

Leadership Potential

John Sample

Aug. 23, 2016

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.

John Sample

		PAGE
Energy and Drive		
Energy		4
Ambition		5
Leadership		6
Social Confidence		7
Persuasion		8
Multi-Tasking		9
Working With Others		
Outgoing		10
Teamwork		11
Concern for Others		12
Democratic		13
Work Style		
Dependability		14
Persistence		15
Rule-Following		16
Attention to Detail		17
Planning		18
Problem Solving Style		
Innovation		19
Analytical Thinking		20
Dealing With Pressure and Stress		
Self-Control		21
Stress Tolerance		22
Identifying and Managing Change		
Initiative		23
Flexibility		24

Strengths to Harness

Concern for Others



Your approach helps you build positive relationships with others.

Teamwork



You adopt a team approach for complex tasks, and an independent approach for simple tasks.



▶ See **PAGE 12** for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

▶ See **PAGE 11** for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

Key Development Areas

Democratic



Consider how your independent approach may cause you to overlook input from others.

Persistence



You may invest more time or effort into a project than it is worth.

Flexibility



You may seek to change things simply for the sake of change.



▶ See **PAGE 13** for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

▶ See **PAGE 15** for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

▶ See **PAGE 24** for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

Energy



- ▶ **Active and energetic**
- ▶ **Have a high level of stamina**
- ▶ **Like to keep busy and work well in demanding environments**



Your Strengths

- Maintaining a high level of energy over time
- Staying active and tackling challenges with vigour
- Thriving in highly demanding environments



Potential Derailers

- Difficulty working in slower paced environments
- Overcommitment leading to burnout
- Pushing yourself and others too hard
- Impatience with initiatives that move slowly



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you overcommitting to projects or activities? Be aware of how many commitments you are making before you become too busy to focus on the important responsibilities.
- Keep in mind that not everyone shares your level of energy. Others may approach tasks or projects at a slower pace than you are used to.
- Rejuvenation is important! Invest into new skills and opportunities that will help you relax.

Ambition



- ▶ **Very ambitious, driven and goal-oriented**
- ▶ **Set difficult goals and focus much of your energy on achieving results**
- ▶ **Highly 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 too aggressive by your team
- Becoming a workaholic; 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 your competitive style is creating conflict with others and adopt a more easy-going approach.
- Is your level of ambition and competitiveness 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



- ▶ **Assertive and directive**
- ▶ **Enjoy being in positions of control and authority**
- ▶ **Comfortable taking charge of situations and managing others**



Your Strengths

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



Potential Derailers

- Coming across as stubborn and unwilling to compromise or collaborate
- Assertiveness leading to strained relationships
- Micromanaging staff



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



- ▶ **Confident and self-assured**
- ▶ **Very comfortable in social situations**
- ▶ **Feel at ease initiating connections with strangers**



Your Strengths

- Meeting new people and interacting with others in both formal and casual settings
- Presenting yourself in a poised and assertive manner
- Being sure of yourself and presenting your thoughts with conviction



Potential Derailers

- Dominating group conversations; may come across as overbearing
- Overlooking people who are more timid or shy
- Not giving others the space or time that they need



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Your self-confidence can be intimidating to others, and may push them to the sidelines. This is especially true of those who are more reserved. Find ways to involve these individuals in the conversation. They may have great ideas, but are not comfortable interjecting or sharing without solicitation.
- Make a conscious effort to focus the spotlight and attention on others, especially members of your team.

Persuasion



- ▶ Enjoy debating ideas and trying to shift people to your way of thinking
- ▶ Comfortable negotiating and bargaining
- ▶ Have a talent for influencing others



