

Session 2: Conceptualizing Leadership

Mentor Modules adapted from Dr. Peter G. Northouse's [Introduction to Leadership Concepts and Practice: 3rd Ed.](#)

Leadership is a combination of strengths (who you are) and abilities (skills you've learned) applied to specific circumstances and contexts (actual behaviors and interactions). Conceptualizing leadership as behavior also implies that leadership can be learned and taught. Your conceptualization of leadership is likely to affect the way you lead, so we're going to spend some time developing that understanding.

Discuss

Think of someone you know and have interacted with personally who exemplifies excellent leadership. Describe this person for your mentor/mentee. What specific strengths, abilities, or behaviors does this person exemplify? How has this person impacted you and/or your understanding of leadership? How do others respond to this person?

Discover

So the next question, then, is this: how do you conceptualize leadership?

Individually, please take the "Conceptualizing Leadership Questionnaire" and follow the instructions for scoring your own understanding of various aspects of leadership. This self-analysis may help you understand your own attitudes and beliefs regarding various facets of leadership as well as what elements you value. Share your results with your mentor/mentee. Do these results confirm or contradict your understanding of your personal values and proclivities? Do you see this influence your interactions with other people?

Develop

You've spent some time conceptualizing your understanding of leadership as well as the qualities of leaders that you admire. The next mentoring session will focus on leadership strengths and more specific behaviors and tendencies that demonstrate leadership activity. Between now and then, consider the following:

- In what areas or contexts do I influence other people's attitudes or behaviors?
- What would other people say that I value as a leader?
- What leadership strengths and qualities do I demonstrate?
- What words would others use to describe my leadership style?

6.2 LEADERSHIP SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose

1. To identify your leadership skills
2. To provide a profile of your leadership skills showing your strengths and weaknesses

Directions

1. Place yourself in the role of a leader when responding to this questionnaire.
2. For each of the statements below, circle the number that indicates the degree to which you feel the statement is true.

Statements	Not true	Seldom true	Occasionally true	Somewhat true	Very true
1. I am effective with the detailed aspects of my work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I usually know ahead of time how people will respond to a new idea or proposal.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am effective at problem solving.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Filling out forms and working with details come easily for me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Understanding the social fabric of the organization is important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When problems arise, I immediately address them.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Managing people and resources is one of my strengths.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am able to sense the emotional undercurrents in my group.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Seeing the big picture comes easily for me.	1	2	3	4	5
10. In my work, I enjoy responding to people's requests and concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I use my emotional energy to motivate others.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Making strategic plans for my company appeals to me.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Obtaining and allocating resources is a challenging aspect of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The key to successful conflict resolution is respecting my opponent.	1	2	3	4	5

6.2 LEADERSHIP SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE

(continued)

Statements	Not true	Seldom true	Occasionally true	Somewhat true	Very true
15. I enjoy discussing organizational values and philosophy.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am effective at obtaining resources to support our programs.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I work hard to find consensus in conflict situations.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am flexible about making changes in our organization.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

1. Sum the responses on items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16 (administrative skill score).
2. Sum the responses on items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17 (interpersonal skill score).
3. Sum the responses on items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 (conceptual skill score).

Total Scores

Administrative skill: _____

Interpersonal skill: _____

Conceptual skill: _____

Scoring Interpretation

The Leadership Skills Questionnaire is designed to measure three broad types of leadership skills: administrative, interpersonal, and conceptual. By comparing your scores, you can determine where you have leadership strengths and where you have leadership weaknesses.

If your score is 26–30, you are in the very high range.

If your score is 21–25, you are in the high range.

If your score is 16–20, you are in the moderate range.

If your score is 11–15, you are in the low range.

If your score is 6–10, you are in the very low range.

Building Your Leadership Profile

If you have the interactive eBook version of this text, log in to access the Leadership Profile Tool. After completing this chapter's questionnaire, you will receive individualized feedback and practical suggestions for further strengthening your leadership based on your responses in this questionnaire.