

## Leadership/Subordinate Role Patterns

Personality is not the only driver of leadership behavior. However, these scales are good predictors of the behaviors described. Keep in mind that there is no “best” leadership style or approach. Nor is there one best way to be a subordinate. Like all work behavior, leadership is usually quite situational. So, in using these scales, the goal is to gauge the fit between the person and the culture and environment of your organization. As always, be sure to talk with me about each assessment you conduct so you get appropriate interpretation for your specific situation.

### *Leadership Roles*

**Authoritarian:** These people usually pride themselves on their decisiveness and ability to grapple with problems directly. They usually wish to maintain control and power and they are often “nay-sayers” to suggestions made to them. They tend to be more blame oriented than solution-seekers for problems. They also tend to be Dominant and Vigilant.

**Participative:** These people usually administer duties in an impersonal but effective manner. They are comfortable to work with because they remove personality and power struggles from the work situation. They strive to focus attention on conditions which hinder the performance of their subordinates and seldom under- or over-estimate their strengths or the strengths of their employees. Rather they work with people as one would work with any other tool to achieve success. They are solution-seeking when problems arise. Organizational success is normally seen as being derived from the fact that they seldom wish to be shielded from the truth, so subordinates are able to communicate easily and directly with them. They also tend to be Concrete Thinkers, Trusting, and Self-Reliant.

**Permissive:** These people generally feel concern about pleasing others and hope that subordinates will take the responsibility to perform effectively and use it wisely. They tend to avoid being demanding, want to avoid conflicts, and seek the friendship and cooperation of others. They desire to provide help when problems arise and value the support of others over their own power and influence. As a result, their mistakes are likely to be errors of omission rather than commission. They tend to be “yes-sayers” and frequently comply with what their subordinates suggest, sometimes taking less than an active part in the administrative process. They also tend to be Deferential, Lively, Vigilant, Apprehensive, and Self-Reliant.

### *Subordinate Roles*

**Ingratiator:** These people strive to promote harmony and desire to reduce conflicts with others in their organization. They try to adapt their behavior to the expectations of their superiors, and try their best to please others. As a result, there are times when they may work to satisfy their superior’s ego rather than to interact in a fully honest way. They

usually perceive their motives as being supportive and helpful, since they feel responsible to do a job well regardless of what the conditions may be which confront them. They also tend to be Warm, Deferential, Lively, Rule-Conscious, Utilitarian, Apprehensive, Traditional, and Self-Reliant.

**Cooperator:** These people value opportunities to share responsibility, accountability, and power with their superiors. They are usually a source of honest and objective criticism and feedback to their superiors if such communication is desired. They are solution-focused and seldom take time to polish interpersonal relationships. As a consequence, they sometimes give the impression of being cold and disinterested in others. They are seldom threatening to superiors, but usually interact well with participative superiors in efforts to provide a maximally motivational organizational climate. They also tend to be Emotionally Stable, Dominant, Lively, Rule-Conscious, Trusting, and Self-Reliant.

**Free Thinker:** These people usually display eagerness to see change, usually assume the power to bring about changes they believe to be important and like dealing directly with problems. They are apt to chafe under close, restrictive, or authoritarian supervision, since they tend to be independent-minded and often quite critical of their superiors. They value free expression of negative points-of-view and are likely to show concern about setting things straight by confronting persons in positions of power. Nevertheless, they are often innovators and sometimes manage to sufficiently stress the system so as to bring about change from the norm. They also tend to be Reserved, Reactive, Dominant, Expedient, and Vigilant.

### *Role Interactions*

**Confrontive:** These people typically place high value on having power and usually respect direct methods for getting and retaining it. They seem to assume that people are broken in to two groups, the winners and losers. They tend to grant few strengths to opponents and to consider their strength to be their efficiency in that what is done is the result of their direct effort rather than the shared effect of the efforts of many. Since they consider themselves to be “winners” they sometimes enjoy embarrassing others by uncovering inefficiencies on their part. They also tend to be Conceptual Thinkers, Reactive, Dominant, Expedient, Vigilant, Self-Assured, and Tense.

**Controlling:** These people usually like roles to be clearly defined and accepted between leaders and subordinates. They perceive that if the system is maintained, the subordinate will ultimately be given a superior position, whereby the same direct force and power upon others can be exercised. So, authoritarian leaders tend to seek out subordinates who will affirm and support their policies and practices, as well as those who will be intensely loyal to them. They also tend to be Utilitarian, Vigilant, and Traditional.

**Objective:** These people value objective and impersonal relationships between superiors and subordinates. They are typically unconcerned about power, and so, power is readily shared in terms of whatever power is necessary to accomplish an assignment. Power, however, is not relinquished in any permanent sense, and they normally do not value

power struggles. Rather, a feeling of mutual respect and interdependence is sought between the parties involved in working together, and these attitudes and feelings usually evolve between each other. Strong morale and competency on all levels are also fostered. They also tend to be Emotionally Stable, Rule-Conscious, Socially Bold, Trusting, Grounded, Self-Assured, Open to Change, and Self-Reliant.

**Supportive:** These people are usually dedicated to harmony and usually prefer to avoid conflict at all costs. The leader wants to be liked and happy, and hence, may hesitate to make decisions that are perceived to possibly alienate others. Such persons, therefore, give up decision-making prerogative both as leaders and as subordinates. They seem to have a feeling that if unpopular decisions are not made, they are able to maintain the position as being a “nice person”. Consequently, they have a willingness to take abuse and blame in order to make others feel better. They also tend to be Deferential, Rule-Conscious, Apprehensive, and Traditional.