

Scoring and Understanding Your Leadership Style

What is Leadership?

The concept of leadership seems familiar enough. Yet defining the word precisely can prove challenging, perhaps because leadership is a concept rather than a thing. You cannot see it, or hear it, or touch it.

How, then, can you begin to define leadership?

One good way to construct a definition is to list those things you must observe to know that leadership is occurring. To build a definition from the ground up, think of an empty stage. What do you need to place there for leadership to occur? Surely you need a leader. At the same time that you put a leader on stage, you must also put a follower there, for a leader can exist only in relation to a follower. What must occur between the two actors if leadership is present? The leader must influence the behavior of the follower. In what way? A leader influences a follower to achieve a predetermined goal. Now all the conditions are in place, and you can observe leadership in action.

What is Style?

Style can be defined as the way a person usually behaves when he or she is able to do things his or her own way. Often you can predict how someone whom you know well will behave in a given situation. Your hunches usually prove accurate because you have already observed a certain pattern in the other person's behavior. For example, think of someone with whom you work every day. You can probably predict how that person would act if he or she were in charge of a project. Your behavior as a leader follows recognizable patterns, too. *What's My Leadership Style?* Provides you with an opportunity to increase your awareness of your own behavior patterns, helping you to understand how your style manifests itself in the way you lead others.

Leadership + Style = Leadership Style

Put leadership and style together, and you get a definition of leadership style: *A person's unique way of influencing others to work toward goals.* Different people have different ways of influencing others. One leader may characteristically influence others to achieve goals by appealing to their sense of fun. Another leader may simply direct others to get down to business. Yet another leader may set out a detailed "road-map" for others to follow, while still another leader may provide encouragement and support as others work toward a goal. Your responses to the items in *What's My Leadership Style?* Reveal your own style of influencing others. Research demonstrates that style can best be understood by measuring the extent to which a person's typical behavior demonstrates *assertiveness* and *expressiveness*. Because we are measuring assertiveness and expressiveness in this assessment, we call these broad categories of behavior dimensions. Assertiveness describes the degree to which a person's behavior is forceful or directive. Highly assertive people like to take control of situations while less assertive people may be more comfortable in less visible roles. Expressiveness describes the degree to which a person's behavior is emotionally responsive or expressive. Highly expressive people like to show their emotions and from interpersonal relationships while less expressive people tend to keep their emotions to themselves. Combining the two dimensions produces four styles.

What's My Leadership Style? Response and Scoring Form

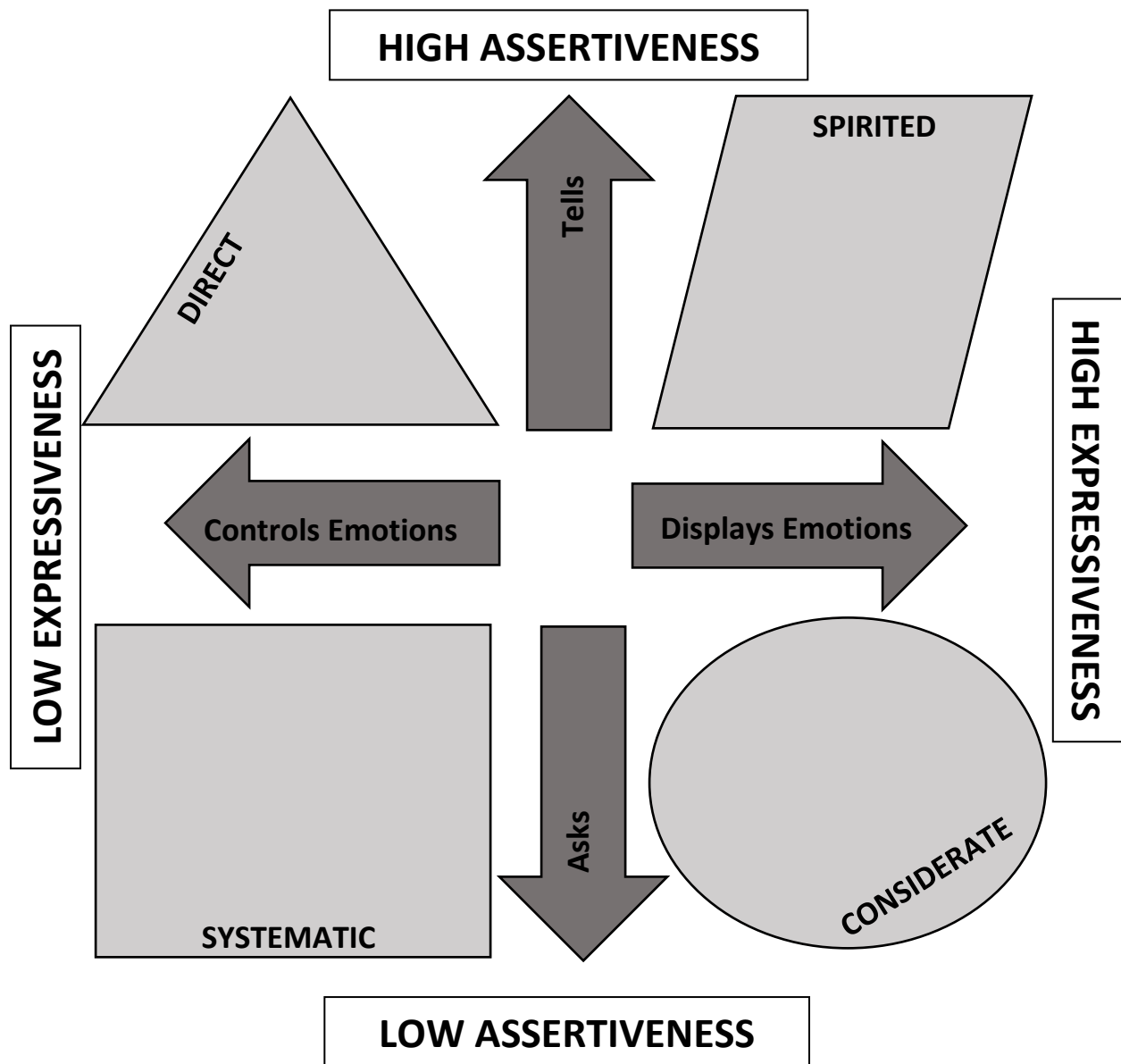
Directions: For each pair of leadership actions below, assign a total of 5 points by dividing the points between both actions. Use any combination that adds up to 5 points, but DO NOT USE FRACTIONS.

