

Leadership Potential

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Mar. 9, 2023

Effective Leadership Starts with Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is often cited as one of the key factors towards becoming a great leader. Successful leaders understand themselves and those around them, allowing them to manage relationships, influence behaviours, manage conflict, lead change and make better decisions.

The Work Personality Index® Leadership Potential report describes 21 key traits of your personal style that will influence your performance in your role as a leader. Understanding these qualities will help you understand the strengths that you can harness and where you may need further development or support.

What You Will See



Your Score



Comparative Leadership Range

The darker area highlights where scores of other leaders typically fall.



Strengths to Harness

Areas where you are closest to other leaders. Learn more about how you can harness these traits in a leadership position.



Key Development Areas

Areas where you are most different from other leaders. Learn more about how you can develop these traits further.



Your Strengths

Strengths that you can harness as a leader.



Potential Derailers

Potential challenges where you can seek support or development.



Enhancing Your Leadership

Advice for how you can continue to develop your skills in this area.

Jane Sample

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Strengths to Harness

Social Confidence



You are comfortable and self-assured in familiar social situations.



▶ See [PAGE 7](#) for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

Attention to Detail



Your style helps you align your team with the objectives of the organization.

▶ See [PAGE 17](#) for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

Persistence



You are comfortable following through and getting most tasks done.

▶ See [PAGE 15](#) for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

Key Development Areas

Teamwork



You may be focusing too much on working autonomously.



▶ See [PAGE 11](#) for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

Flexibility



You may focus too much on the established ways of working.

▶ See [PAGE 24](#) for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

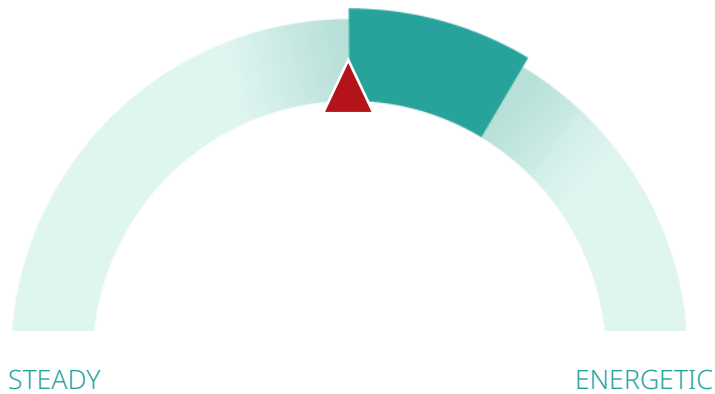
Rule-Following



Be careful when bypassing standard procedures and processes.

▶ See [PAGE 16](#) for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

Energy



- ▶ Possess as much energy as most people, but get tired when tasks require a long and concentrated expense of effort
- ▶ Enjoy work that involves some mental and physical challenges
- ▶ Prefer a balance between challenging and straightforward activities



Your Strengths

- Maintaining your stamina and energy over time
- Remaining physically and mentally active for some time
- Comfortable working in demanding situations periodically



Potential Derailers

- Difficulty working in slower paced environments for longer periods of time
- Burning out from engaging in higher energy activities too often



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you able to show the same level of energy for all of your tasks, or are you spreading yourself too thin? Learn to recognize when you are overcommitting yourself, and engage in rejuvenating activities.
- Develop a list of tasks that are challenging, and one that contains straightforward tasks. Rather than adjusting your energy level for the task at hand, try taking on a task that matches your current energy level.

Ambition



- ▶ **Ambitious, driven and goal-oriented**
- ▶ **Set moderately difficult goals and focus your energy on achieving results**
- ▶ **Somewhat competitive and have high aspirations**



Your Strengths

- Working toward goals in a determined and diligent way
- Leading with a clear sense of purpose and a focus on achieving bold targets
- Pushing yourself and others to succeed



Potential Derailers

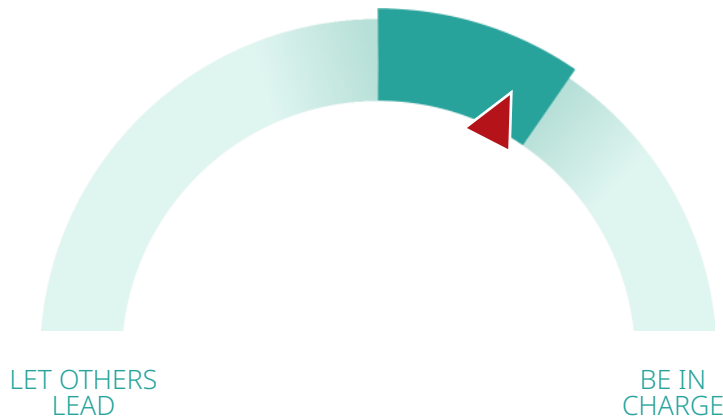
- Allowing your competitiveness to override your cooperativeness
- Being seen as somewhat aggressive by your team
- Investing too much time and energy into your work and career



Enhancing Your Leadership

- In some situations, a competitive approach may not be appropriate. Recognize when this may create conflict with others and adopt a more easy-going style.
- Is your level of ambition influencing the balance between your career and personal responsibilities? Consider whether or not your work-life balance is impacted by your level of drive.
- Don't let your personal ambition get in the way of team goals or values. If you focus too much on your own achievements, you may be seen as a poor team player.

