



## **Leadership Skills Test**

**Report for: Marian Scipa**

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Table Of Contents

Table Of Contents ..... 1

Summary ..... 2

Introduction ..... 3

Graphs ..... 4

Details ..... 5

Strengths & Limitations ..... 7

Advice ..... 8

### Summary

What is leadership? Leadership is getting other people to follow you towards a common goal, bringing out the best in the people around you, and helping people find a greater meaning in the everyday tasks they are asked to perform. A person who possesses the ability to lead is a great asset to any organization, group, or department.

### Overall results



You appear to possess most of the qualities needed to be a great leader. Whether you've worked hard to develop your leadership qualities or you're one of the lucky ones to be born that way, you are in a great position to lead a group towards success! Leadership abilities are in high demand...and you've got what it takes. Your score indicates that you are quite competent and know how to handle groups of people with finesse. As you surely realize, leadership comes with a wide range of responsibilities and pressures. While it may be a lot of weight to carry on your shoulders, you appear to be well-equipped to deal with it. You're a natural!

### Introduction

What is leadership? Leadership is getting other people to follow you towards a common goal, bringing out the best in the people around you, and helping people find a greater meaning in the everyday tasks they are asked to perform. A person who possesses the ability to lead is a great asset to any organization, group, or department.

"To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart." - Eleanor Roosevelt

Research has revealed that effective leaders possess a specific personality profile. In essence, people who emerge as natural leaders set clear guidelines for behavior, reward good performance, provide feedback, and take a management role in assigning tasks to others. They also possess, among other things, high emotional stability, good motivational and mentoring skills, a strong vision for success, and can share this vision in a way that inspires others. Unfortunately, those whose personalities differ greatly from this ideal will likely feel unnatural leading others, and may end up struggling should they find themselves in such a position.

To be an effective leader takes hard work. Those who have the desire and the determination to sharpen their wits, hone their skills, and accentuate their virtues can pull away and deftly lead others to success.

Graphs

Overall results



Micromanagement



Long-term Planning



Communicating Vision



Emotional Control



Motivating



## Details

### Overall results (score 93)

You appear to possess most of the qualities needed to be a great leader. Whether you've worked hard to develop your leadership qualities or you're one of the lucky ones to be born that way, you are in a great position to lead a group towards success! Leadership abilities are in high demand...and you've got what it takes. Your score indicates that you are quite competent and know how to handle groups of people with finesse. As you surely realize, leadership comes with a wide range of responsibilities and pressures. While it may be a lot of weight to carry on your shoulders, you appear to be well-equipped to deal with it. You're a natural!

Overall leadership aptitude.

### Micromanagement (score 7)

Your responses suggest that you are a very flexible manager who is willing to provide employees with sufficient autonomy. You appear to be totally comfortable delegating tasks to others, and are willing to place your trust in your employees' competence. This fosters a strong sense of empowerment and pride in those you lead. Individuals who have a tendency towards micromanagement prefer to run a tight ship... to an excessive degree. They believe that in order for their company or department to be successful, they must control everything that goes on in it. As a result, they are often reluctant to delegate and to trust their employees, ending up overwhelmed with work. Their lack of trust toward their employees' skills, combined with their overly controlling behavior, can significantly undermine employee morale and commitment.

Assesses whether a person tends to control everything employees do.

### Long-term Planning (score 93)

To effectively guide others and a company to success, a leader must not only develop a solid vision and plan of action, but it is also necessary that he or she set appropriate goals in order to attain these future objectives. Fortunately, this is an area in which you will likely excel. You are well aware of the need to plan for the long-term, and will take all the necessary steps required to accomplish this. It is essential to have a concrete long-term plan and to set the goals needed to bring it to fruition - the success of a company depends precisely on this. Moreover, people need to know, with absolute clarity, where the company is headed and what goals they should be aiming for in order to feel truly motivated by what they are doing.

Assesses whether a person has the ability to plan the future of a company.

### ***Communicating Vision (score 91)***

According to your answers, you are able to envision a clear direction for your company and communicate your plans in a way that excites others. You seem to have the level of charisma needed to convince people that your ideas are worthwhile. This is an essential skill, because employees will be much more willing to achieve a goal if they are passionate about it. People who excel in this area are innovative visionaries who are confident in their ability to persuade and convince others. They consider it essential to make those they lead aware of, as well as part of, their vision.