When getting others to work towards a goal, I am likely to...

		Equal to 5			
1.	Generate excitement.			Act decisively.	1.
2.	Take charge.			Offer guidance.	2.
3.	Provide encouragement.			Provide structure.	3.
4.	Point out omissions.			Seek everyone's input.	4.
5.	Emphasize goals.			Outline a sequence of steps.	5.
6.	Promote positive thinking.			Push to beat the competition.	6.
7.	Maintain a comfortable work space.			Get down to business.	7.
8.	Define tasks.			Require speed.	8.
9.	Direct others.			Create a free environment.	9.
10.	Listen to suggestions.			Provide challenges.	10.
11.	Plan things carefully.			Focus on the deadline.	11.
12.	Create a sense of urgency.			Spark creative thinking.	12.
13.	Offer inspiration.			Promote cooperation.	13.
14.	Monitor progress closely.			Improvise along the way.	14.
15.	Adopt a familiar approach.			Brainstorm new approaches.	15.
16.	Make it fun.			Set high standards.	16.
17.	Rally team spirit.			Show appreciation.	17.
18.	Demonstrate enthusiasm.			Analyze the situation first.	18.
19.	Request accuracy.			Foster teamwork.	19.
20.	Promote logical thinking.			Help out.	20.
Totals for Each Style					
Spirited 			Direct 		
Considerate 			Systematic 		

What's My Leadership Style? Response and Scoring Form Part 2

Directions: Copy the totals for each style from the previous page into the chart below. This is your leadership style profile.



Interpreting Your Score

Each of the four styles can be described based on the degree of assertiveness or expressiveness used.

Direct	High assertiveness, low expressiveness, leads by taking charge
Spirited	High assertiveness, high expressiveness, leads by inspiring
Considerate	Low assertiveness, high expressiveness, leads by building group harmony
Systematic	Low assertiveness, low expressiveness, leads by planning carefully

People generally develop a leadership style they are most comfortable using. That is their dominant style. Take a look at your Leadership Style Profile. Did you score higher than 16 on any style? If so, you probably prefer to use this style whenever you can. Did you score below 10 on any styles? These are probably leadership styles that you do not use often. Some people have one clearly dominant style. Those people generally use that style to the exclusion of others. Other people may use a variety of styles. They would have a relatively even distribution of points in their Leadership Style Profiles.

Is There a Best Leadership Style?

In a word, no. Current theory suggests that different situations require different leadership styles. In fact, the most important take-away from this assessment is this: *The most effective leaders are the ones who adapt their styles to the requirements of the situation.* Leadership Style Effectiveness shows the strengths and weaknesses of different leadership styles depending on the situation.