Your Strengths

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



Potential Derailers

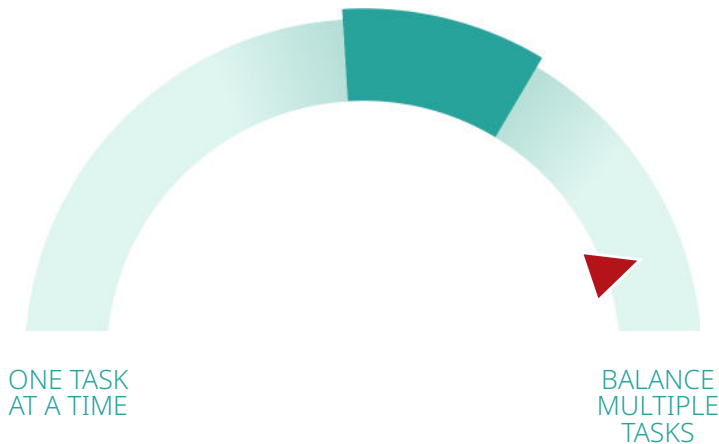
- Coming across as aggressive and difficult
- Appearing as unyielding and not willing to change your mind
- Putting too much effort and energy into winning someone over
- Playing the role of devil's advocate for no reason other than enjoyment of an argument



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 multiple 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

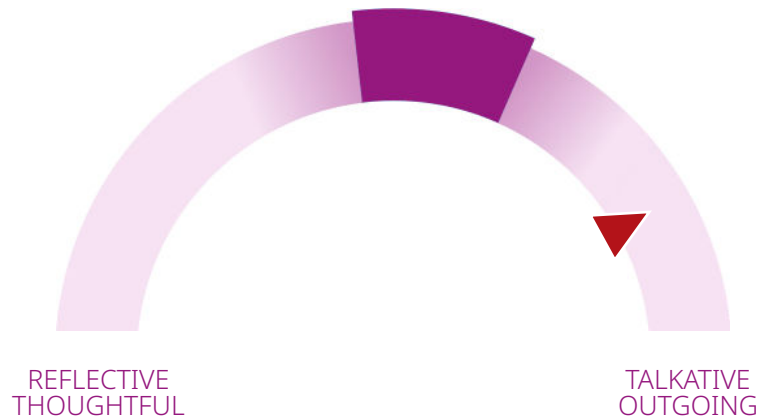
- Taking on too much and struggling to get everything done
- Moving on to new issues too quickly and sacrificing follow-through
- Not focusing on key priorities



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



- ▶ Extraverted and sociable
- ▶ Lively, friendly and approachable
- ▶ Have a large number of friends and contacts



Your Strengths

- Sharing ideas and spreading enthusiasm
- Connecting with and engaging others



Potential Derailers

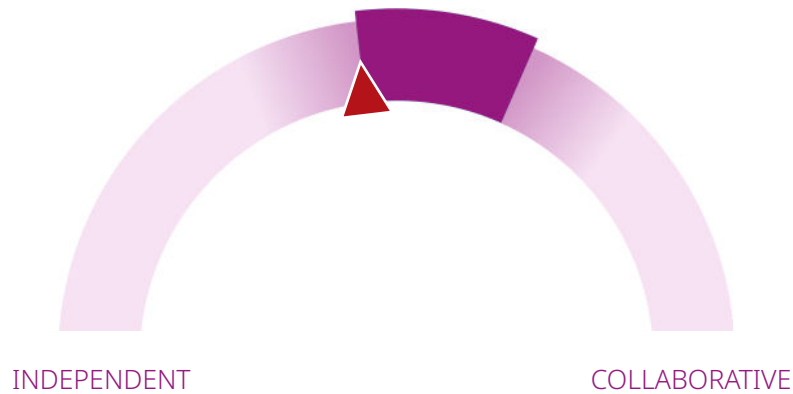
- Talking more than listening
- Sharing your thoughts, feelings and ideas too soon
- Over relying on face-to-face communication



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When leading discussions don't move on too quickly. Some members of your team may require a bit more time to reflect before they can share their best ideas. Give them this opportunity and then solicit their thoughts.
- Do you find yourself saying things that you later regret, especially when meeting new people? Review and reflect on your opinions before sharing them with those that you don't know as well.

