

Leadership Potential

J. Sample

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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.

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Strengths to Harness

Initiative



You enjoy identifying and acting on opportunities.

Persuasion



You are open to convincing others to accept new ideas or perspectives.

Innovation



You are comfortable building on the ideas of others and introducing practical solutions.



▶ See **PAGE 23** for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

▶ See **PAGE 8** for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

▶ See **PAGE 19** for the implications of this result, as well as ways to harness these strengths.

Key Development Areas

Rule-Following



Ensure that you are staying open to challenging the status quo.

Flexibility



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

Persistence



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

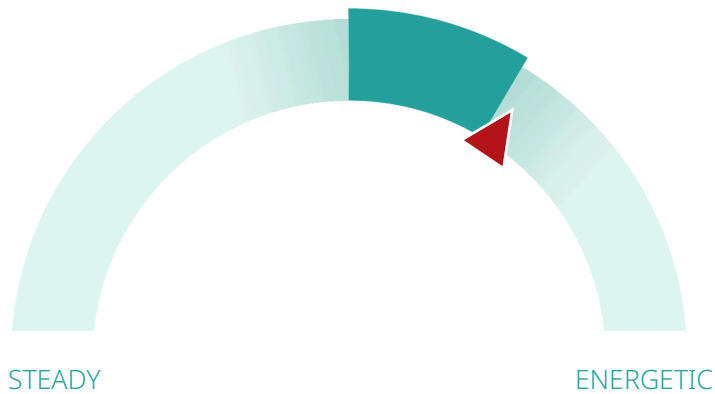


▶ See **PAGE 16** for the implications of this result, as well as developmental strategies.

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

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

Energy



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



Your Strengths

- Maintaining a higher level of energy over time
- Staying active and tackling challenges
- Thriving in demanding environments



Potential Derailers

- Difficulty working in slower paced environments
- Overcommitting yourself
- 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



- ▶ **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

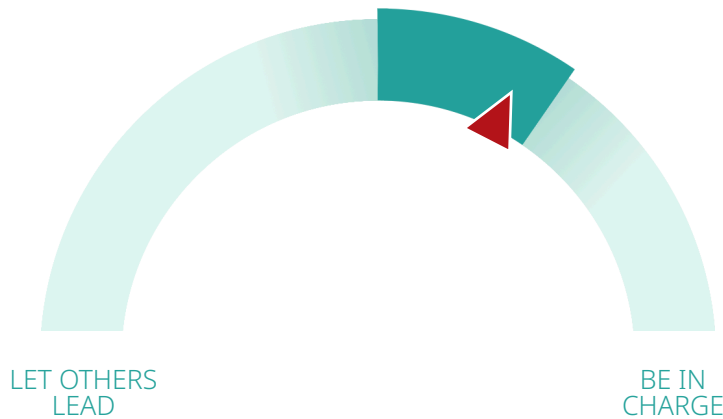
- Allowing your competitiveness to override your cooperativeness
- Being seen as somewhat aggressive by your team
- Investing too much time and energy into your work and career



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



- ▶ **Moderately confident and self-assured**
- ▶ **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 manner
- Being sure of yourself and presenting your thoughts with conviction



Potential Derailers

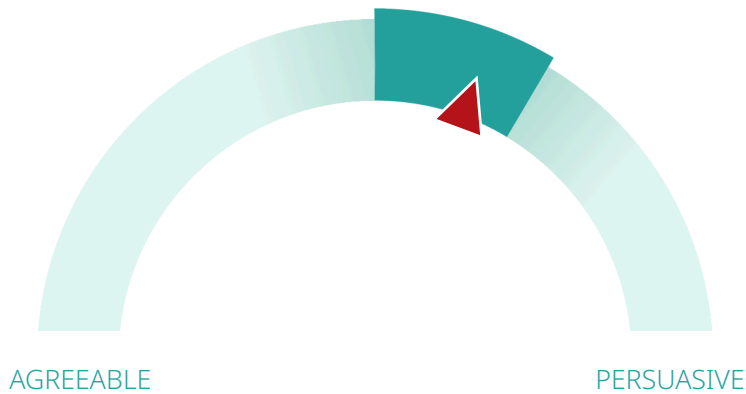
- Dominating group conversations
- Overlooking people who are more timid or shy
- Not giving others the space or time that they need