Direct • Produces quick results • Gets people moving • Takes charge no matter how challenging MOST EFFECTIVE in crisis situations or rapidly changing situations in which bold action and quick decisions are needed. LESS EFFECTIVE in situations requiring careful planning and in situations requiring tact and sensitivity to other's feelings.	Spirited • Inspires others to develop fresh, new approaches • Create a fun atmosphere by acting spontaneously • Rallies support MOST EFFECTIVE in situations in which people need to be motivated to develop fresh innovative ideas. LESS EFFECTIVE in urgent situations in which deadlines must be met and in situations in which long-term planning is vital.
Systematic • Makes decisions based on facts • Asks for specific details • Is analytical MOST EFFECTIVE in situations calling for careful, long-term planning, accuracy and objective analysis. LESS EFFECTIVE in situations requiring quick decision-making or flexibility because of ambiguity or interpersonal conflict.	Considerate • Listens actively • Works cohesively • Considers others' feelings MOST EFFECTIVE in sensitive situations requiring patience, tact, and diplomacy. LESS EFFECTIVE in situations requiring quick adjustments because of unforeseen changes and situations in which the need to take charge of others is crucial.

Too Much of a Good Thing?

You probably find yourself most comfortable leading others in those situations in which your dominant style is most effective. But sometimes you may need to move outside of your comfort zone so that you can adapt your style to the demands of a particular situation. Otherwise, your leadership style strengths may become weaknesses. Each style has definite strengths. However, some strengths, when taken to an extreme, can become weaknesses.

DIRECT

Direct leaders, when stressed, may cross the line from taking charge to being overbearing.

Direct leaders, like to get things done quickly, which is usually a plus. However, if some of their followers work at a slower pace, they may feel pressured by their direct leader's drive. In addition, direct leader's sensed of urgency may cause them to be reluctant to delegate.

Direct leaders like to compete, which may give their organizations an edge over others. However, taken to extremes, their competitive spirit may intimidate those they lead.

Direct leaders work hard. But when they expect the same high-octane performance from those they lead, they may cause their followers to burn out.

SYSTEMATIC

Systematic leaders provide structure for activities, which usually helps tasks or projects progress without a hitch. However, when systematic leaders impose too much structure, their followers may chafe under so much control.

Systematic leaders make sure that no one overlooks the important details. But taken to the extreme, their conscientiousness may make the people they lead feel bogged down.

Systematic leaders make sure that all the data is in before making decisions, which is usually a sound policy. However, when urgent situations call for quick action, systematic leaders' thoroughness may be counterproductive.

Systematic leaders insist on objectivity and accuracy above all else. As a result, those they lead may view them as impersonal or picky.

SPIRITED

Spirited leaders are good at generating enthusiasm among their followers. Yet taken to an extreme, their persuasive abilities may become manipulative.

Spirited leaders know how to prompt those they lead to develop fresh new approaches. However, their emphasis on thinking of new ways to do things sometimes comes at the expense of making sure that things are carried through to completion.

Spirited leaders inspire their followers by providing them with a vision. But in presenting the big picture, they may sometimes gloss over the important details.

Spirited leaders enjoy motivating their followers from center stage, but sometimes they forget that they also need to provide their followers with an audience, by listening to them.

Considerate leaders provide their followers with a sense of reassurance when times are difficult or rapidly changing. However, their desire to keep things comfortable by keeping them the same may cause them to resist change, rather than helping their followers adapt to it.

Considerate leaders build a loyal following by demonstrating their support for others. However, some of their followers may view their support as permissiveness.

Considerate leaders recognize the importance of taking their followers' views into account. But taken to an extreme, their willingness to accommodate others' views may cause them to cave in or appear to cave in.

Considerate leaders are good at maintaining team harmony, but, in some cases, their desire to maintain harmony may cause them to avoid constructive conflict.

The Bottom Line

Current research shows that people representing all four behavioral styles can and do function effectively as leaders. Here is the bottom line: Rather than asking yourself, "Do I have what it takes to be a leader?" it is far more productive to ask yourself, "What does this particular situation require from me?" Then you will be able to decide whether you need to adjust your leadership style, and, if so, how?

Action Planning

Now that you have identified your own leadership style, how can you put it to work? Use the following questions to guide your thinking.

1. Based on the information you obtained from this assessment, what do you view as your personal strengths as a leader?
2. What are your areas for improvement as a leader?
3. Think of a specific situation in which you will need to influence others to accomplish a goal. What strengths can you use to your advantage? How do you plan to adapt your leadership style to meet the requirements of the situations.

FACILITATOR STYLE INVENTORY (FSI)

by Richard Brostrom

Teaching people for leadership roles in learning groups can be difficult, particularly when one consults the often conflicting "how to" literature on the subject. The classic debate between *behaviorists* (emphasizing control, shaping, prompting, reinforcing, token economy) and *humanists* (advocating freedom, spontaneity, student-centering, individuality, feelings) is just one example of basic differences.