Teamwork



- ▶ **Adopt a team approach for large or complex tasks**
- ▶ **Prefer to work on your own for simple ones**
- ▶ **Encourage your staff to exercise their judgment when involving others in their work, hoping for quick collaboration when solving problems, but independent action for straight-forward issues**



Your Strengths

- Capable of working independently and in teams
- Encouraging others and sharing your expertise to create learning opportunities



Potential Derailers

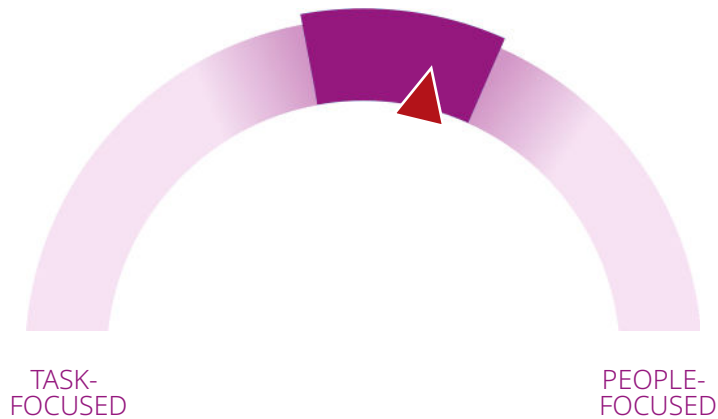
- Working alone too often can leave you feeling disconnected and drained
- Not providing enough autonomy to members of your team



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Not everyone will be as versatile as you are when it comes to jumping between group and individual work. Consider the needs of your team members and adjust your approach accordingly. Some will value more collaboration, while others will prefer to work on tasks individually before bringing their findings or progress back to the group.
- While naturally drawn toward tackling difficult issues in a team setting, this is not always appropriate as a leader. Make sure that the tasks and issues you involve others in are suitable.

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

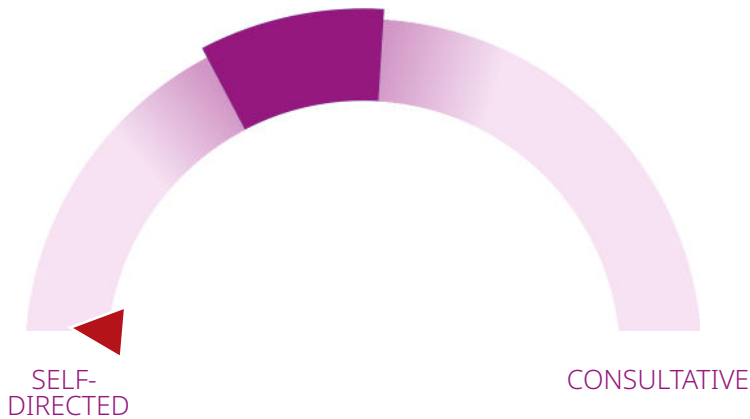
- Avoid dealing with conflict, especially when it requires unpopular decisions to be made
- Prone to losing patience when encountering the same problem repeatedly
- Becoming frustrated in environments where the feelings and emotions of others consistently come into play



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



- ▶ Independent and self-directed
- ▶ Rarely seek input when making decisions
- ▶ Not 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

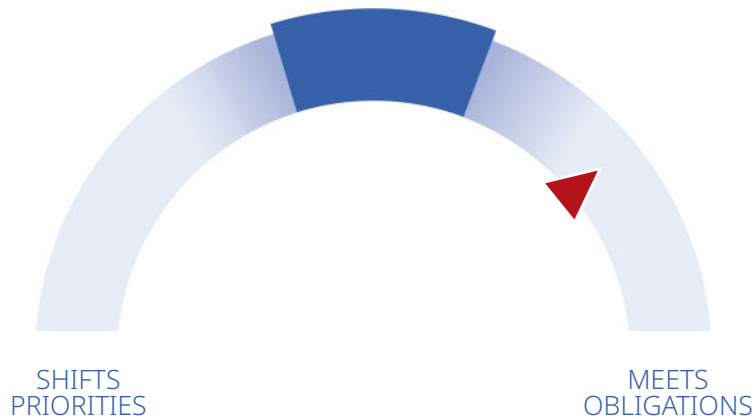
- Resisting feedback, guidance and outside perspectives
- Operating too independently
- Getting stuck in a rut of your own way of seeing things