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



- ▶ **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

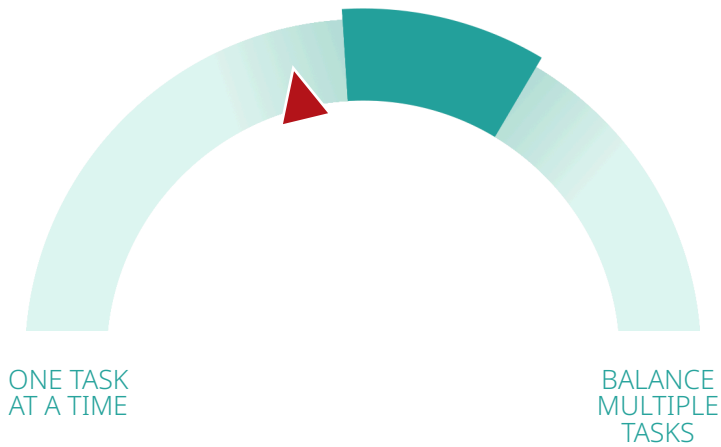
- Appearing as unyielding or difficult
- Putting too much effort and energy into winning someone over
- Playing the role of devil's advocate for no reason other than enjoyment of an argument



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 some multi-tasking
- ▶ Prefer to complete complex tasks without distraction, but are comfortable juggling several straight-forward activities at the same time



Your Strengths

- Accepting new responsibilities and the challenges that they bring
- Managing multiple, straight-forward demands
- Balancing a busy schedule when necessary



Potential Derailers

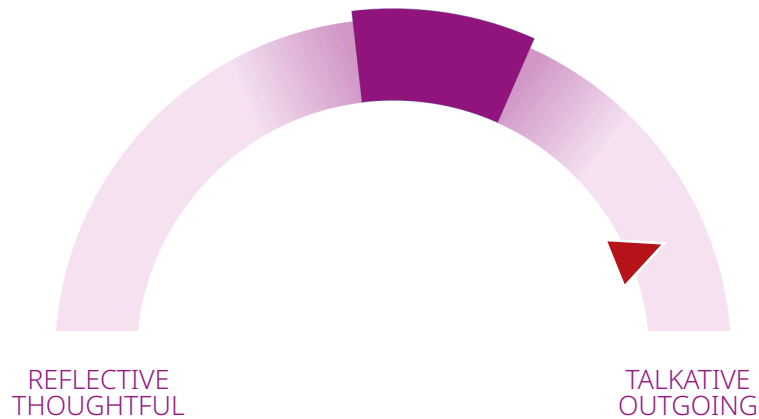
- Providing too many resources towards straight-forward tasks, without focusing your team on more complex priorities
- Finding it difficult to maintain the appropriate balance between focusing on key tasks and addressing emerging demands



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Ensure that you are not taking on too many new challenges, even if you feel that you can handle all of the responsibilities that you face. If you are overburdened, you may not be able to capitalize on important opportunities.
- When you do find that you have a lot of tasks or responsibilities, find techniques to help you provide sufficient focus on each demand. Use scheduling software or "to do" lists to keep track of all of your responsibilities. If delegation is an option, you can provide a trusted individual with an opportunity to show their talents.

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

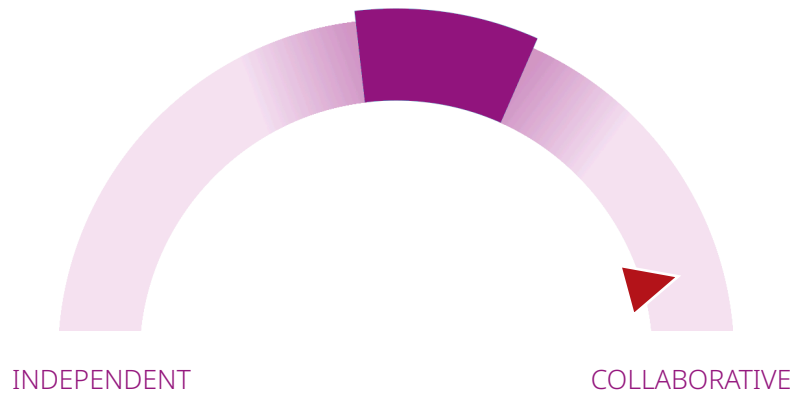
- Talking more than listening
- Sharing your thoughts, feelings and ideas too soon
- Over relying on face-to-face communication



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



- ▶ Are extremely co-operative and encouraging
- ▶ Prefer to work with others, believing that many tasks are best completed as a team
- ▶ Involve others in as much of your work as possible
- ▶ Quick to help others with their projects