A person new to facilitating and teaching can be confused by these separate advocacies or feel obliged to follow an unnatural "teaching" script simply because a text says it is *the* way.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FACILITATOR STYLE INVENTORY (FSI)

The Facilitator Style Inventory is designed as an orientation experience--one that explores various beliefs about the teaching-learning process and helps a facilitator/ teacher form decisions about the use of various methods and techniques. More than just techniques, however, participants learn about themselves and their personal impact on others in the teaching-learning setting. The goal is to develop a flexible set of alternative procedures and personal skills appropriate for learners, teachers, and facilitators, and for the task itself.

The FSI consists of 15 stem phrases, each of which has 4 completion statements. The completion items correspond to 4 major instructional orientations: the behaviorist, structuralist, functionalist, and humanist approaches.

Adapted for the UniServ and Organizer Facilitator team 2024 by Ellen Holmes

Facilitator Style Inventory

Instructions: For each of the following 15 phrases, rank the 4 completion statements given in the order that completes the phrase to your best satisfaction. Give your most favored statement a rank of 4; your next favored, 3; your next, 2; and your least favored statement, 1. Place your ranking for each statement in the square to the right of that statement.

	Your Ranking	
1. In planning teaching, I am most likely to...		
...survey the problem and develop valid exercises based on my findings.		C
...begin with a lesson plan – specifically what I want to teach, when, and how.		B
...pinpoint the results I want and construct a program that will almost run itself.		A
...consider the areas of greatest concern to the participants – and plan to deal with them, regardless of what they may be.		D
2. People learn best...		
...when they are free to explore – without the constraints of a 'system'.		H
...when it is in their selfish interest to do so.		G
...from someone who knows what they are talking about.		F
...when conditions are right – and they have an opportunity for practice and repetition.		E
3. The purpose of teaching should be...		
...to develop the participants' competency and mastery of specific skills.		A
...to transfer needed information to the learner in the most efficient way.		B
...to establish the learner's capacity to solve their own problems.		C
...to facilitate certain insights on the part of the participants.		D
4. Most of what people know...		
...they have acquired through a systematic educational process.		F
...they have learned by experience in trial-and-error fashion.		E
...they have gained through a natural progression of self-discovery rather than some 'teaching' process.		H
...is a result of consciously pursuing their goals – solving problems as they go.		G

5. Decisions on what to be covered in a teaching event...		
...must be based on careful analysis of the task beforehand.		A
...should be made as the learning process goes along and the learners show their innate interests and abilities.		D
...should be mutually derived, by the learner and the teacher/facilitator.		C
...are based on what learners now know and must know at the conclusion of the event.		B
6. Good teachers start...		
...by gaining proficiency in the methods and processes of training – how to teach – and then bringing in the content.		F
...by recognizing that learners are highly motivated and capable of directing their own learning – if they have the opportunity.		G
...by mastering the field themselves and becoming effective 'models' for the learners.		H
...by considering the end behaviors they are looking for and the most efficient ways of producing them in learners.		E
7. As a teacher I am least successful in situations...		
...where learners are passive, untalkative, and expect the trainer to do all the work.		D
...that are unstructured, with learning objectives that are unclear.		A
...where there is no right answer.		B
...when I am teaching abstractions, rather than concrete, specific ideas.		C
8. In a teaching event, I try to create...		
...the real world – problems and all – and develop capacities for dealing with it.		G
...a learning climate that facilitates self-discovery, expression, and interaction.		H
...a stimulating environment that attracts and holds the learners and moves them systematically toward the objective.		E
...an interesting array of resources of all kinds – books, materials, etc. – directed at the learners' needs.		F
9. Emotions in the learning process...		
...are utilized by the skillful trainer to accomplish the learning objective.		A
...have potential if the trainer can capture the learner's attention.		B
...will propel the learner in many directions, which the trainer may follow and support.		D
...provide energy that must be focused on problems or questions.		C

10. Teaching methods...		
...should be relatively flexible but present real challenges to the learner.		G
...should be determined by the subject.		F
...must emphasize trial and feedback.		E
...must allow freedom for the individual learner.		H
11. When learners are uninterested in a subject, it is probably because...		
...they do not see the benefit.		C
...they are not ready to learn it.		D
...the instructor has not adequately prepared the lesson.		B
...of poor planning.		A
12. Learners are all different:		
...some will learn, but others may be better suited for another activity.		H
...the best approach is to teach the basics well and put learners on their own after that.		G
...with an effective training design, most tasks can be mastered by the majority of learners.		E
...an experienced teacher/trainer, properly organized, can overcome most difficulties.		F
13. Evaluation of instruction...		
...is done by learners, regardless of the instructor; the instructor should be a sounding board.		D
...should be built into the system, so that learners continually receive feedback and adjust their performance accordingly.		A
...is ultimately decided when the student encounters a problem and successfully resolves it.		C
...should be based on pre-established learning objectives and done at the end of instruction to determine learning gains.		B
14. Learners seem to have the most regard for a teacher who...		
...taught them something, regardless of how painful.		G
...guided them through experiences with well-directed feedback.		E
...systematically led them step-by-step.		F
...inspired them and indirectly influenced their lives.		H
15. In the end, if learners have not learned...		
...the teacher has not taught.		B
...they should repeat the experience.		A
...maybe it was not worth learning.		C
...it may be unfortunate, but not everyone can succeed at all tasks.		D