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



- ▶ **Meet your obligations and follow through on all your commitments**
- ▶ **Strongly value meeting deadlines**
- ▶ **Aim to finish everything that you start**



Your Strengths

- Getting things done and not letting things slip through the cracks
- Keeping track of all tasks, including those which are smaller or lower priority
- Being seen as highly responsible



Potential Derailers

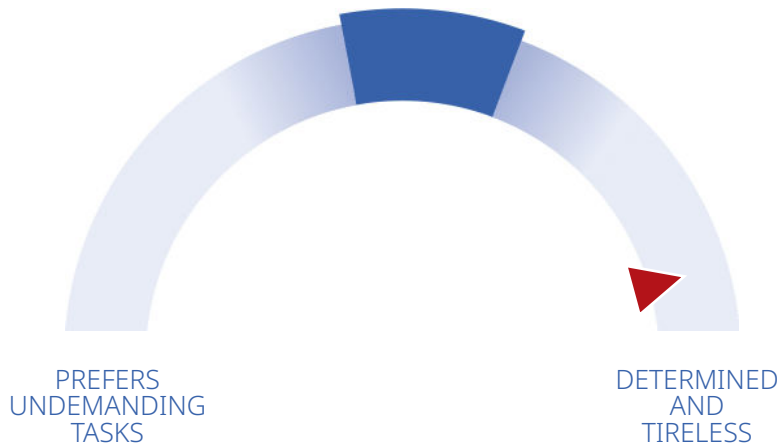
- Not seeing the need to reprioritize tasks
- Rigidly sticking with previously developed plans and project deliverables
- Over-relying on doing things yourself



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Don't see changing goals and deliverables as being unreliable. When addressing long-term challenges and issues, you will need to adopt an emergent strategy to achieve the best result.
- Ensure that you aren't promising more than you can realistically deliver. It may be tempting to take on new responsibilities, but do not overcommit yourself.

Persistence



- ▶ Do not give up easily and relentlessly focus on getting the job done
- ▶ Try many solutions to resolve problems
- ▶ Are tenacious and steadfast



Your Strengths

- Persevering through difficult challenges
- Following-through
- Maintaining your focus and ignoring distractions



Potential Derailers

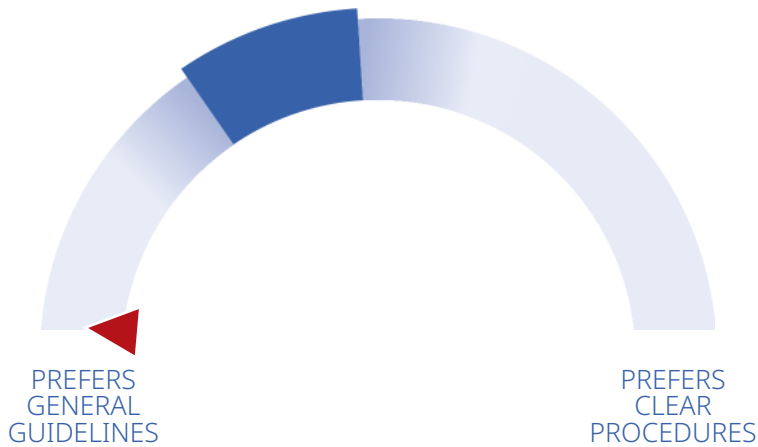
- Over committing resources
- Not knowing when to ask for help
- Driving staff too hard
- Not maintaining an appropriate work-life balance



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you spending too much time trying to overcome challenges? Sometimes pushing forward with a project may not be worth the time or effort. Consider when it might be time to ask for help or pass the task off to someone else who has the expertise to solve the problem.
- Most of your staff will adopt a less determined and tenacious approach to tasks than you do. Note this difference, and consider how their needs for work-life balance may be different than your own. Pushing people too hard and setting unrealistic expectations can fracture work relationships.