Leadership



- ▶ **Moderately assertive and directive**
- ▶ **Enjoy being in leadership positions**
- ▶ **Comfortable taking charge of situations and managing others**



Your Strengths

- Setting an agenda and directing team members
- Asserting your ideas and influencing others
- Making some unpopular decisions
- Delegating work



Potential Derailers

- Coming across as somewhat stubborn
- Assertiveness may lead to some strained relationships
- Being seen as micromanaging to staff who are seeking more freedom



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Is your knowledge and skills always appropriate for every situation? Your approach may not always be the most efficient method, so let others take the leadership role when their knowledge and approach is more suitable.
- Consider when you may need to take a more consultative approach to leadership.
- Keep in mind that your direct approach may come across as being overly assertive or domineering. Avoid telling others what to do too often, especially if they do not work for you.

Social Confidence



- ▶ **Comfortable and self-assured in familiar social situations; less so in large groups of strangers**
- ▶ **Will initiate conversations with people you know, or if your position calls for it**
- ▶ **You enjoy spending time with people you know well**



Your Strengths

- Meeting new people, in both formal and informal settings
- Presenting yourself as capable and competent in group settings
- Connecting with others and engaging people without dominating the conversation



Potential Derailers

- Focusing too much of your attention and energy on the people you know
- Not pushing your ideas when engaging people who seem very confident or passionate about their own



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When entering a room take a moment to scan the environment. Are there people who are on their own, or not participating in the conversation? Make the effort to engage these people.
- Take the time to identify and clarify your skills and areas of competence. This will allow you to present yourself in a self-assured manner in a greater number of areas.

Persuasion



- ▶ **Very comfortable debating ideas and trying to shift people to your way of thinking**
- ▶ **Open to negotiating and bargaining when there is a need**
- ▶ **Have a talent for influencing others**



Your Strengths

- Exercising persuasion and influence when necessary
- "Selling" ideas to others
- Willingness to share and advocate for your point of view



Potential Derailers

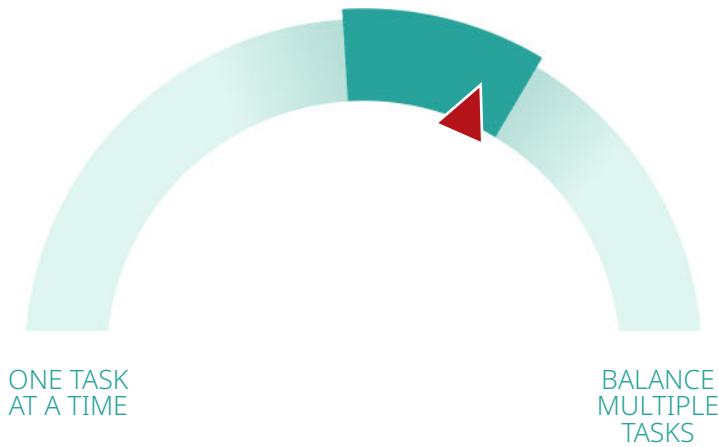
- Appearing as unyielding or difficult
- Putting too much effort and energy into winning someone over
- Playing the role of devil's advocate for no reason other than enjoyment of an argument



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Ensure that you are not overusing your comfort with persuasion and argument. If your interactions involve a lot of attempts at influence, people may begin to feel uncomfortable, or believe that you agree with few things that are important to them.
- Are others accepting your perspectives simply because you are unyielding? Your skill at arguing your position may cause others to disengage. You may lose valuable information or perspectives that could make an important contribution.
- Keep in mind that not everything is up for negotiation or bargaining. If you rely on this approach too often, you can damage relationships.