SCORING THE FACILITATOR STYLE INVENTORY (FSI)

Sum all the numbers that you placed in the "A" and "E" boxes in the Training Style Inventory. Place this total in the "A + E" box in the table below. This is your behaviorist score. Do the same for the following totals: "B" and "F"; "C" and "G"; "D" and "H."

A+E	B+F	C+G	D+H
Behaviorist Score <i>"New behavior can be caused and 'shaped' with well-designed structures around the learner."</i>	Structuralist Score <i>"The mind is like a computer; the teacher is the programmer."</i>	Functionalist Score <i>"People learn best by doing, and they will do best what they want to do. People will learn what is practical."</i>	Humanist Score <i>"Learning is self-directed discovery. People are natural and unfold (like a flower) if others do not inhibit the process."</i>

Reflection Questions

1. In which instructional orientation (i.e. behaviorist, structuralist, etc.) your highest score? Your lowest score? Do your scores surprise you in anyway or reaffirm what you already know about yourself?

2. Review the Strengths and Limitations table on the next page. For your highest rated instructional orientation, what are your visceral reactions to what is written in the table? Explain. Do you have any examples that reinforce these strengths or limitations? Explain.

3. Review the terminology on page 7 of this handout. Place a check in the top five descriptors that you would use to best describe your facilitator style. How might these points be helpful to your co-trainers?

	Strengths	Limitations
Behaviorist	"The Doctor": clear, precise, and deliberate; low risk; careful preparation; emotionally attentive; complete security for learners; a trust builder; everything "arranged"; protective; patient; in control.	"The Manipulator": fosters dependence; overprotective; controlling; manipulative "for their own good"; sugar-coating; hypocritical agreeing; deceptive assurances; withholding data.
Structuralist	"The Expert": informative; thorough; certain; systematic; stimulating; good audio-visual techniques; well rehearsed; strong leader; powerful; expressive; dramatic; entertaining.	"The Elitist": preoccupied with means, image, or structure rather than results; ignores affective variables; inflexible (must follow lesson plan); dichotomous (black or white) thinking; superior.
Functionalist	"The Coach": emphasizes purpose; challenges learners; realistic; lets people perform and make mistakes; takes risks; gives feedback; builds confidence; persuasive; gives opportunity and recognition.	"Sink or Swim": ends justify means; loses patience with slow learners; intimidating; insensitive; competitive; overly task oriented; opportunistic, return-on-investment mortality.
Humanist	"The Counselor": sensitive; emphatic; open; spontaneous; creative; a "mirror"; non-evaluative; accepting; responsive to learners; facilitative; interactive; helpful.	"The Fuzzy Thinker": vague directions; abstract, esoteric, or personal content; lacks performance criteria; unconcerned with clock time; poor control of group; resists "teaching"; appears unprepared.

Facilitation Styles

The following terminology has been adapted from Richard Brostrom's Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) to provide language to adult educators when identifying their teaching styles. It is likely that your teaching styles are pulled from multiple columns of instructional orientations.

Behaviorist	Structuralist	Functionalist	Humanist
• Clear, precise, and deliberate • Low risk • Careful preparation • Emotionally attentive • Complete security for learners • A trust builder • Everything 'arranged' • Protective patient • In control	• Informative • Thorough • Certain • Systematic • Stimulating • Good audio-visual techniques • Well-rehearsed • Strong leader • Powerful • Expressive • Dramatic • Entertaining	• Emphasizes purpose • Challenges learners • Realistic • Lets people perform and make mistakes • Takes risks • Gives feedback • Builds confidence • Persuasive • Gives opportunity and recognition	• Sensitive • Emphatic • Open • Spontaneous • Creative • Non-evaluative • Accepting • Responsive to learners • Facilitative • Interactive • Helpful

References

- Mager, R.F. *Preparing Instructional Objectives*. Fearon: Belmont, CA: 1975.
 McClelland, D.C., et al. *The Achievement Motive*. Halsted Press: New York: 1976.
 Roger, C.R. *Freedom To Learn*. Charles E. Merrill: Columbus, OH, 1969.
 Skinner, B.F. *About Behaviorism*. Knopf: New York, 1974.

