The Leadership Compass Self-Assessment

"When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."
—AUDRE LORDE

GOALS

- Give us a vocabulary and a way of thinking about working with each other in our teams
- Deepen our appreciation of everyone's different work styles
- Understand the need for a variety of work styles
- Reflect on our own individual work styles and identify areas for growth
- Understand the negative and positive impacts of each style taken to excess
- Learn the qualities we can develop to become better leaders

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

- We will categorize ourselves into the work style that fits us best at work →
- No one is purely one style, rather everyone typically has portions of all styles
- For this discussion we will pick one that fits us best at work
- All comments will be directed towards a work style, not a person with the qualities of that direction

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Read** each of the statements on the following pages.
2. Place a **check mark** in the box next to the statements that apply to how you make choices and decisions at work.
3. Each of these statements will apply to all of us some of the time; we are interested in knowing which of these statements represent you most of the time.
4. **Count** the total number of check marks on each section and place that number in the star shape to the right of the section.
5. The section with the highest number in the star shape is your dominant decision-making style.

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North—Action

Approaches to Work/Work Style

OF CHECKED BOXES IN **NORTH**

- ☐ I am usually assertive, active, and decisive.
- ☐ I like to determine the course of events and be in control of professional relationships.
- ☐ I am quick to act and express a sense of urgency for others to act.
- ☐ I enjoy challenges presented by difficult situations and people.
- ☐ I think in terms of the bottom line or results.
- ☐ I like a quick pace and fast track.
- ☐ I persevere and am not stopped by hearing "No"; I probe and press to get at hidden resistances.
- ☐ I likes variety, novelty, and new projects.
- ☐ I am comfortable being in front of a room or crowd.
- ☐ Some of my value-oriented words phrases include "Do it now!," "I'll do it!," and "What's the bottom line?"

East—Vision

Approaches to Work/Work Style

OF CHECKED BOXES IN **EAST**

- ☐ I am a visionary who sees the big picture.
- ☐ I am a generative and creative thinker; I am able to think outside the box.
- ☐ I am very idea-oriented and focus on future thought.
- ☐ I make decisions by standing in the future.
- ☐ I usually have insight into mission and purpose.
- ☐ I look for overarching themes and ideas.
- ☐ I am adept at problem-solving.
- ☐ I like to experiment and explore new ways of doing things.
- ☐ I appreciate a lot of information.
- ☐ My value-oriented words are "option," "possibility," and "imagine."

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South—Empathy

Approaches to Work/Work Style

OF CHECKED BOXES IN **SOUTH**

- ☐ I understand how people need to receive information in order to act upon it.
- ☐ I integrate others' input in determining the direction of what's happening.
- ☐ I am value-driven regarding aspects of professional life.
- ☐ I use professional relationships to accomplish tasks and interaction is primary to me.
- ☐ I am supportive of colleagues and peers.
- ☐ I have a willingness to take others' statements at face value.
- ☐ I am feeling-based and trust my own emotions and intuition.
- ☐ I believe my intuition and emotions are regarded as truth.
- ☐ I am receptive to others' ideas; I am a team player; I build on the ideas of others.
- ☐ I am generally non-competitive.
- ☐ I am able to focus on the present moment.
- ☐ My value-oriented words are "right" and "fair."

West—Analytical

Approaches to Work/Work Style

OF CHECKED BOXES IN **WEST**

- ☐ I understand what information is needed to assist in decision-making.
- ☐ I am seen as practical, dependable, and thorough in task situations.
- ☐ I'm helpful to others by providing planning and resources and come through for the team.
- ☐ I move carefully and follow procedures and guidelines.
- ☐ I use data analysis and logic to make decisions.
- ☐ I weigh all sides of an issue and am balanced.
- ☐ I am introspective and self-analytical.
- ☐ I am careful and thoroughly examine people's needs in situations.
- ☐ I maximize existing resources and get the most out of what has been done in the past.
- ☐ I am skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project.
- ☐ My value-oriented word is "objective."

Approaches to Work/Work Style

NORTH—ACTION

- Assertive, active, and decisive
- Likes to determine the course of events and be in control of professional relationships
- Quick to act; expresses a sense of urgency for others to act
- Enjoys challenges presented by difficult situations and people
- Thinks in terms of the bottom line
- Likes a quick pace and the fast track
- Perseveres; not stopped by hearing "No"; probes and presses to get at hidden resistances
- Likes variety, novelty, and new projects
- Comfortable being in front of a room or crowd
- Value-oriented phrases include "Do it now!," "I'll do it!," and "What's the bottom line?"