Multi-Tasking



- ▶ Enjoy balancing demands and having a wide range of responsibilities
- ▶ Like having the opportunity to shift between tasks when things get boring



Your Strengths

- Dealing with multiple demands and a lot of issues
- Shifting between tasks as needed
- Comfortable with a busy schedule



Potential Derailers

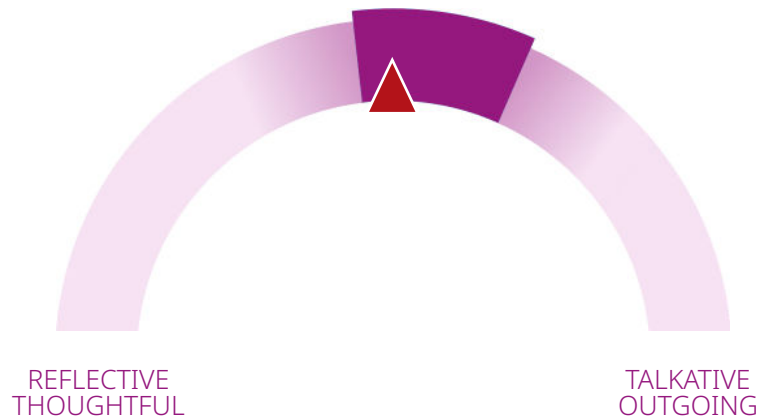
- Taking on too much and struggling to get everything done
- Moving on to new issues too quickly and sacrificing follow-through
- Not focusing on key priorities



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Being busy is not the same as being effective. Would you be better served by focusing on fewer, but more important, things? Look to delegate tasks that do not require your specific skills.
- Your active style can result in focusing on the things that appear urgent rather than what is important. Take care not to get caught up in the immediate issues at the expense of key priorities and long-range plans.

Outgoing



- ▶ Most comfortable interacting with people that you know, but do not find connecting with others to be stressful
- ▶ Value some time to collect your thoughts and reflect on ideas before sharing with others



Your Strengths

- Moving between individual and group work with finesse
- Managing the demands of tasks and relationships
- Ability to work with a wide range of people in a wide range of environments



Potential Derailers

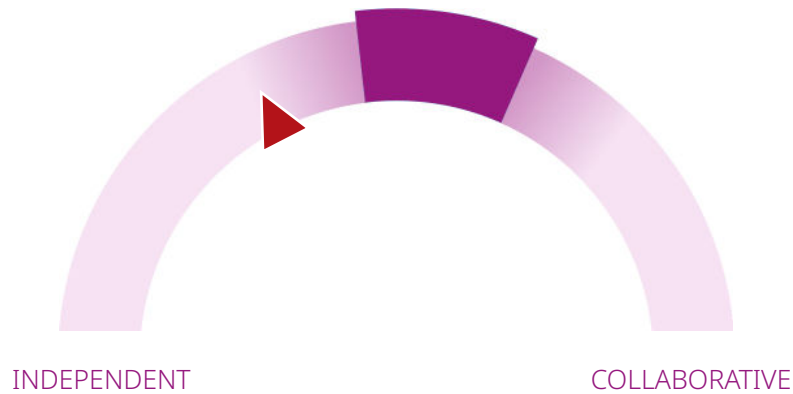
- Having to work on your own, or in group settings for extended periods of time
- Gearing your tempo and friendliness to personal needs rather than the demands of the situation
- Making decisions when there is limited time to reflect on the issue



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Learn to recognize when you are becoming tired from spending too much time with or without others, and adjust your tasks accordingly.
- When dealing with those who are less outgoing, allow more time for reflection. Give others a chance to say what they think and make a point of listening.

Teamwork



- ▶ **Enjoy working on your own, or in smaller groups**
- ▶ **Find that most tasks are best completed by working independently**
- ▶ **In team environments, you prefer to work on your part of the project by yourself and then bring the results to the group for integration**



Your Strengths

- Self-reliance
- Comfortable completing tasks with little assistance from others



Potential Derailers

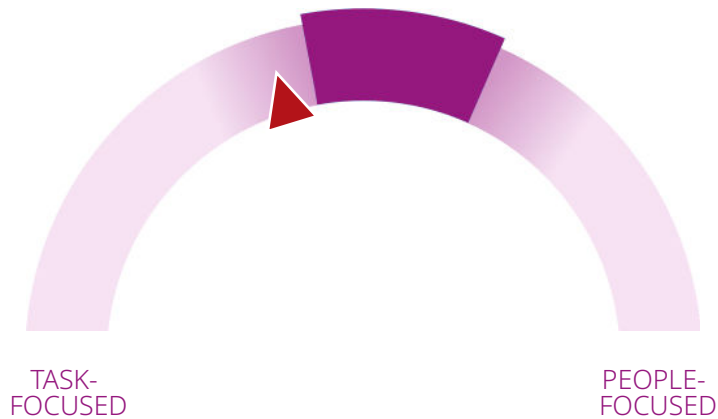
- Not valuing brainstorming, collaboration or team efforts
- Failing to share your ideas and thought process with others
- Independent approach producing sub-optimal results



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Your high level of independence may come across as a lack of cooperation and an unwillingness to contribute to team goals. As a leader, encouraging and enabling teamwork is critical for organizational success.
- Take time to inform and involve others in your work. Make the effort to solicit ideas from different people before committing yourself to a plan of action.
- Ask team members if and how you can help them with their projects.