Assesses the ability to share the overall vision of a company and to be able to convince others of this vision.

### ***Emotional Control (score 92)***

Your results indicate that your emotional control is outstanding. Overall, you don't seem to have any difficulty monitoring and regulating your behavior, which will prove to be a useful skill when dealing with the stress that comes along with many leadership positions. Both your relationship with your employees and the atmosphere you contribute to create will benefit from your poised and calm demeanor.

Assesses the ability to master one's emotions even during times of stress and frustration.

### ***Motivating (score 95)***

The motivating aspect of leadership is an essential skill - and an area in which you are doing very well. Your responses indicate that you seem to possess all the necessary skills and knowledge needed to help employees reach their full potential. Good leaders and motivators know how to draw out people's strengths. They actively seek out and value their employees' input, find different ways to motivate and inspire them, and make it a point to reward their hard work. In addition, they are well aware that in order to bring out the best in others, they themselves must be the ones to set the right example.

Assesses the ability to bring out the best in others.

### Strengths & Limitations

The following is a summarized version of your results, categorized as Strengths, Potential Strengths, and Limitations.

#### Strengths

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- You have good leadership potential
- You do not have a tendency toward micromanagement
- You are skilled at planning the long-term success of a company
- You are capable of communicating your vision for success
- You have good emotional control
- You possess the skills and traits needed to be an effective motivator to those you lead

#### Potential Strengths

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- No potential strengths detected

#### Limitations

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- No limitations detected

One study of Fortune 1000 companies concluded that the overriding distinguishing feature of the companies that achieved a significant performance improvement was a change in leadership.



## Advice

*" If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. "*

John Quincy Adams

Below are some tips that can help you reach your full potential as a leader.

- **Encourage your employees to take more initiative.** There is always some risk involved in delegation. At first, your employees may not do the job as well or as fast as you would. They may make some mistakes. Recognize that errors are part of the learning experience, and are a necessary step in the development of employees' potential. Provide encouragement and advice, and reward them if they go the extra mile.
- **Show appreciation.** Employers should be aware that on a day-to-day basis, all they need to do to keep an employee motivated is offer an emphatic "Thank you!" or "Good job!" when appropriate.
- **Take the time to figure out what is really important to the organization.** Pursuing something that doesn't lead to organizational goals is generally a waste of time. Why spend precious energy working towards something if it doesn't help you and the rest of the team achieve your objectives? Define what it is that needs to be accomplished, along with the smaller steps that will need to be carried out along the way.
- **Provide all the resources employees need for improvement.** Ensure access to information, educational resources, and support. In addition, make sure that employees have enough time to fulfill the task. Be available in case they have questions.
- **Define the goals of the organization and make sure that everyone keeps them in mind.** You may want to post them in strategic places or even send memos. Make sure that the goals are reasonable and that the people who will be responsible for implementing them have had some say in the matter. Keeping people moving towards goals will ensure that the company has a forward momentum.
- **Enlist the advice of higher-ups, subordinates and colleagues.** Everyone in the department and organization has to live with the company's vision; therefore, it makes sense that a wide variety of people take part in its development.
- **Be aware of the benefits of collaborating with employees.** It helps establish a rapport with subordinates as well as develops future leaders. Each time you ask for help, you send the message that every person's input is important and valued, not to mention help improve the skill level in your department.
- **Don't micro-manage!** Give employees guidelines about what you expect from them and let them figure out their own way of getting there. Many employees dislike ambiguity, but they also dislike being told exactly how they are supposed to do their job. There are many ways to get to the same goal. Let the employees own the process. Having a say in how they do their job motivates people. They may also know of alternatives you had never even thought about!
- **When an employee makes a mistake, don't rub it in.** Clearly and briefly state what happened, why, and the consequences of the mistake. If possible, let them correct it. Give them instructions and advice so that they solve the problem on their own. Instead of analyzing in excruciating detail the failure, try to focus on what they can do to avoid that kind of error in the future.
- **Don't try to take on too much at once.** Trust that your employees can handle things if you assign more tasks to them. Making sure that your own workload is the right size will be good for everyone because you will have more time for your managerial duties, such as giving feedback and overseeing the big picture.
- **When delegating tasks, make sure that you are being reasonable.** The task should fit the person, meaning that s/he should be qualified, have room in his/her schedule, and have some say as to whether it is possible to get it done on time without being overloaded.
- **Establish a trusting relationship with your employees.** You're unlikely to feel comfortable

assigning important tasks to your employees if you don't trust that they are going to get them done well. Gradually assign more and more difficult tasks that require increasing responsibility. You should then be able to trust their ability to get things done. If you don't, you should explore the reasons for it. Are you reluctant to relinquish control, or is your employee really not capable?