Based on and adapted from *Developing Effective Teaching Styles* by Richard Brostrom. Copyright © COMCOR, 1975. This material may be freely reproduced for educational/ training/ research activities only. Permission for systematic or large-scale reproduction or distribution--or inclusion in other publications--must be obtained from the copyright holder.

Richard Brostrom is president of COMCOR, Madison, Wisconsin, a training and development consulting firm that publishes *Seminars*, the Directory of Continuing and Professional Education Programs. He is an organization development practitioner, a business development consultant, and a frequent workshop leader at the University of Wisconsin Management Institute.

Your Style Under Stress Test

What kind of a self-monitor are you? One good way to increase your self-awareness is to explore your Style Under Stress. What do you do when talking turns tough? To find out, fill out the survey on the following pages. It'll help you see what tactics you typically revert to when caught in the midst of a tough and crucial conversation.

Instructions: The following questions explore how you typically respond when you're in the middle of a tough and crucial conversation. Before you begin answering, **think of a challenging relationship you have at work.** Then **place a check mark in the statement if it applies** when thinking about how you typically approach risky conversations in that relationship. Don't answer what with what you wish you would do - be honest and reflective.

-
1. ____ At times I avoid situations that might bring me into contact with people I'm having problems with.
 2. ____ I have put off returning phone calls or emails because I simply didn't want to deal with the person who sent them.
 3. ____ Sometimes when people bring up a touch or awkward issue, I try to change the subject.
 4. ____ When it comes to dealing with awkward or stressful subjects, sometimes I hold back rather than give m full and candid opinion.
 5. ____ Rather than tell people exactly what I think, sometimes I rely on jokes, sarcasm, or snide remarks to let them know I'm frustrated.
 6. ____ When I've got something tough to bring up, sometimes I offer weak or insincere compliments to soften the blow.
 7. ____ In order to get m point across, I sometimes exaggerate my side of the argument.
 8. ____ If I seem to be losing control of a conversation, I might cut people off or change the subject in order to bring it back to where I think it should be.
 9. ____ When others make points that seem stupid to me, I sometimes let them know it without holding back at all.

10. __ When I'm stunned by a comment, sometimes I say things that others might take as forceful or attacking—comments such as "Give me a break!" or "That's ridiculous!"
11. __ Sometimes when things get heated, I move from arguing against others' points to saying things that might hurt them personally.
12. __ If I get into a heated conversation, I've been known to be tough on the other person. In fact, the person might feel a bit insulted or hurt.

Style Under Stress Score

Please fill out the score sheet below. Each domain contains a couple of critical questions. Next to the question number is a box. For example, under "Masking," question 5 (T). - If you checked question 5 in the assessment, then check the box here. Your Style Under Stress score is the total in each column, enter that in the box next to Silence or Violence. The column with the higher number shows which forms of communication you turn to most often, when under stress.

Silence or Violence Conversation Strategy Tendency

Silence	Violence
Masking ☐ 5 (checked) ☐ 6 (checked)	Controlling ☐ 7 (checked) ☐ 8 (checked)
Avoiding ☐ 3(checked) ☐ 4 (checked)	Labeling ☐ 9 (checked) ☐ 10 (checked)
Withdrawing ☐ 1 (checked) ☐ 2 (checked)	Attacking ☐ 11 (checked) ☐ 12 (checked)

What Your Score Means

Your silence and violence scores give you a measure of how frequently you fall into these less-than-perfect strategies. It's actually possible to score high in both. A high score (one or two checked boxes per domain) means you use this technique fairly often. It also means you're human. Most people toggle between holding back and becoming too forceful.

Since these scores represent how you typically behave during stressful or crucial conversations, they can change. Your score doesn't represent an inalterable character trait or a genetic propensity. It's merely a measure of your behavior—and you can change that. I

Reference: Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., Switzler, A. (2023). Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High, 2nd ed. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

DISC Personalities or Leadership Styles Under Stress by Kristeen Bullwinkle

Every personality has areas of struggle. When we're stressed by work demands, lack of sleep, or even hunger, we often display behaviors we aren't proud of. When we feel threatened, we may call upon behaviors that are reactionary and don't typically help the situation. We're going to look at those. Without understanding these behaviors, we can't ask for support in changing them or learn how to recognize them before we're fully committed to their action.