Rule-Following



- ▶ See operating procedures as general guidelines rather than specific instructions
- ▶ Willing to bend, adjust or break 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
- Questioning the status quo and challenging current guidelines and structures



Potential Derailers

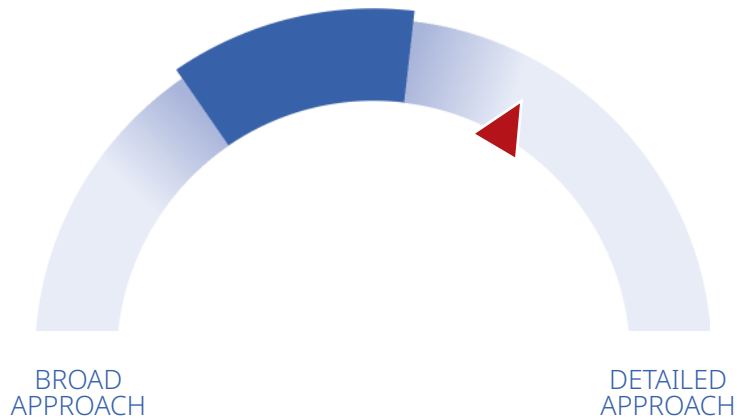
- Operating outside of standard procedures
- Resisting established processes
- Cutting corners, being overly expedient and bypassing important steps



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



- ▶ Focus on details and manage them carefully
- ▶ Prefer facts and figures to broad ideas and future possibilities
- ▶ Realistic and thorough



Your Strengths

- Being mindful of the details and integrating them into decisions
- Focusing on quality control and setting higher standards
- Considering the needs of day-to-day operations



Potential Derailers

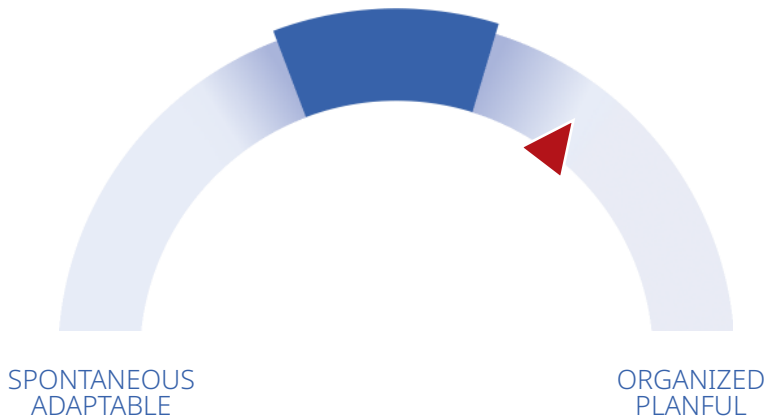
- Failing to align your team with the organization's broad strategy and vision
- Leading through ambiguity and uncertainty
- Overlooking long-term implications in favour of immediate tasks



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you favouring day-to-day needs at the expense of the big picture? Your focus on the immediate, concrete details may cause you to overlook the long-term, strategic needs of your team and the organization.
- Are your standards too high to be realistic? While it is beneficial to be concerned about quality, ensure that you aren't getting bogged down by setting requirements that aren't worth achieving. Sometimes, "good enough" is the best solution.

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

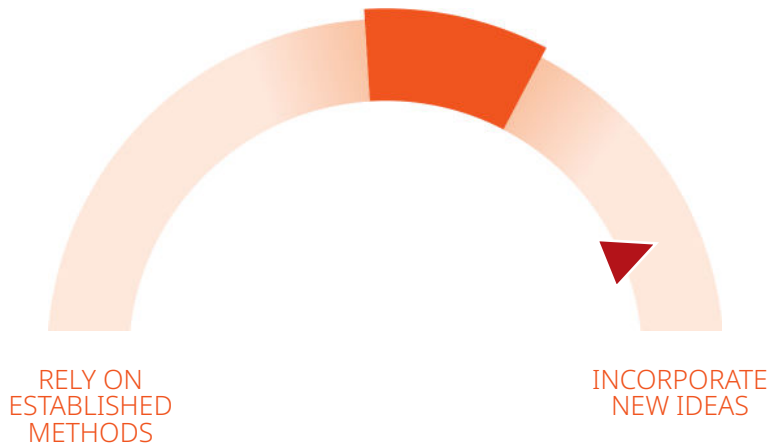
- Sticking with your planned approach for too long, even though it is no longer effective
- Failing to make adjustments when new information becomes available
- Taking too long to make decisions and shift priorities