Concern for Others



- ▶ **Balance between the needs of individuals and the task at hand**
- ▶ **Show some empathy when helping others, but also value maintaining an objective approach to their issues**
- ▶ **Aware of the feelings of others and can anticipate how people will react to events**



Your Strengths

- Building and maintaining positive relationships via diplomacy
- Making decisions by considering both the logical consequences and the impact on people
- Providing critical feedback to others when it is necessary, even if you find it uncomfortable



Potential Derailers

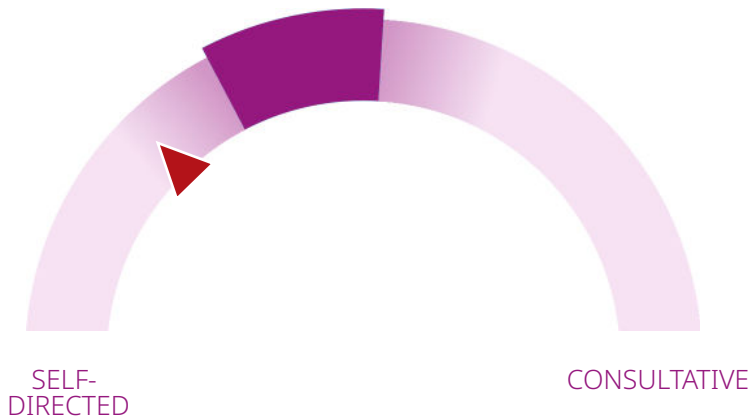
- Avoid dealing with conflict, especially when it requires unpopular decisions to be made
- Prone to losing patience when encountering the same problem repeatedly
- Becoming frustrated in environments where the feelings and emotions of others consistently come into play



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Identify situations where you should consider the concerns of others, and those where you need to make an objective decision. Is your decision actually objective, or is it being influenced by the thoughts and feelings of others?
- Find opportunities to balance your preferences for working with others in a supportive manner and working on tasks with fewer interpersonal requirements. When facing a challenge in one of these domains, the change of scenery may help you generate (or weigh) potential solutions.

Democratic



- ▶ Self-directed and favour independence
- ▶ Infrequently seek input when making decisions
- ▶ Not very concerned about others' ideas or opinions



Your Strengths

- Making decisions without the need to consult others
- Going against popular opinion
- Making independent decisions



Potential Derailers

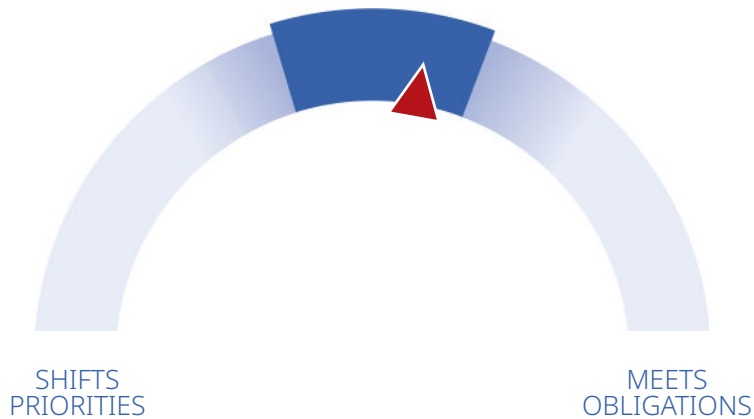
- Operating too independently
- Ignoring feedback, guidance and outside perspectives
- Getting stuck in a rut of your own way of seeing things



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Be wary of ignoring relevant information or advice too frequently. While independent decision making can help solve problems more quickly, diversity in perspectives can result in better solutions.
- Consult with others and incorporate their perspectives before making important choices.

Dependability



- ▶ **Strive to complete tasks according to the established schedule**
- ▶ **Willing to shift priorities as more urgent demands arise**
- ▶ **Aim to finish tasks that you start, but willing to show flexibility on lower priority deadlines**



Your Strengths

- Ensuring that most tasks and projects have been completed
- Reprioritizing tasks as needed



Potential Derailers

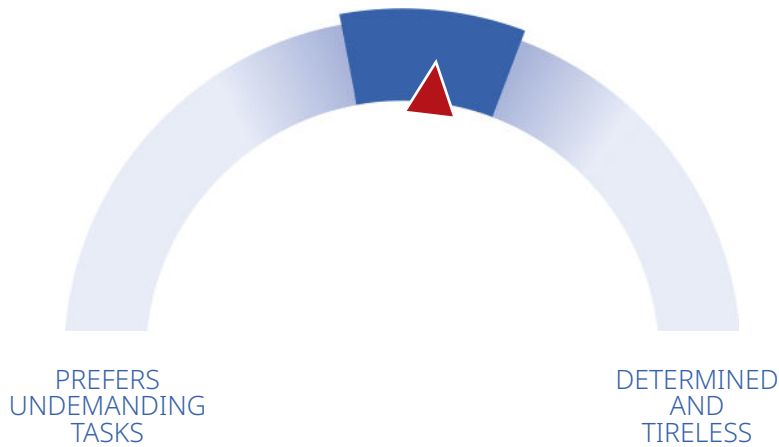
- Jumping into a task before determining its importance and priority
- Not keeping track of the progression of every task, including lower priority projects