Your Strengths

- Working collaboratively
- Encouraging others and sharing your expertise
- Supporting group efforts, as a contributor or as a leader



Potential Derailers

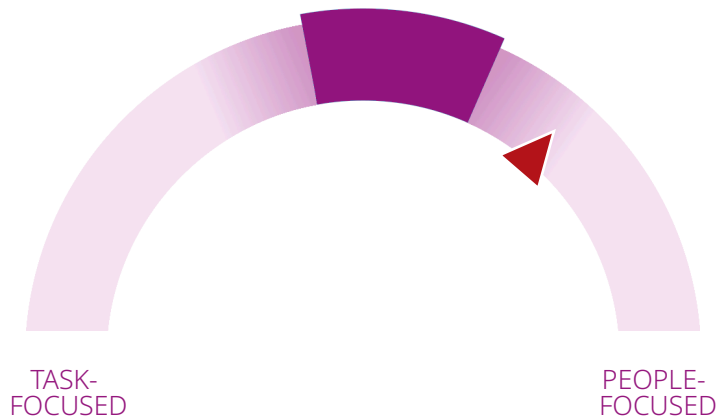
- Treating all responsibilities as team tasks
- Not providing members of your team with the appropriate levels of autonomy
- May appear as dependent on others



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you providing constructive opportunities for your team members to complete some tasks on their own? While this can be challenging, it is how you can help others develop their skills and grow professionally.
- Are there some tasks where an independent approach would be more effective? Not all tasks need to involve teamwork, and some of your team may prefer to work on certain tasks individually before bringing their findings or progress back to the group.

Concern for Others



- ▶ Emotionally perceptive, understanding, and tactful
- ▶ Open to assisting others in need
- ▶ Show empathy and compassion when supporting others
- ▶ Consider the impact of decisions on people



Your Strengths

- Building and maintaining supportive work relationships
- Identifying the impact decisions will have on people
- Interpersonal sensitivity and acceptance of others



Potential Derailers

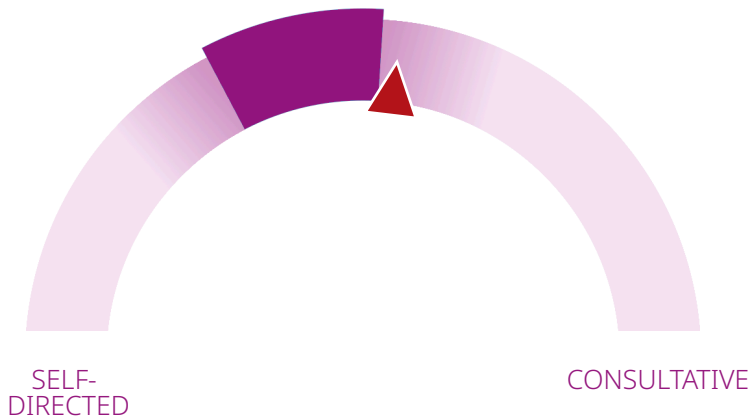
- Not dealing with conflict
- Having to make difficult people decisions where you cannot minimize the negative impact
- Maintaining an impartial and objective approach to people-related challenges



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When making a decision, you may give too much weight to the feelings of others. Is it worthwhile to approach the decision from a more objective standpoint, or involve someone who is detached from the issue?
- Share tough feedback and provide critiques to others - they need this to grow. By softening your responses to spare their feelings, you may be withholding valuable advice and learning opportunities.

Democratic



- ▶ **Consult with others before determining a course of action**
- ▶ **Comfortable making smaller decisions independently**
- ▶ **May feel restricted in environments with too much supervision**



Your Strengths

- Consulting and collaborating when input is needed
- Achieving consensus while considering a variety of perspectives
- Ensuring that decisions are being made in a timely manner



Potential Derailers

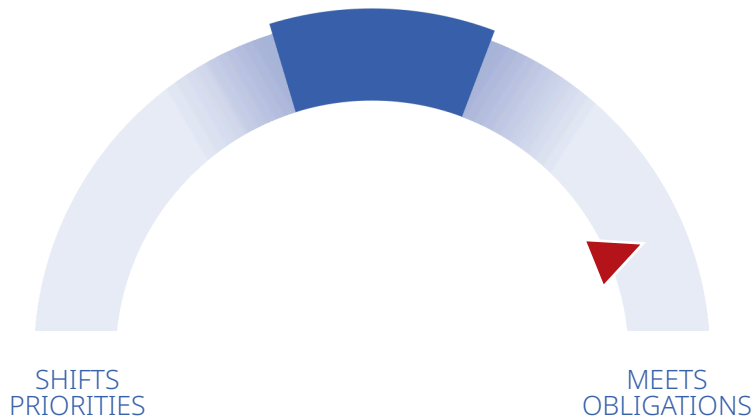
- Striking the right balance between gathering sufficient information and making a decision within a reasonable timeframe
- Making decisions when extremely limited information is available, or there is no clear direction available to guide you
- Going against a widely popular opinion