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



- ▶ Drawn to what is new and different
- ▶ Enjoy generating and considering innovative ideas
- ▶ Like to find new ways to complete tasks
- ▶ Willing to consider most ideas, even if they are far-fetched or impractical



Your Strengths

- Openness to leading innovation and change
- Providing new ways to do things
- Incorporating ideas from a wide range of disciplines



Potential Derailers

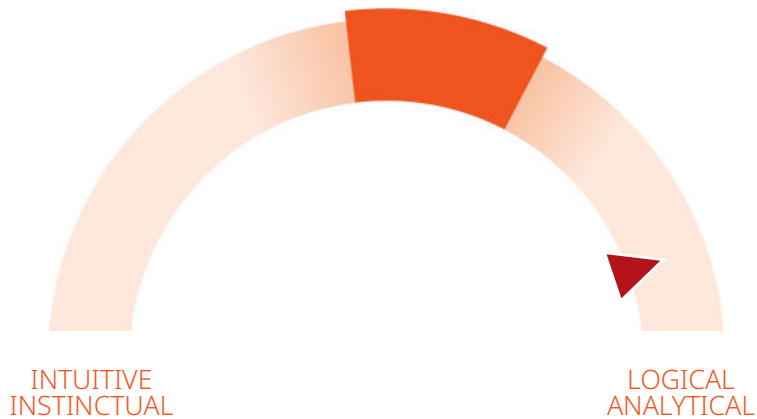
- Implementing overly complex or innovative solutions when something easier and more practical will do
- Resisting standard processes and procedures - even when they are working well
- Failing to consider the practical steps necessary to implement your ideas



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Before committing to a new idea or approach, ask yourself if it is overly idealistic or impractical? Does it offer the best solution, or are you simply drawn to it because it is new?
- Others may find your ideas vague, complex, or both. How could you state things more simply? This will help increase buy-in and make your solution easier to implement.

Analytical Thinking



- ▶ **Logical and conceptual**
- ▶ **Critically analyze information before making decisions**
- ▶ **Enjoy complex tasks and intellectually challenging work**



Your Strengths

- Critical thinking and impartial evaluation
- Synthesizing information from many sources before moving forward with plans or decisions
- Taking a methodical, deliberate and objective approach to problem solving



Potential Derailers

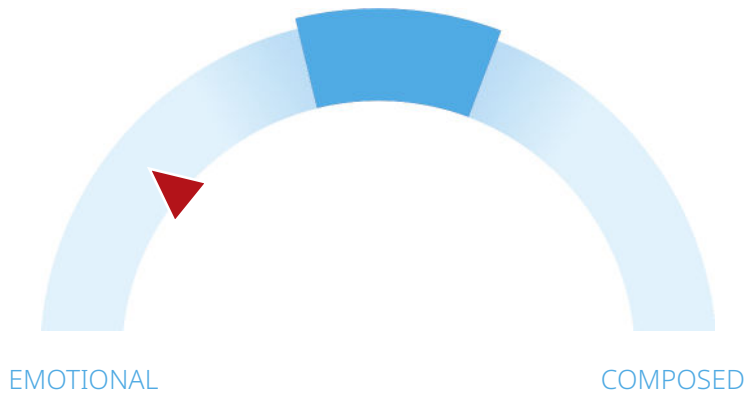
- Overanalyzing situations
- Struggling to make timely decisions when information is limited



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you over thinking issues and challenges? Even important decisions need to be made in a timely manner, otherwise you may miss out on good opportunities. Set a timeline for when the decision needs to be made and adhere to the schedule, despite the temptation to continue to analyze more information.
- Consider how your highly analytical approach may come across to others. It may not be your intention, but your team may see you as overly critical of their ideas when the finer details of their decisions are being reviewed.

