

Leadership Development Assessments



Personality and Leadership

Character is more important than intellect.
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Organizations place a premium on intellect, education, and technical knowledge – the “hard skills” that are the cost of entry into the professional world. While it’s tempting to think hard skills alone will assure success, they are necessary, but not sufficient, for leadership effectiveness. More often, it is personality and its impact on leadership that determines who excels in a leadership role.

Personality operates like a lens through which all actions and behavior are filtered and through which knowledge, skills and competencies are sharpened or blurred. Personality traits can positively accentuate or negatively compromise the skills and abilities of a leader. Studies and everyday experience show that personality can propel a person of fairly average intelligence and education to great heights or cause even the smartest person to fail. Personality impacts everything.

Personality Defined

While many people think of personality as strictly internal motivations, thoughts and feelings, most psychologists define personality as behavior – how you act. Gardner Lindzey, in *Theory of Personality*, defines personality as “*the most outstanding and salient impressions a person creates on others.*” Raymond Cattell, in *The Scientific Analysis of Personality*, defines personality as “*the pattern and regularity of behavior over time.*”

As current research from cognitive-behavioral psychology has demonstrated, there is an ongoing feedback loop between the internal (thoughts, feelings, motivations) and external (behavior) dimensions of personality.

There is a common belief that personality, compared to the other components of human capital (e.g., education, skills, IQ, etc.), is unchangeable. Personality, as expressed through behavior, is in fact the most readily modifiable. As a manifestation of personality, behavior can be internally monitored and externally modified; we each have the ability to selectively change how we interact with others and to change the impressions that others have of us. Moreover, since others interact with us based on their impressions of our behavior – not on our internal motivations and intentions – managing external behavior is a key to increasing leadership effectiveness. *To do this, leaders must become aware of and learn to change counterproductive habit-patterns as well as build upon existing strengths.*

Most cognitive, emotional and behavioral patterns are simply habits – unconscious ingrained actions and reactions to situations. They do not emerge from a self-directed effort because no effort is made to manage these behaviors. These ingrained habits are “default behaviors” – behaviors that are manifest without thinking. The LMAP assessment and development process fosters behavior mastery by educating leaders about their behavioral habits, by providing constructive alternative behaviors and by teaching leaders how to make conscious behavioral choices rather than simply behaving from habit.

Personality and Leadership Effectiveness

LMAP draws upon an extensive body of classic theoretical and empirical research on the relationships between personality and performance:

- *Leadership effectiveness in business settings:* Bass (1981); Bennis (1985); Kanter (1983); Mintzberg (1973); Kotter (1988); Quinn (1988); Likert (1967); Stogdill (1963); Yukl (1988); Peters (1987); Kelley and Caplan (2002); Collins (2001).
- *Personality impact on leadership, management, communications skills in aviation safety:* Ginnett (1986, 1989); Helmrich (1986, 1990); Chidester, Kanki (1990).
- *Multiple intelligences:* Gardner (1993); Goleman (1995); Sternberg (1997).
- *Positive psychology:* Seligman (2004); Baker (2003); Buckingham, Coffman (1999).
- *Big 5 Personality Theory:* Hogan, 1999; Costa, McCrae, 1998; Hoffman, 2002.
- *Circumplex Theory* by Guttman (1954); Leary (1954, 1957); Schaeffer (1961); Schaeffer and Plutchik (1966); Becker and Krug (1964); Lafferty and Cooke (1971); Wiggins (1979; 1982; 1989; 1991); Plutchik and Conte (1997).

Personality and Leadership continued

Moreover, there is very high agreement across psychologists that there is a core measurable set of personality traits. This is reflected in the list of traits measured in the published assessments cited in the Tables below. Some personality assessments represent results with bar charts and/or numbers (Table 1), others, like LMAP, plot results on a circular graphic, called a circumplex (Table 2). What these tables show is that LMAP is in the mainstream of personality assessment, most personality instruments measure ten to fifteen personality traits, and most assessments share more similarities than differences.