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you letting too many obligations slip, in order to accommodate arising demands? Make sure that you are completing important tasks on schedule. In doing so, you will be seen as reliable and responsible to others.
- Ensure that you aren't promising more than you can realistically deliver. It may be tempting to take on new responsibilities, but beware becoming overwhelmed when trying to meet all of the deadlines you have set for yourself.

Persistence



- ▶ **Motivated to complete your work and like to finish tasks that you start**
- ▶ **Compare the resources and effort needed to accomplish a task against the rewards**
- ▶ **May be uninterested in pursuing routine or extremely difficult tasks**



Your Strengths

- Knowing when effort will exceed the returns
- Following-through and getting the job done for most tasks
- Maintaining your focus and ignoring many distractions



Potential Derailers

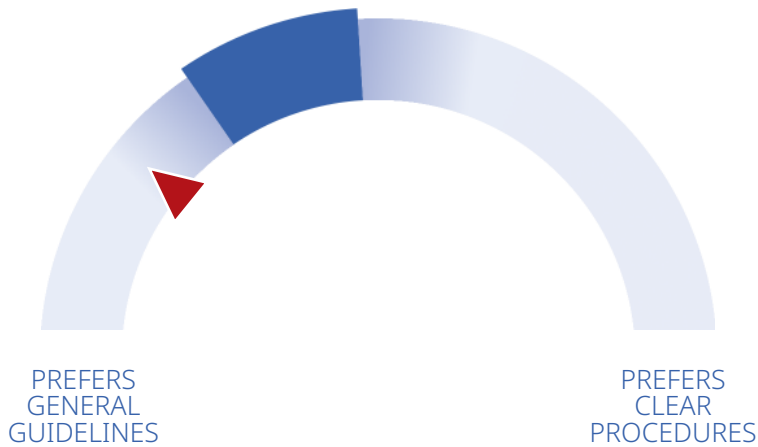
- Failing to recognize when a task you are highly invested in is no longer worth the effort
- Not following through on tasks that are less interesting
- Disengaging from challenging tasks too quickly



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you shying away from tasks simply because they aren't interesting, even if they can be rewarding? Sometimes you can find great long-term rewards from these projects, even though they'll be less engaging in the short-term.
- Ensure that you are balancing demanding tasks with those that require less effort, in order to recharge and rejuvenate between challenging tasks.

Rule-Following



- ▶ See operating procedures as general guidelines rather than specific instructions
- ▶ Willing to bend or adjust rules in order to make progress
- ▶ Dislike bureaucracy, especially when it restricts you from working efficiently



Your Strengths

- Working in unstructured, free-flowing environments
- Managing uncertainty and ambiguity
- Challenging current guidelines and structures



Potential Derailers

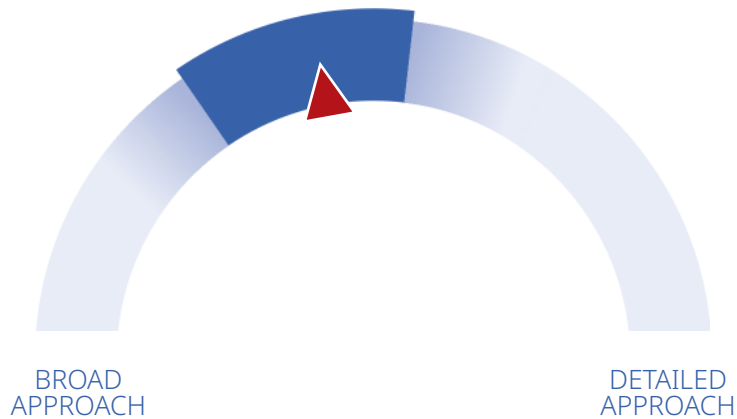
- Operating outside of standard procedures
- Resisting established processes
- Cutting corners, being overly expedient and bypassing important steps



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When challenging the current way of doing things, carefully question your motivation for doing so. Are these changes actually more effective? Keep in mind that some guidelines and structures may be in place for legitimate reasons.
- Consider who on your team could benefit from clearer guidance and more structure than you naturally provide. How can you help these individuals perform at their best?