Self-Control



- ▶ **Outspoken and open with your thoughts and feelings**
- ▶ **Candidly show enthusiasm or frustration, and may come across as intense or impatient**
- ▶ **Low tolerance for frustration**



Your Strengths

- Being outspoken and frank, especially when an honest conversation is needed
- Expressing your thoughts and emotions
- Presenting your reactions in a straight forward and genuine way



Potential Derailers

- Reacting to events rather than addressing problems in a constructive fashion
- Not providing a calming presence for your team
- Being seen as moody or irritable



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are there situations where being outspoken can work against you or your team? Identify these situations and, when facing them, keep in mind that a more diplomatic approach may be necessary. Carefully evaluate what you want to say and how it may come across to others.
- Remember that you can walk away from situations that are making you upset. Ask to come back to the conversation when everyone has had some time to process or mull over the situation, then return to the issues when you are feeling calm.

Stress Tolerance



- ▶ Able to cope with many demands and tolerate stress very well
- ▶ Remain relaxed when under extreme pressure or facing difficult challenges
- ▶ Respond constructively to problems and do not take criticism personally



Your Strengths

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



Potential Derailers

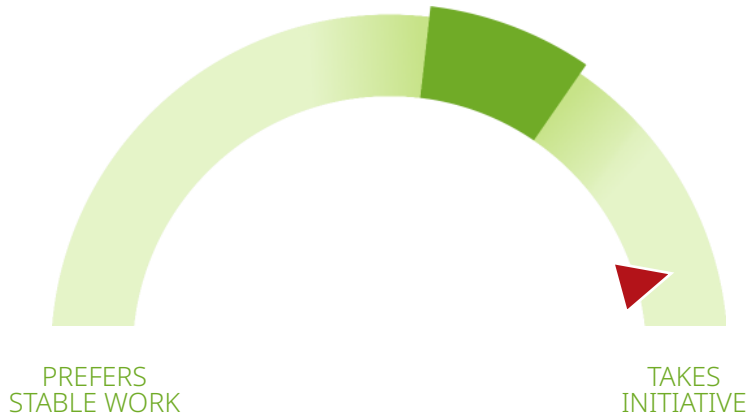
- Getting bored quickly with tasks that pose little challenge
- Not appreciating the anxiety or emotional turmoil that others may be feeling



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



- ▶ **Greatly enjoy identifying and seizing new opportunities**
- ▶ **Proactive and quickly take initiative, acting before being asked or forced to by external events**
- ▶ **Handle challenges swiftly and willing to do extra work to achieve goals**



Your Strengths

- Being very proactive and going beyond the requirements of your role
- Identifying and acting on business opportunities
- Not feeling limited by your specified job responsibilities or formal level of authority



Potential Derailers

- Not identifying the necessary resources before moving forward
- Moving onto new opportunities too quickly, resulting in an unpredictable environment for your team
- Overstepping boundaries and moving forward without support from others



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you taking on new opportunities too frequently? Has your team or your present tasks fallen to a lower priority as a consequence? Make sure that your desire to identify and make the most of new opportunities does not come at the expense of fulfilling your current responsibilities.
- Before taking action on new opportunities, be sure that they align with the broader goals of the organization, and that your team has sufficient resources to assign to the task. Even if the prospect feels urgent, discuss the opportunity with others before moving forward.

Flexibility



- ▶ **Quickly adjust to new circumstances, situations and environments**
- ▶ **Seek out novelty and variety, and find routine activities boring**
- ▶ **Flexible and open to change**



Your Strengths

- Adaptability and flexibility
- Ability to make adjustments and react to situations in the moment
- Embracing change



Potential Derailers

- Giving up on routine tasks before they are completed
- Not recognizing the value of consistency
- Failing to provide the level of stability that your team may require



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you making changes because they are needed, or because you are becoming bored with the standard procedures? Look to make modifications only when there is a significant benefit to doing so, not just because you're looking for variety.
- Make sure that you are providing enough structure and stability for those on your team who need it. There are benefits in having some routine at work, and most people will value this consistency more than you do.