Table 1: LMAP Traits compared to traits in other Personality Models

LMAP [®]	Caliper Profile [®] (1998)	Assess Personality [®] (2008)	Edwards Inventory [®] (1959)	Neo-Big 5 Personality (1976, 1982)
Helpfulness	Empathy	Positive About People	Nurturance	Empathy/Consideration
Sociability	Sociability	Sociability	Affiliation	Warmth – Outgoing
Approval Seeking	Accommodation	Need to Be Liked	Succorance	Accommodation
Dependence	Self-Structure (low)	Self-Reliance (low)	Deference	Compliance (Deferent)
Tension	Anxiety	Emotional Evenness	Abasement	Worry
Hostility	Aggressiveness		Dominance	
Rigidity	Rigid / Flexible	Objectivity (low)	Change (low)	Rigid / Flexible
Need to Control	Aggressiveness	Organized/Structure	Dominance	Assertiveness
Competitiveness	Ego Strength			Competitive
Conscientiousness	Conscientiousness	Detail Interest	Order	Orderliness/Competence
Achievement Drive	Assertiveness	Assertiveness	Achievement	Need to Achieve
Innovation	Idea Orientation	Structure (low)	Intracception	Imagination / Curiosity
Openness to Feedback				

Table 2: LMAP traits compared to traits in other Circumplex Personality Models

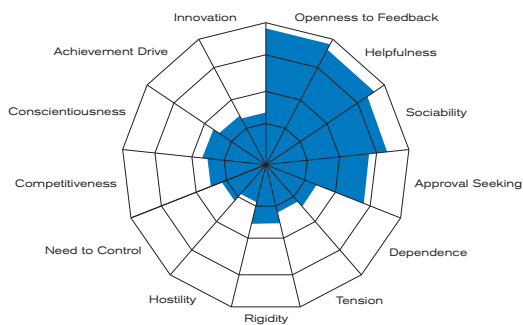
LMAP [®]	Leary (1957)	Schaefer (1959)	Human Synergistics [®] , Lafferty (1971)	Wiggins Circumplex [®] (1995)
Helpfulness	Helpful/Nurturing	Democratic	Humanistic-Encouraging	Cooperative/Helpful
Sociability	Affiliation/Friendly	Cooperative	Affiliative	Sociable/Outgoing
Approval Seeking	Clinging/Self-Effacing	Accepting	Need for Approval	All-loving/Absolving
Dependence	Dependent	Protective-Indulgent	Dependence	Dependent/Self-Doubt
Tension	Apologetic/Fearful	Avoidant	Abasive/Helpless	
Hostility	Aggressive/Hostile	Authoritarian	Power	Controlling/Dictatorial
Rigidity	Rebellious/Distrustful	Possessive	Oppositional	Suspicious/Rigid
Need to Control	Aggressive/Hostile	Authoritarian	Power	Controlling/Dictatorial
Competitiveness	Competitive		Competitive	Competitive
Conscientiousness	Organizing/Ordering	Persistence	Perfectionism	
Achievement Drive	Assertive/Responsible	Achievement	Assured/Ambitious	
Innovation	Independent	Imagination	Self-Actualization	Confident/Self-Reliant
Openness to Feedback				

Personality and Leadership continued

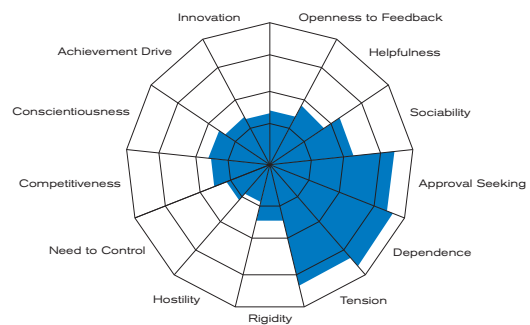
The LMAP Circumplex

The LMAP Profile is a circumplex with 13 scales, each scale measuring a distinct personality trait. The LMAP Profile is organized with the most positively correlated traits (e.g. Conscientiousness and Achievement Drive) adjacent to one another and negatively correlated traits on opposite sides of the Profile (e.g. Rigidity and Openness to Feedback). On the LMAP Profile, scores are shown in percentiles compared to a normative database. The center point equals zero and the four concentric circles mark the 25th, 50th, 75th, and 100th percentiles. Percentile scores allow for comparison of the participant’s raw scores to those in the LMAP sample. Traits with the longest/largest-shaded areas have the greatest impact on behavior; smaller shaded areas have less influence on behavior.

