

Unit 4: Interpretation Guide for Leadership Self-Assessment

The lecture and chapter for this topic discuss several types of leader behavior that have been shown to impact the effectiveness of leaders. Two of the most important of these are task-oriented leader behavior (often called “Initiating Structure”) and relationship-oriented leader behavior (often called “Consideration”). As the book and lecture describe, the importance and impact of each of these types of behavior can vary depending on the circumstances of the leadership situation. As a starting point, it is important, that you understand these (and the other leader behaviors) that can help leaders effectively guide their followers to success.

Consider the definition and potential impact of Initiating Structure and Consideration behavior:

Initiating Structure Behavior

- Initiating Structure is leader behavior that organizes and defines what followers should do to achieve success. It defines a path to success to guide followers.
- The primary purpose of Initiating Structure is to ensure that people, equipment, and other resources are used in an efficient way to accomplish the mission of a group or organization.
- Research has shown that appropriate Initiating Structure can drive follower performance, satisfaction, and commitment. It is important to note, however, that inappropriate Initiating Structure can mislead followers and that excessive Initiating Structure (for followers who already know how to do their job well) can be distracting and annoying.

Consideration Behavior

- Consideration is leader behavior that focuses on creating mutual respect or trust and that focuses on showing concern for follower’s needs and desires.
- The primary purpose of Consideration is to create positive work relationships between leaders and followers and among coworkers.
- Research has shown that appropriate Consideration can drive follower satisfaction and commitment. Followers who are shown Consideration by leaders are not only more likely to become satisfied and committed to the leader and to the organization but, when Consideration is coupled with appropriate Initiating Structure, followers also become more effective. It is important to note that Consideration without Initiating Structure may lead to happy but low performing followers.

The purpose of this self-assessment is to identify the degree to which you believe that you typically engage in each of these two types of leader behavior when you interact with followers. There is no one correct style of leader behavior for all situations and there is no one best type of dominant leadership style. As discussed in lecture and in the book, successful leader behavior requires diagnosing each leadership situation, analyzing the needs of followers, and then providing the type of behavior that is needed by followers in the specific situation. This requires flexibility in leader behavior. Understanding your dominant leadership style can help you

anticipate situations in which your natural style is likely to succeed and identify situations in which you need to learn to alter your dominant leader behavior to better match the situation and the needs of your followers.

As you look at your scores that describe your dominant leader behavior, consider the following:

Initiating Structure Behavior

| | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Score of 6 – 12 | = | Low Initiating Structure behavior |
| Score of 13 – 23 | = | Medium Initiating Structure behavior |
| Score of 24 – 30 | = | High Initiating Structure behavior |

Consideration Behavior

| | | |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Score of 6 – 12 | = | Low Consideration behavior |
| Score of 13 – 23 | = | Medium Consideration behavior |
| Score of 24 – 30 | = | High Consideration behavior |