Attention to Detail



- ▶ **Able to focus on details when it's needed**
- ▶ **Aim to balance the short- and long-term needs of the team and organization**
- ▶ **Seek to align day-to-day operations with the strategic vision**



Your Strengths

- Aligning your team and the organization with the strategy and vision
- Taking action even when there are fewer details available
- Organizing both short- and long-term plans



Potential Derailers

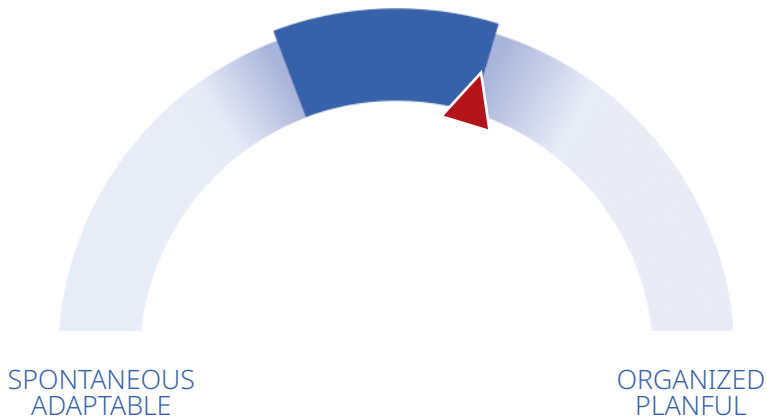
- Getting caught up in either day-to-day tasks, or long-range planning, and failing to consider the appropriate balance between the two
- Ensuring a consistently high standard for quality is maintained



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Maintaining a balance between the day-to-day operations and the long-term strategic plan will always be a challenge, especially when they take you in two different directions. Ensure that you aren't being pulled in too many different directions, otherwise you won't be able to address the important issues.
- Do you find yourself getting bogged down in details? Take a step back to consider the big picture. Are you investing your time and effort into something that will make a difference in the long-run? If not, limit your commitment accordingly.

Planning



- ▶ **Make short- and long-term plans for projects and tasks**
- ▶ **Enjoy thinking about how the immediate future can be approached in a structured way**
- ▶ **Consider a wide range of contingencies when organizing your work**



Your Strengths

- Short and long-term planning
- Careful consideration of potential issues and challenges before embarking on a new project
- Organizing tasks so they can be completed in a methodical and efficient manner
- Being prepared for contingencies



Potential Derailers

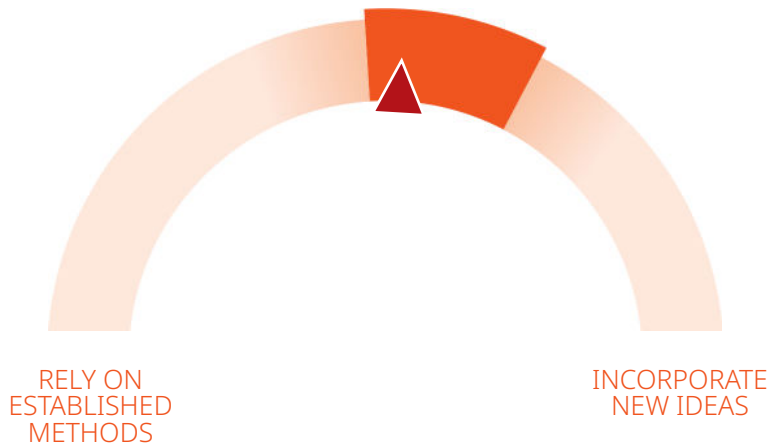
- Sticking with your planned approach for too long, even though it is no longer effective
- Failing to make adjustments when new information becomes available
- Taking too long to make decisions and shift priorities



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Time-limited or critical situations often require action without extensive planning. Are you investing in detailed planning that is not necessary? Take time to evaluate the risk of the situation and adjust your level of preparation accordingly. Becoming more comfortable with plunging in and adopting an emergent approach will increase your effectiveness in situations where a quick response is called for.
- Today's plan may not fit tomorrow's environment. Good plans can be disrupted by unexpected changes or new information. Is there a way to adjust the current plan to meet the new situation? Recognize when you may need to shift priorities.

Innovation



- ▶ **Enjoy new ideas, but avoid those that seem far-fetched**
- ▶ **Comfortable building on the thoughts and work of others**
- ▶ **Implement practical solutions when things are not working**



Your Strengths

- Combining innovation and pragmatism
- Generating and applying new ideas to take advantage of opportunities