Enhancing Your Leadership

- When making decisions, consider how much time you have and how much feedback you actually need to move forward. This will be important when trying to balance gathering information with making timely decisions.
- Additionally, evaluate the importance of the decision. For important decisions with higher consequences, weigh on the side of consensus. For lower impact decisions, consider moving forward quickly.

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

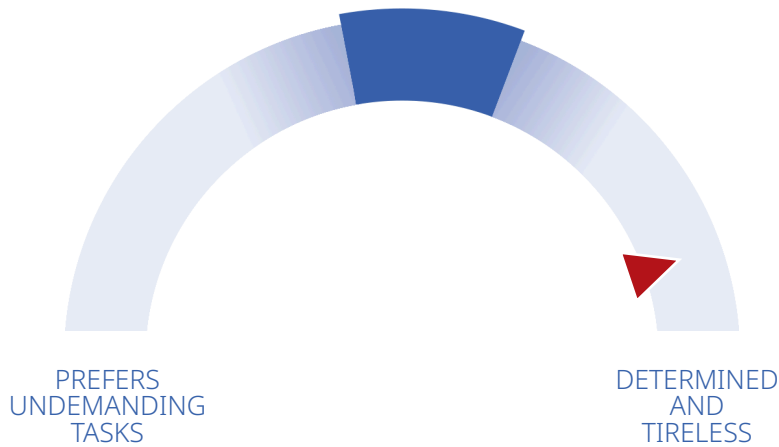
- Not seeing the need to reprioritize tasks
- Rigidly sticking with previously developed plans and project deliverables
- Over-relying on doing things yourself



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

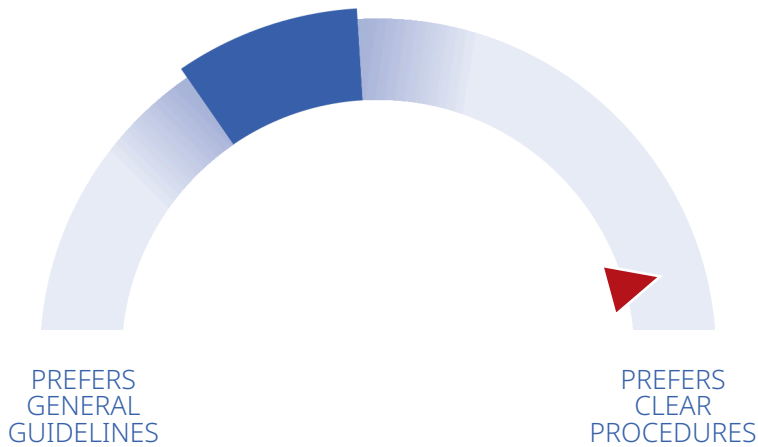
- Over committing resources
- Not knowing when to ask for help
- Driving staff too hard
- Not maintaining an appropriate work-life balance



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



- ▶ **Carefully follow instructions and standardized processes, and expect your team to do the same**
- ▶ **Unwilling to bend rules, even when it would be beneficial or convenient to do so**
- ▶ **Systematic and structured in your approach to work**



Your Strengths

- Working within organizational structure comfortably
- Establishing clear systems, rules and processes for completing tasks
- Providing clear directions and guidelines to your team



Potential Derailers

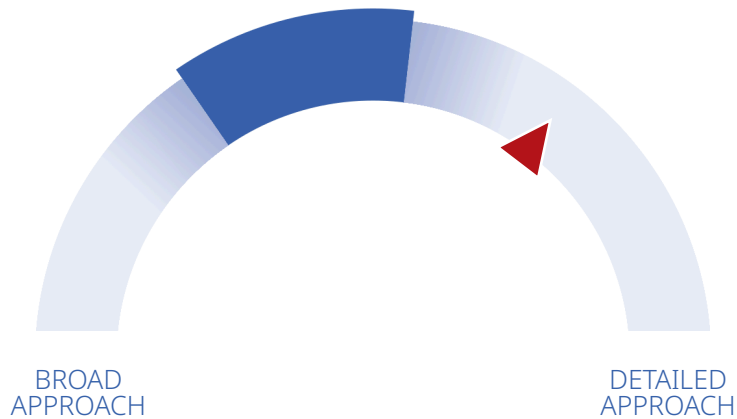
- Managing uncertainty and ambiguity
- Sticking with old ways of working that are no longer effective
- Addressing issues that do not have well-established steps for completion