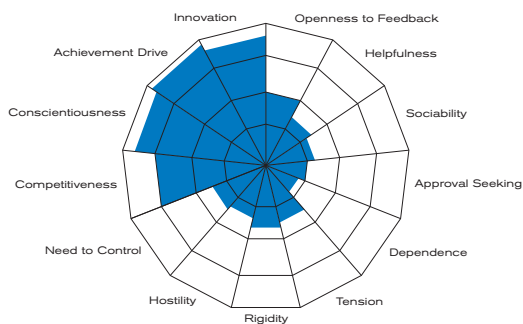
Teamwork Traits



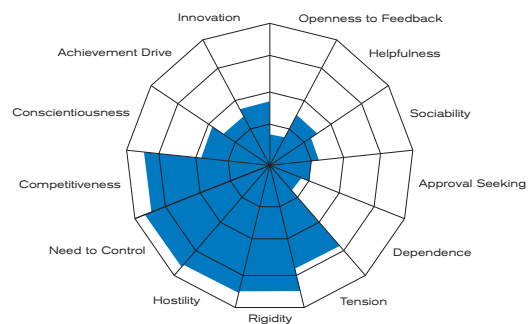
Deference Traits



Task Mastery Traits



Domineering Traits



The LMAP Profile can be heuristically divided into four main sectors of traits that measure related dimensions of behavior:

- **The Task Mastery Traits** include Competitiveness, Conscientiousness, Achievement Drive, and Innovation. In combination these traits share a focus on achieving goals and doing high quality work. Combined with Teamwork Traits, the Task Mastery Traits form the High Performance Leadership Profile.
- **The Teamwork Traits** include Openness to Feedback, Helpfulness and Sociability. These traits share a focus on cooperation and collaboration.
- **The Deference Traits** include Approval Seeking, Dependence, and Tension. In combination these traits focus on following the lead of others and tend to yield passive, unassertive, “deferential” behaviors where conflict and risk are avoided.
- **The Domineering Traits** include Tension, Rigidity, Hostility, Need for Control, and Competitiveness. In combination these traits focus on getting and maintaining control. Drive, decisiveness and passion are assets of these traits; self-centeredness and inflexibility are liabilities.

Personality and Leadership continued

The LMAP Assessment is Distinct from Competency-Based 360s

Job competencies are an important part of selection, management and leadership development, as well as performance management systems. Personality-based assessments also provide an important component in the human capital portfolio. Perhaps because most personality assessments are self-assessments with more limited validity and value, the role of personality assessment in leadership development is often overlooked.

Competency assessments are good at identifying what skills and abilities an individual has while personality assessments identify why an individual is or is not effective in deploying these skills and abilities. It is often not the lack of a skill or competency that undermines effectiveness; it is the personality style that compromises how skills and competencies are expressed. We see this frequently in highly intelligent leaders who make astute observations but share their observations in a way that alienates team members (and embodied in the expression, *the problem is not what you have to say, but how you say it.*) Moreover, as a leader ascends in an organization, their performance in their role becomes less dependent on deploying their individual knowledge skills and abilities and more dependent on relational skills for success-- inspiring, motivating and coaching subordinates individually and as a team.

The chart below outlines differences between the LMAP 360 Assessment and competency assessments:

	LMAP 360	Competency Based 360s
Areas of Measurement	Attitudes and behaviors associated with emotional intelligence; e.g. patience, sociability, assertiveness, conscientiousness, and behaviors that interfere with EQ: e.g. rigidity, hostility, dependence, need for approval	Distinct competencies associated with management & leadership roles; e.g. planning, delegating, valuing diversity, problem analysis, performance feedback
Validity	Built on a reliable and valid model of leadership behavior, grounded in over 20 years of empirical research on thousands of leaders. A coherent model of behavior that triggers insights into how you show up to others	May or may not be valid; often an ad hoc “wish list” of management and leadership skills, beliefs and values. All skills and values are great, but not equally important for different people in different jobs and roles
Norm Base	Standardized scores; norms derived from a large executive leader sample. Standardized scores puts raw score results in context and provide relative comparisons about behavioral styles	Norms not usually available; even less common in “customized” competency based 360s. Use of raw scores can lead to “more is better” mindset and to setting development targets with poor ROI or wrong developmental direction
Addresses “double edged” Behaviors	Explicitly accounts for behavioral styles that can be effective for individual contributors but ineffective in a team leadership role	Rarely discusses behavioral styles that can be effective for individual contributors but ineffective in a team leadership role
Sensitivity to Derailment Behaviors	Analysis of interaction of traits on LMAP Profile fosters insights on derailment behaviors	Results analyzed on discrete level and rarely provide insights into derailment behaviors
Type of Report	In-depth narratives that explain self and co-worker feedback ratings	Generally numbers and bar charts with little or no explanation or interpretation
Recommendations for Behavior Change	Specific recommendations for modifying counter-productive behaviors: substitute behaviors, interactive exercises, external resources	Provide very few specifics on development activities – mainly generic suggestions