Review of the Four Types of DISC Personalities and (Leadership Styles)

- **D is Dominance (Direct).** A person primarily in this DiSC quadrant places emphasis on accomplishing results and "seeing the big picture." They are confident, sometimes blunt, outspoken, and demanding.
- **I is Influence (Spirited)** . A person in this DiSC quadrant places emphasis on influencing or persuading others. They tend to be enthusiastic, optimistic, open, trusting, and energetic.
- **S is Steadiness (Considerate).** A person in this DiSC quadrant places emphasis on cooperation, sincerity, loyalty, and dependability. They tend to have calm, deliberate dispositions, and don't like to be rushed.
- **C is Conscientiousness (Systematic).** A person in this DiSC quadrant places emphasis on quality and accuracy, expertise and competency. They enjoy their independence, demand the details, and often fear being wrong

How we each struggle

The i-style personality (Spirited)

What struggles can such a fun personality have? Give them a few routine tasks and a deadline and find out. The i style can struggle with doing detailed analysis, performing repetitive tasks, or not being able to express themselves.

If you really want to drive i styles batty, put them alone in a windowless room and ask them to file historical documents related to something in which they have no interest. Increase the pressure by hosting a party just down the hall where they can hear everyone having fun.

When under a lot of pressure, the i style can become histrionic. If the person leans toward the D style, then they can also become narcissistic.

Core belief: I'm valuable if I can attract people.

How those of us with other styles can help

We can encourage the return of an i's natural upbeat and positive attitude by allowing them to express themselves. Give them some positive attention. If you're on a team, be sure they understand and share the team's goals; then allow them to rally everyone. Show enthusiasm for whatever they're working on. If they have to do all that filing, be sure they get lots of breaks, can decorate the room they're working in, and can offer suggestions on how to make the task less dull. Even better, join

them in the task and put on some good music. The i-type personality believes life should be pleasant, fun, and lively, so try to help them make it that way. (Hear

The C-style personality (Systematic)

Opposite the i style on the DiSC circle is the C. What upsets someone with an i style might be just what the C-type person longs for.

If you want to make the C styles stress out, put them in a room with lots of emotional and erratic people. Make them mingle without making introductions. Or give them a poorly defined goal to reach, few resources, and a short time frame. And tell them they'll be graded. Or just ask them to learn a new skill in front of others.

A C under stress wants to display self-control, unlike the i who is about putting it all out there. Emotions can be hard because they are so hard to anticipate and manage. Being with lots of people is hard for C styles because it distracts their attention from their own thoughts and behaviors. They want to be socially appropriate, but might not know what the social rules are or consider them frivolous.

Under stress, the C style can be avoidant, disagreeable, and even hostile. They can get their backs up and become very resistant.

Core belief: I'm valuable if I'm competent.

How those of us with other styles can help

Be clear about expectations. Let them know how they will be judged. They're always judging themselves and don't want to be wrong or inappropriate. They really don't want to be the cause of any emotional outbursts.

If someone with a C style has done something wrong and becomes defensive, allow them time to run a self-diagnostic of the situation. They need to know how and why they screwed up (and they need to be able to decide if they agree that it *was* a screw-up). Express confidence in their ability to learn from a mistake. Deflect their attention from the error, and move it toward how to make amends, fix it, or continue toward the goal. Assure them that you still see them as competent.

A C type will have a hard time asking for help. If you ask a C if they need help, it's likely that they will take that as questioning their competence, or they'll worry that you see them as weak. Ask anyway. As long as you do it with respect, C-style folks might really appreciate it in the long term. It's very important to take the time to build trust with this style.

The S-style personality (Considerate)

The S style is so pleasant that it's hard to think of them struggling with their behaviors while under stress, but they do. If you wonder what an S style looks like under stress, tell them that they have to

confront someone else about their poor performance or disruptive attitude. Make them immediately change the operating procedure they've been following, providing no justification for the change and no time to practice. Next, have them convince someone they've never met that they support this new procedure.

The S seeks out harmony and is attentive to the needs of others. This means that you might not notice that they are feeling fear or not taking care of their own needs. S-style folks tend to get very quiet and passive when experiencing a high level of stress.

The S can be passive-aggressive. The S can also overcommit if they feel they have to take on responsibilities because no one else will. The S can inhibit innovation out of discomfort with change.

Core belief: I'm valuable if I'm accepted, if I can please.

How those of us with other styles can help

Encourage S-type personalities to speak up. The S might not promote themselves or call attention to their own success or abilities. Be sure that you are not mistaking their agreeable, low-key behaviors for a lack of passion, experience, or knowledge.

It can be tempting to try to take advantage of someone with this style. You can misread them and assume that they are aligned with your point of view or your actions. They might not be. Ask them. And if you really care about their answers, give them time to consider how they want to present their viewpoint and be sure that you're showing that you care.

The D-style personality (Direct)

The D style often seems completely in control and confident, but this isn't always true. They have a great need to be in control and a hard time when they aren't.

You can drive a D-type personality nuts by being emotional, needy, or challenging, or by asking them to follow strict rules with no allowance for individual accomplishment. They will also feel stressed if you put them in a vulnerable position. They may have a hard time with being bedridden, for example.

