or a meeting), list two alternatives you have considered by saying, "I settled on . . . after considering a few other options, such as . . . and . . ."

2. Identify advantages & disadvantages: After proposing an idea to someone, state one advantage and one limitation of your idea by saying, "I think that we should . . . ; it will help us with . . . , but it will not . . ."

3. Define the ideal solution: After realizing that you have a problem to solve, write down 2-3 bullet points of what the ideal solution should look like.



YOUR LEADER HABIT EXERCISE

Cue (After an event or task finishes...)	Behavior (... you do the micro-behavior)

PRACTICE YOUR LEADER HABIT EXERCISE ONCE A DAY FOR 66 DAYS AND MARK THE DAYS YOU PRACTICED.

				X		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66