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Consider how you can harness your focus on structure and organization to provide clarity and stability for both your team and the organization.
- Sticking with the existing processes and procedures may not always be in the best interest for yourself, your team or the organization. Is there a way to improve the existing methods? Could a method established elsewhere provide efficiency benefits? Be careful that consistency and familiarity do not become comfortable but ineffective ruts.

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

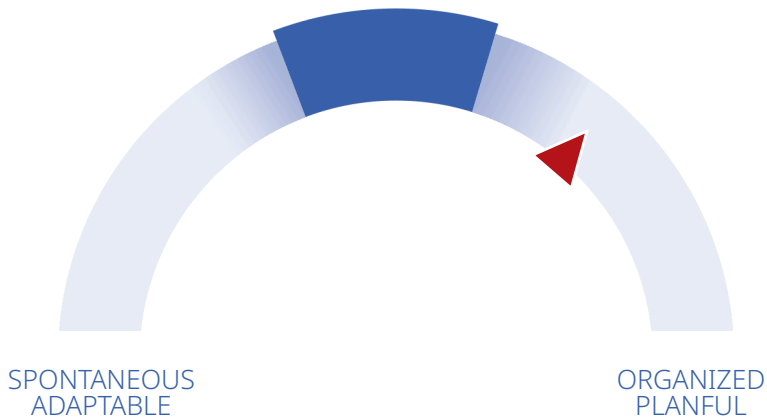
- Failing to align your team with the organization's broad strategy and vision
- Leading through ambiguity and uncertainty
- Overlooking long-term implications in favour of immediate tasks



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

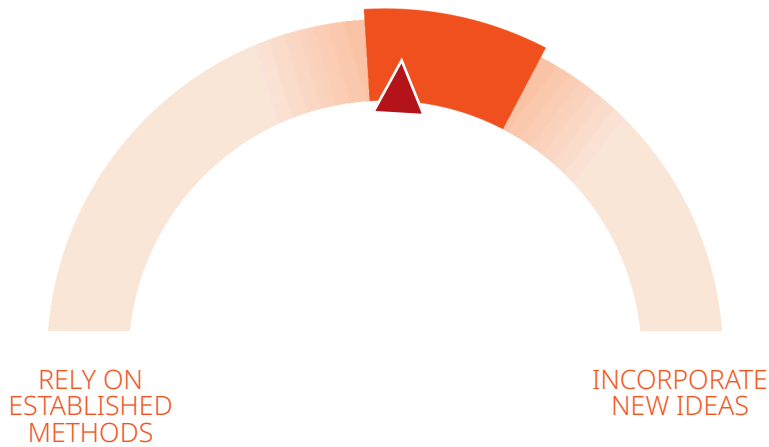
- Sticking with your planned approach for too long, even though it is no longer effective
- Failing to make adjustments when new information becomes available
- Taking too long to make decisions and shift priorities



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



- ▶ 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

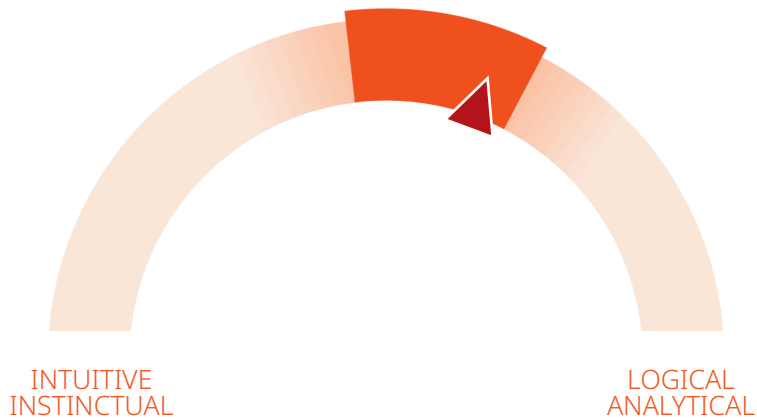
- Not truly considering ideas that are highly conceptual or imaginative
- Getting stuck in the middle-ground between ideas and execution
- Failing to delegate the implementation and execution of creative solutions to others



