



Discover Your Leadership Strengths and Blind Spots

1.) Quick Quote To Consider

"In the choice between changing one's mind and proving there's no need to do so, most people get busy on the proof." John Kenneth Galbraith

2.) Discover Your Leadership Strengths And Blind Spots

Are there days you wish you had a special pair of glasses that let you clearly see yourself as a manager and leader? There are assessments available that act as lenses to increase your understanding of how others experience your style of management and leading. In this issue, you'll learn about how combining the FIRO-B and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) instruments will give you a view into the following:

- how you manage interpersonal relationships
- your style for initiating opportunities
- how you approach change within your organization
- the impact of stress and change on you as a leader
- your manner of influencing others

FIRO-B (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation-Behavior)

FIRO-B identifies how you are oriented to interpersonal relations. It measures your needs in three areas:

Inclusion: forming new relations and associating with others. It determines the extent of contact and prominence that a person seeks.

Control: making decisions, influencing and persuading people. It determines the extent of power or dominance that a person seeks.

Affection: forming emotional ties and warm connections between people. It determines the extent of closeness that a person seeks.

Each characteristic is measured from two perspectives. How much you want each behavior and how much you express your desire for it. The extent to which you want or accept behavior from other people is called the Wanted dimension, while the Expressed dimension measures the extent to which you will initiate the behavior. The instrument reveals how much of each of the six interpersonal dimensions is characteristic of you.

For instance, you may have a high need for inclusion and a lower need for expressing it.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

Myers-Briggs Type Instrument (MBTI) is used to help you learn more about yourself in four areas: (1) where you get your energy (Extroverting or Introverting), (2) how you gather information (Sensing or iNtuiting), (3) how you process information (Thinking or Feeling), and (4) how you orient yourself to the world (Judging and Perceiving). The MBTI combines



your preferences for each of these behaviors into 16 personality types, resulting in a 4-letter descriptor.

For instance, I prefer Extroverting/iNtuiting/Feeling/Perceiving, which is combined into type ENFP. People with this combination of preferences are described as:

Warmly enthusiastic and imaginative (Extroverting and iNtuiting). See life as full of possibilities (iNtuiting). Make connections between events and information very quickly, and confidently proceed based on the patterns they see (iNtuiting). Want a lot of affirmation from others, and readily give appreciation and support (Feeling). Spontaneous and flexible (Perceiving).

Here's a description if you preferred Introverting/Sensing/Thinking/Judging (ISTJ):

Quiet, serious, earn success by thoroughness, and dependability. Practical, matter-of-fact, realistic, and responsible. Decide logically what should be done and work toward it steadily, regardless of distractions. Take pleasure in making everything orderly and organized—their work, their home, their life. Value traditions and loyalty.

These behaviors affect your approach to communicating and leading.

A Combined View of You

When you combine the results of these two instruments, you learn more about how your preferences and needs influence your style of leadership. Here are several examples:

Interpersonal Relations

Do you like to interact directly with your staff, or, do you prefer indirect interaction?

Some people prefer walking down the hall to talk face-to-face, while others rely more on written communication, e-mail or rely on others to interrelate for them.

Too much interaction can result in losing privacy and generating excessive commitments due to the leader's accessibility and overexposure. On the other hand, low visibility creates a depersonalized environment that doesn't inspire commitment from staff. Those that seesaw between the two risk having issues with uneven visibility and disclosure within different areas of the organization that can result in resentment or mixed signals.

Dealing with Change and Stress

The results of the two combined instruments show your potential strengths in dealing with change, but also the possible liabilities of each strength. For instance, a high need for affection can mean that you show loyalty and trust and are willing to work with each person's emotions during the change. But, that strength can also result in your feeling betrayed as the changes are instituted and you may not have done the political maneuvering necessary to influence outcomes.



Influencing Others

As a leader, you live in a dynamic social world. Sometimes you will be required to approach others and engage them, and at other times you will receive behavior and actions from others. The results of these instruments reveal your comfort with initiating and receiving certain behaviors, such as:

- sharing information
- recognizing team members' contributions
- creating structured roles and rules taking action and showing progress immediately
- developing team consensus
- building rapport with others

The culture of your organization or the situation will determine what behavior is appropriate to be successful. A mature leader learns to expand his or her repertoire of leadership behaviors.

If you need to learn new leadership behaviors because you have changed your job, are managing a new work team, or your organization is reorganizing, the FIRO-B and MBTI assessments will help you understand your strengths and the potential challenges you may face. You can then form a plan for addressing your developmental needs.

For those of you managing personal and/or professional changes, Northwood Consulting, Ltd. can administer the FIRO-B and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, produce the 17-page report and help you develop a personal development plan. Just e-mail us at info@northwoodconsulting.com or call 301.990.6331.