- **When offering negative feedback, be prepared to present some options and solutions.** You're unlikely to feel comfortable assigning important tasks to your employees if you don't trust that they are going to get them done well. Gradually assign more and more difficult tasks that require increasing responsibility. You should then be able to trust their ability to get things done. If you don't, you should explore the reasons for it. Are you reluctant to relinquish control, or is your employee really not capable?

- **If you have decided to give an employee a reward for hard work, give them a choice whenever possible.** If the employee has a family, for instance, s/he may prefer to take paid time off rather than receive a monetary reward.

- **Feedback should be immediate and relative to the achievement.** The greater the achievement, the larger the reward should be. It won't do to simply say thank you to an employee who single-handedly snagged a million-dollar deal, for instance. Some compensation is in order!

- **Visualize your goals.** Once you have a clear mental image of what it takes to reach your goals and you can actually imagine yourself carrying out those steps, then it will become much easier to guide others in following through with a plan. Imagining the rewards of achieving those goals can also serve as a powerful motivator.

- **Break it down into steps.** Any goal can seem overwhelming when you look at the big picture, but once you break it down into smaller, more "digestible" chunks, it suddenly seems doable. A first step towards buying a home, for example, may be establishing a budget and savings plan. Each time you complete one of the concrete, smaller steps, you will see your goal taking shape, and you will then feel more motivated to keep going.

- **Offer positive incentives to improve, not negative consequences for lack of improvement.** Don't make firing ultimatums unless the employee's performance is sub-standard and has been for a long time. Fear may be a good motivator in the short-term, but it certainly won't create a positive atmosphere in the work place. Promise increased salary, bonuses, or career advancement if the individual lives up to the expectations set forth - and be sure to deliver as promised.

- **Let your employees find their own way.** You will only de-motivate them and undermine their opinions if you step in when it isn't necessary to do so. Offer guidance rather than telling them what to do.

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- **Be there for your people.** Encourage their ideas, be there to give suggestions, and don't criticize them when they make a mistake. Be their biggest cheerleader.

- **Understand the needs and major motivators of your employees.** Adjust your approach accordingly. There is no need to treat all employees exactly the same way, as long as they perceive the treatment to be fair and equitable. For example, Mindy may appreciate flextime to spend more time with her family, while Debra prefers an opportunity for advanced training.

- **Make communicating your vision a part of the routine.** On all hand outs and memos provided to employees, also print the vision statement. This will ingrain the statement into their minds without pushing it too much. Periodically discuss how different decisions and behaviors will affect the vision of the organization.

- **Communicate your own excitement about the vision.** Managers tend to set an example that is then modeled by employees. Therefore, if you are excited about the goals and behaviors set forth in the company's vision they may be too. If you find that you cannot really get excited about the vision, perhaps it needs to be reworked into something more enticing.

- **Be accepting of employees' ideas.** By being open to employees' ideas, they will likely be more open to your own vision.

- **If confidence is an issue for you, work on it.** Part of being able to convince others of your ideas is self-confidence. If you are not sure of yourself, others will find it difficult to place their trust in you as well.

- ***Prepare your arguments.*** To plead your case in court, you wouldn't go in unprepared, would you? Do the same when presenting a new idea to employees. Try to anticipate questions they may have and prepare solid responses.
- ***Don't be too proud to ask for help.*** Yes, you are/will be the manager. That does not mean however, that you have all the answers or have no weak areas. Perhaps some of your subordinates possess expertise in areas that you don't. By asking for help you can save time, energy and stress.
- ***Have regular meetings to ask for input and ideas.*** By establishing a routine and formal place to receive input from employees, you send the message that their contribution is valued.