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



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



Your Strengths

- Critical thinking and impartial evaluation
- Synthesizing information from a variety of sources before moving forward with plans or decisions
- Taking a methodical 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



- ▶ **Very calm and composed, keep your emotions under control**
- ▶ **Self-disciplined, even-tempered, not moody**
- ▶ **Do not speak out when mad or annoyed, opting to keep your feelings to yourself**



Your Strengths

- Presenting a calm and diplomatic image
- Showing self-restraint and emotional composure during times of conflict
- Leading through emotional or tense situations



Potential Derailers

- Not sharing your true thoughts and feelings, even when it would be beneficial to do so
- Seen as hard to read, disingenuous or uncommitted
- May not express the appropriate level of urgency to others



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Let others know your thoughts and feelings. Showing more authentic reactions can help you develop more effective relationships with others, as well as prevent being seen as cold or uninterested.
- Would your team appreciate seeing your enthusiasm? While you act as a source of calm and stability in difficult circumstances, letting your team see your excitement towards positive situations can encourage and motivate them.

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

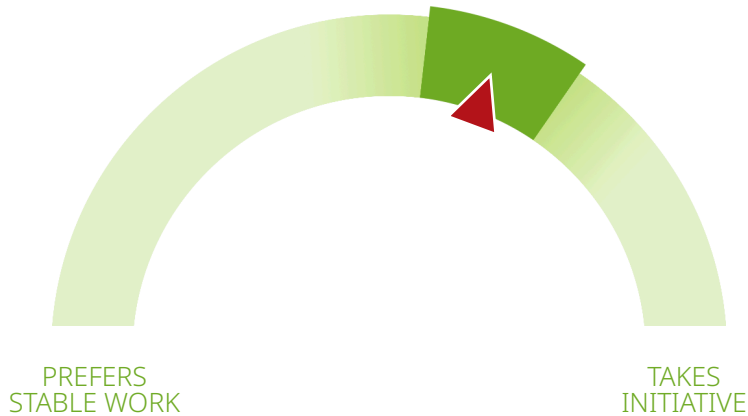
- Getting bored quickly with tasks that pose little challenge
- Not appreciating the anxiety or emotional turmoil that others may be feeling



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



- ▶ **Enjoy identifying and seizing new opportunities**
- ▶ **Act before being asked or forced to by external events**
- ▶ **Handle challenges swiftly and willing to do extra work to achieve goals**



Your Strengths

- Being 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

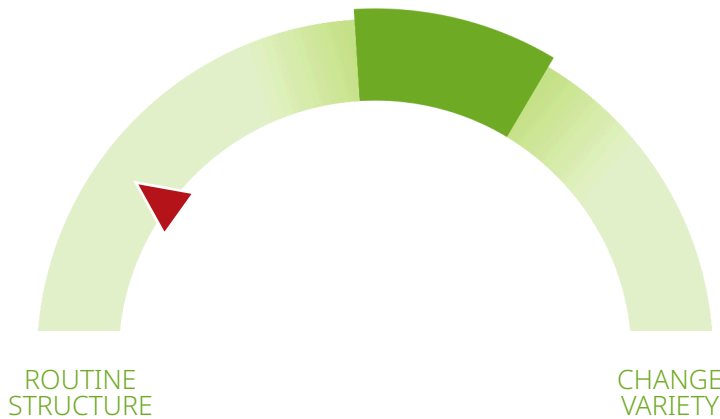
- Not identifying the necessary resources before moving forward
- Moving onto new opportunities too quickly, resulting in an unpredictable environment for your team
- Overstepping boundaries and moving forward without support from others



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



- ▶ **Bring a high level of structure to work environments and consistency to tasks**
- ▶ **Trust established ways of working and those that have proven successful for others**
- ▶ **Enjoy environments where change is less frequent, well-considered and carefully implemented**



Your Strengths

- Working in highly structured environments
- Creating a stable and predictable environment for your team
- Completing routine work



Potential Derailers

- Not being flexible enough when dealing with new challenges
- Wariness and hesitancy to change
- Sticking with approaches that are no longer useful



Enhancing Your Leadership

- Are you resisting change simply because it's not the way it's always been done? Change can be uncomfortable, but consider the benefits that change could bring to your team and workplace. Your team will also be more open to change if they see you being the role model.
- Ensure that you are providing enough flexibility within your team to allow people to make changes when necessary. While consistency is important, team members may have identified areas where adjustments are required and you should be able to trust them accordingly. Locking things down can discourage the sharing of ideas and reduce employee engagement.