

The Leadership Compass - North South East West

This activity emphasizes that leadership is the process of influencing others and understanding both your style and the style of those you work with will make you a more effective leader. Ultimately, having a holistic understanding of leadership styles helps the group get what it needs to achieve its goals.

KEYS TO SUCCESS:

- Play to strengths in others
- Expand repertoire of skills (that are opposite of strengths)

North

“I can do it”/ “Do it now”

Approaches to work/leadership style:

- Active, active, decisive
- Likes to be in control
- Comfortable being up front
- Quick to act, expresses sense of urgency for others to act now
- Enjoys challenges presented by difficult situations and people
- Thinks in terms of the “bottom line”
- Courageous
- Perseveres, not stopped by hearing no
- Likes variety, novelty, new projects

Overuse – Style taken to excess:

- Can seem bogged down by need to press ahead, decide
- Seem to not care about process
- Can get defensive quickly, argue
- May get autocratic
- Want things their way, overrule people in decision making process
- See things in terms of black and white
- Not sensitive to other people’s feelings, may be perceived as cold
- Have trouble relinquishing control, find it hard to delegate “if you want to do something right, do it yourself.”
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Best way to work with a North:

- Present your case quickly, clearly and with enthusiasm
- Let them know how they will be involved
- Focus on the “challenge” of the task
- Provide plenty of autonomy
- Give positive public recognition

- Use them in tasks requiring motivation, persuasion, initiative

South

“Right, Fair”

Approaches to work/leadership style:

- Allows others to feel important in determining direction
- Value driven
- Interaction is primary – uses relationships to accomplish task
- Willing to trust others statements
- Feeling-based, trust own emotion/intuition, intuition regarded as “truth”
- Team player, receptive to others’ ideas, build on ideas of others
- Non-competitive

Overuse: style taken to excess

- Can be bogged down when they believe relationships, needs of people are being compromised.
- Has trouble saying no
- Internalizes difficulties and assumes blame
- Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary to task
- Difficulty confronting, dealing with anger, may be manipulated by anger
- Easily taken advantage of
- Immersed in present, loses track of time, immersed in “now”, may not see long range view

Best way to work with the South:

- Remember process, attention to what’s happening in the relationship (feelings between you right now).
- Needs to feel decisions are ethically right – justify decisions around values, ethics, and the right thing to do.
- Appeal to relationship between you and this person, this person and others
- Listen hard and allow the expression of feeling and intuition in logical arguments
- Easily steamrolled by others
- Provide plenty of positive reassurance and likeability
- Get to know the person personally, let them know that you appreciate them

EAST

“Option” “Possibility”

Approaches to work/leadership style:

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Very idea oriented, focus on future thought
- Insight into mission and purpose
- Looks for overarching themes and ideas
- Likes to experiment and explore
- Strong spiritual awareness – attune to higher level

Overuse: Style taken to excess:

- Can be bogged down by lack of vision or too much emphasis on vision
- Can lose focus on task
- Poor follow through on projects
- May become easily overwhelmed
- Not time-bound, may lose track of time
- Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, then burns out over the long haul
- Can develop a reputation for lack of dependability

Best way to work with the East:

- Show appreciation and enthusiasm for ideas
- Listen and be patient during generation of ideas
- Avoid critical or judgmental statements of ideas
- Allow and support divergent thinking
- Provide a variety of tasks
- Provide help and supervision checkpoints on detail and project follow through

WEST

“Objective”

Approaches to work/leadership style:

- Seen as practical, dependable and thorough in task situations
- Helpful to others by providing planning and resources
- Moves carefully and follows procedures and guidelines
- Uses data analysis and logic to make decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue, likes balance
- Introspective, self-analytical
- Careful, thoroughly examines people's needs in situations
- Works well with existing resource – gets the most out of what has been done in the past
- Skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project

Overuse: style taken to excess:

- Can be bogged down by information, analysis process
- Can become stubborn and entrenched in position
- Can be indecisive, collect unnecessary data, “analysis paralysis”
- May appear cold or withdrawn with respect to others' working styles
- Tendency towards watchfulness, observation
- Can remain withdrawn, distant
- Resists emotional pleas and change

Best way to work with a West:

- Allow plenty of time for decision making
- Provide data – objective facts and figures this person can trust
- Don't be put off by critical NO statements
- Minimize expressing of emotions, use logic whenever possible
- Appeal to tradition, sense of history, correct procedures