Potential Derailers

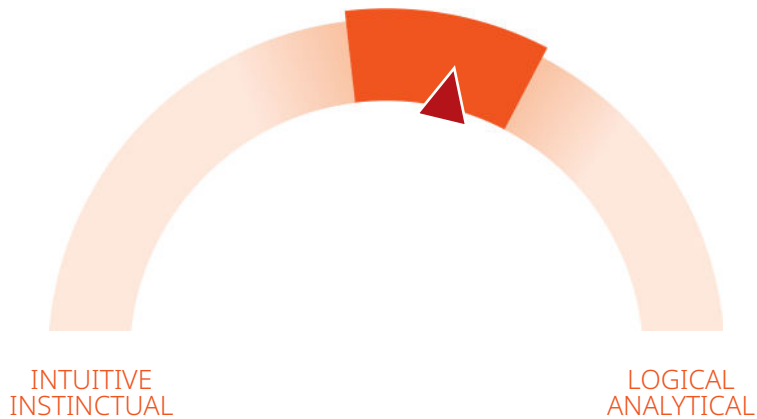
- Not truly considering ideas that are highly conceptual or imaginative
- Getting stuck in the middle-ground between ideas and execution
- Failing to delegate the implementation and execution of creative solutions to others



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When you cannot find the balance between innovation and pragmatism, consider which approach will apply best to the situation at hand. Will an innovative solution address the immediate need? Will adapting a previous solution create a different long-term challenge?
- Delegate the implementation of ideas to others. You will limit your impact if you feel that you need to generate solutions and implement them on your own.

Analytical Thinking



- ▶ **Rely on your intuition to make smaller decisions**
- ▶ **Devote more time and analysis to serious issues**
- ▶ **Enjoy solving problems and considering abstract concepts some of the time**



Your Strengths

- Seeking a balance between analysis and action
- Critical thinking and impartial evaluation
- Asking questions and seeking out additional information when tackling complexity



Potential Derailers

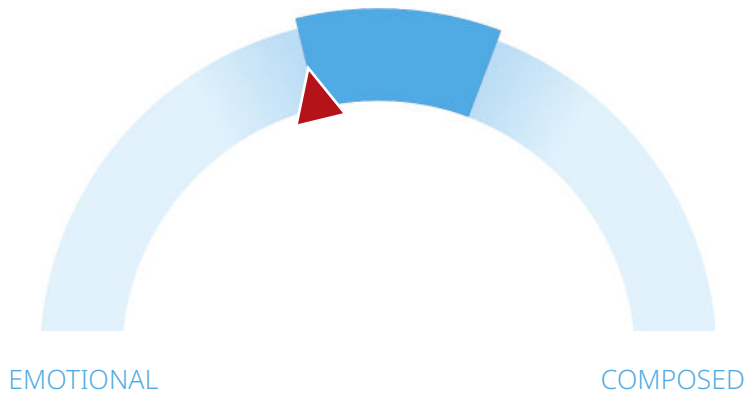
- Struggle with making multiple decisions in a short period of time
- Getting worn down by issues that require extensive analysis
- Jumping to implementation too quickly



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Getting the correct balance between action and analysis can be challenging. Take the time to evaluate how you balance the two, and if there are any issues with the way that you approach different situations. Are there times when you should take action and move forward faster than you currently do? Are there times that you should dive deeper and analyze the situation?
- When in doubt, discuss your ideas and solutions with those who favour analysis. They will be able to provide you with a critical review, and a different perspective.

Self-Control



- ▶ Relatively calm and easy going
- ▶ Generally patient and slow to anger
- ▶ Try to conceal emotions which will be interpreted negatively, but can become upset when things frequently go wrong



Your Strengths

- Presenting a mostly calm and diplomatic image during difficult times, but may be outspoken when it is necessary to do so
- Showing self-restraint and emotional composure during times of conflict
- Leading through emotional or tense situations



Potential Derailers

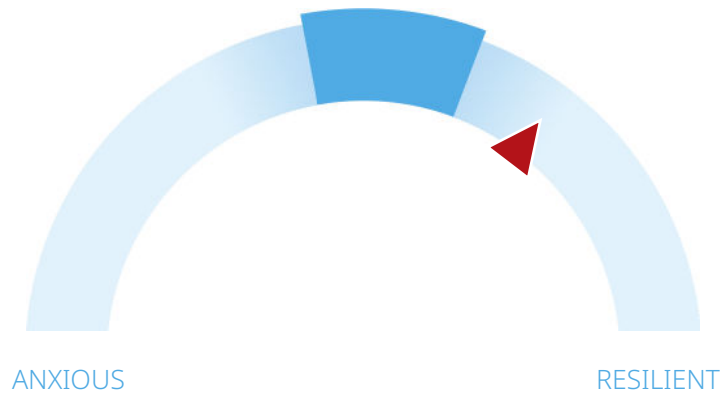
- Withholding your true thoughts and feelings with others, especially when they may be interpreted negatively
- May be uncomfortable expressing intense emotions, such as excitement or impatience, when it's necessary to do so



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Consider when it would be beneficial to be more open with your thoughts and feelings, even if they are negative. If framed in a constructive manner, showing your authentic reactions can help you develop more effective relationships with others.
- Would your team appreciate seeing your enthusiasm? While you act as a source of calm in difficult circumstances, letting your team see your excitement towards positive situations can encourage and motivate them.

