**Strategic thinking**. Shaw maintains that many leaders are better at managing operations than thinking strategically. Leaders who overestimate their strategic capabilities can face serious problems when they’re promoted into senior-level roles. Such roles put a premium on identifying and acting on new growth opportunities, which is something that’s hard to focus on if you're bogged down in managerial tasks.

**All-knowing.** Some bosses think that they know more than everybody else about everything and anything. Executives in this category don’t consider others’ points of view on most issues. They often prefer being right to being effective. Not only are they not always correct, but they distance themselves from their brain trust and make it harder to explore challenges and potential pitfalls.

**Assumption.** Many executives make the mistake of assuming that other people are just like them. They assume that they are motivated by similar things, think similarly, and would agree with the leader’s decisions. As preposterous as this may sound, many leaders just assume that others see things just as they do. Shaw said that this propensity for assumption can lead to poor decisions and weak work relationships. Sometimes, leaders exacerbate this problem by hiring people who are like them instead of hiring individuals who have complementary skills. In the ["Top Ten Mistakes that Entrepreneurs Make](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHjgK6p4nrw&buffer_share=b8706&utm_source=buffer)," Guy Kawasaki includes [this as] one of the most pervasive blind spots that leaders often have. As Kawasaki puts it, "You need to balance off all the talents in a company."

**Stuck-in-the-past blind**. Oftentimes, leaders assume that their past experiences can help them fix new problems. While this may be true at times, Shaw says, leaders will often default to old methods that do not fit the current situation. As Abraham Maslow once wrote, "I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail.” Oftentimes, leaders’ desire to take action hinders their ability to pursue or consider alternative responses.

**Install a warning system.** Have at least one person who can offer you feedback that prevents you from being blindsided. I did this as a head of school (we called it a Head Support Committee) and that worked wonders for me in terms of getting genuine, constructive feedback in a way that did not make members feel uncomfortable in sharing their thoughts.

**Build a good team.**Build a diverse team of smart people who are willing to engage with the leader and each other in productive talks and debates on the best path forward.

**Assess yourself from time to time**. Use 360-degree surveys, skip-level interviews or similar feedback mechanism that point out areas of potential weakness.

**Other ideas**:

* Get a peer mentor (peer coaching)
* Be reflective
* Work on relationships (the glue that holds everything in the workplace together)