When challenged or put under stress, someone with a D style can lack empathy (it's inefficient, in their mind) and can be hurtful. They can ignore doubts that could alert them to risks. They can also have a hard time letting someone else take center stage.

Core belief: I'm valuable if I'm producing or on top.

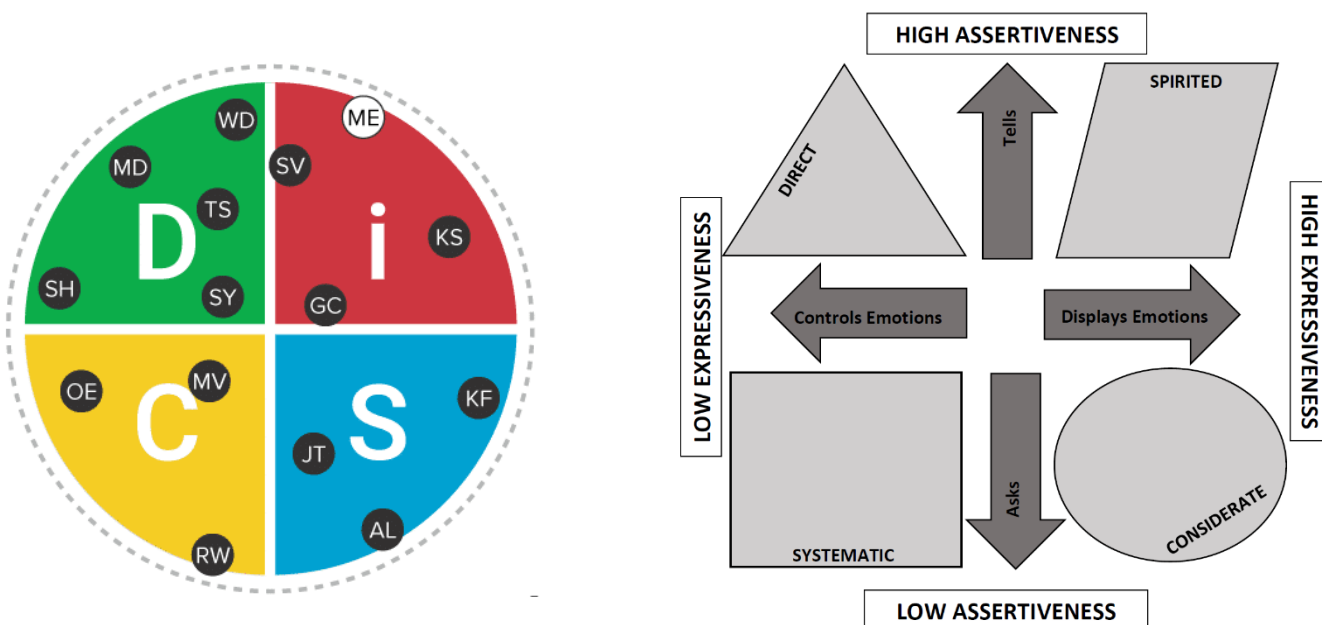
How those of us with other styles can help

D-style people are looking for rewards in their environment, so you can help them structure that environment to promote their own successes and increase their autonomy. Be sure they can assume this autonomy safely and responsibly. Help them assess risk. Help them understand the possible outcomes of shortcuts they might want to take.

They can use help identifying when they are starting to railroad a decision or monopolize a conversation. Be direct. Remember that they need to know that when you point out something, it's not to challenge their authority, but rather it's to help them achieve a goal. Make sure they see the bigger picture and bottom line.

A note about where you are.

You'll notice that people on the left side of the circle (or leadership styles chart) expect resistance and try to prepare for it. People on the right side tend to avoid resistance and skirt around it. Everyone has the ability to move into adaptive behaviors to match their situation or environment. Everyone also has the ability to move into maladaptive behaviors most commonly identified with another section of the circle. We're all susceptible to using the behaviors we've found most rewarded in the past, and these can be positive or negative behaviors. **In other words, our culture also contributes to our behaviors.**



Crucial Conversation Patterns Under Stress

Direct and Systematic (D and C)	Spirited and Considerate (I and S)
Violence Patterns – Violence patterns consist of any verbal strategy that attempts to convince, control, or compel others to your point of view. It violates safety by trying to force meaning into the pool. Methods range from name-calling and monologuing to making threats. The three most common forms are controlling, labeling, and attacking.	Silence Patterns – Silence patterns consist of any act to purposefully withhold information from the pool of meaning. It's almost always done as a means of avoiding potential problems, and it always restricts the flow of meaning. Methods range from playing verbal games to avoiding a person entirely. The three most common forms of silence are masking, avoiding, and withdrawing.