Stress Tolerance



- ▶ **Able to cope with most demands and tolerate stress well**
- ▶ **Remain relaxed when under pressure**
- ▶ **Respond constructively to problems and do not take criticism personally**



Your Strengths

- Stress tolerance and resiliency
- Remaining calm in a variety of tense situations
- Constructive use of criticism



Potential Derailers

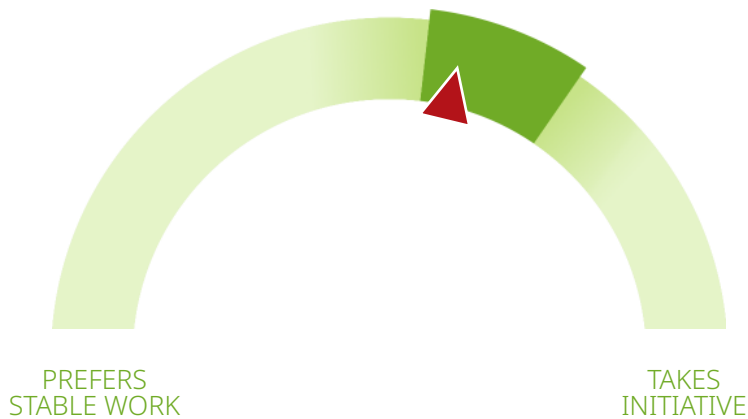
- Getting bored quickly with tasks that pose little challenge
- Not always appreciating the anxiety or emotional turmoil that others may be feeling



Enhancing Your Leadership

- What you find exciting and engaging, others may find stressful and difficult. Recognize that others may not be able to deal with stress as effectively as you can. How can you provide support to these individuals, especially when they are in a difficult situation?
- When faced with a task that you find routine and repetitive, could you delegate this work? Could you then take on some of the tasks that your team finds stressful and difficult, but you find engaging?

Initiative



- ▶ **Moderately proactive**
- ▶ **Keep an eye open for future possibilities and take advantage of clear opportunities**
- ▶ **Enjoy having some stability and consistency in your work responsibilities**



Your Strengths

- Being proactive and going beyond the requirements of your role when required
- Acting on clearly beneficial business opportunities
- Acting outside the bounds of your formal role when necessary



Potential Derailers

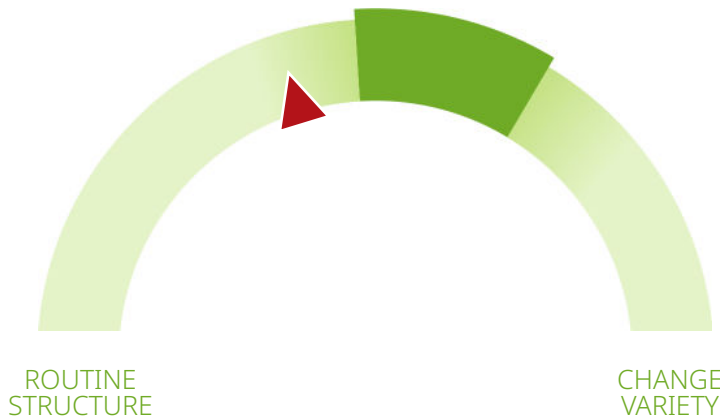
- Moving forward before getting the appropriate buy-in or resources in place
- Failing to find the appropriate balance between taking on new opportunities and sticking with current priorities
- Only considering opportunities that are familiar and not a large stretch



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you taking on too many opportunities? Has your team or responsibilities become a lower priority as a consequence? Make sure that your desire to make the most of new opportunities does not come at the expense of fulfilling your current responsibilities.
- Evaluate opportunities carefully and make sure that you are prioritizing those which have the greatest impacts or chance of success. Does the opportunity align with broader goals? Do you have the resources to pursue them? Sometimes you may need to take a bigger risk, while at other times you will need to stick with your current approach. How well are you balancing this natural leadership tension?

Flexibility



- ▶ **Prefer a balance between routine tasks and new challenges in your day-to-day responsibilities**
- ▶ **Open to changes that address problems in a practical manner, but can be wary of off-the-wall ideas or unproven theories**



Your Strengths

- Comfort with small to moderate sized change
- Openness to improvements that address immediate challenges



Potential Derailers

- Failing to get on board with larger changes, preferring to support minor adjustments which may not be sufficient
- Being seen as changing too much by those who prefer stability, and not enough by those who are open to larger changes



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Keeping a balance between routine and variety can be a challenge. Identify which tasks you complete best in a structured, routine manner. When you find that you are becoming tired from working on routine tasks, switch to something new and creative to be able to fulfill your need for some variety.
- Are you providing enough structure for your team? Are you providing the appropriate level of flexibility as well? Good leaders find the appropriate balance between stability and adaptability based on the demands of the issue rather than personal preferences.