WEST—ANALYTICAL

- Understands what information is needed to assist in decision-making
- Seen as practical, dependable, and thorough in task situations
- Helpful to others by providing planning and resources; comes through for the team
- Moves carefully and follows procedures and guidelines
- Uses data analysis and logic to make decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue; balanced
- Introspective and self-analytical
- Careful; thoroughly examines people's needs in situations
- Maximizes existing resources; gets the most out of what has been done in the past
- Skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project
- Value-oriented word is "objective"

EAST—VISION

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Generative and creative thinker; able to think outside the box
- Very idea-oriented; focuses on future thought
- Makes decisions by standing in the future
- Insight into mission and purpose
- Looks for overarching themes and ideas
- Adept at problem-solving
- Likes to experiment and explore
- Appreciates a lot of information
- Value-oriented words are "option," "possibility," and "imagine"

SOUTH—EMPATHY

- Understands how people need to receive information in order to act upon it
- Integrates others' input in determining direction of what's happening
- Value-driven regarding aspects of professional life
- Uses professional relationships to accomplish tasks; interaction is primary
- Supportive of colleagues and peers
- Displays a willingness to take others' statements at face value
- Feeling-based; trusts own emotions and intuition as truth
- Receptive of others' ideas; team player; builds on ideas of others; non-competitive
- Able to focus on the present moment
- Value-oriented words are "right" and "fair"

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Styles Taken to Excess

NORTH—ACTION

- May easily overlook process and comprehensive strategic planning when driven by need to act and decide
- May get defensive quickly, argue, and try to "out expert" you
- May lose patience; pushes for decisions before its time; avoids discussion
- May be autocratic; want things their way; has difficulty being a team member
- Sees things in terms of black and white; little tolerance for ambiguity
- May go beyond limits; gets impulsive; disregards practical issues
- Not heedful of others' feelings; may be perceived as cold
- Has trouble relinquishing control; finds it difficult to delegate responsibilities
- Value-oriented phrase is "If you want something done, do it yourself!"

WEST—ANALYTICAL

- May be bogged down by information or analysis process at the expense of moving forward
- May become stubborn and entrenched in position
- May be indecisive, collect unnecessary data, become mired in details, or suffer from "analysis paralysis"
- May appear cold or withdrawn in respect to others' working styles
- May have a tendency towards watchfulness or observation
- May remain withdrawn and distant
- May resist emotional pleas and change

EAST—VISION

- May put too much emphasis on vision at the expense of action
- May lose focus on tasks
- Poor follow-through on projects; can develop a reputation for lack of dependability or attention to detail
- Not time-bound; may lose track of time
- Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, but burns out over the long haul
- Will not work on projects that do not have a comprehensive vision
- Easily frustrated and overwhelmed when outcomes are not in line with vision

SOUTH—EMPATHY

- May lose focus on goals when they believe relationships and/or needs of people are being compromised
- Has trouble saying "No" to requests
- Internalizes difficulty and assumes blame
- Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary to task
- Has difficulty consulting, confronting, and dealing with anger; may be manipulated by anger
- May over-compromise to avoid conflict
- Immersed in the "now"; loses track of time; may not see long-range view
- May become mired in the process at the expense of accomplishing goals

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North: The “Get It Done” Person

Approach to Work

- Assertive, Active, Decisive
- Likes to be in control and determine the course of events
- Quick to act, expresses urgency for others to act quickly also
- Enjoys challenging people and situations
- Thinks in terms of the “bottom line”
- Likes a quick pace and the fast track
- Courageous, Ambitious, and Confident
- Perseveres – Not stopped by “NO”
- Goal-centered, ambitious
- Hardworking leader who is comfortable being in front
- Value Words – “Do it now!” “I’ll do it.”

Best Ways to Work with a North

- Present your case quickly, clearly, and with enthusiasm and confidence
- Let them know they will be involved – their payoff and their role Focus on the “challenge” of the task.
- Provide them with plenty of autonomy
- Establish timelines and stick with them
- Give them positive, public recognition
- Use them to complete tasks that require motivation, persuasion, and initiative

South: The Nurturer

Approach to Work

- Friendly, Likeable team player
- Allows others to feel important
- Supportive, nurturing and caring towards colleagues Willing to trust others’ statements at face value
- Peace-loving, sympathetic, and helpful
- Feelings-based, trusts own emotions and intuition as truth
- Able to focus on the present moment
- Process-centered
- Generous, non-competitive and likes to build on the ideas of others
- Value Words: “Right” and “Fair”
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Best Ways to Work with a South

- Remember process, attention to what is happening with the relationship between you
- Justify your decisions around values and ethics
- Appeal your relationship with this person and his or her other relationships
- Listen hard and allow the expression of feelings and intuition in logical arguments
- Be aware that this person may have a hard time saying “NO” and may be easily steamrolled
- Provide plenty of positive reassurance and likeability
- Let the personal know you like them and appreciate them

East: The Visionary

Approach to Work

- Innovative, Creative and sees the big picture
- Very idea oriented, focuses on future thought
- Risk-taker, adventurous, spontaneous
- Has insight into mission and purpose
- Looks for overarching themes and ideas
- Appreciates a lot of information
- Strong spiritual awareness, free spirited, unconventional
- Likes to experiment and explore
- Value words: “Option” “Possibility”

Best Ways to Work with an East

- Show appreciation and enthusiasm for ideas
- Listen and be patient during idea generation
- Avoid criticizing or judging ideas
- Allow and support divergent thinking
- Provide a variety of tasks
- Provide help and supervision to support detail and project follow through

West: The Analyst

Approach to Work

- Seen as practical, dependable, and thorough
- Provide planning and resources to others
- Moves carefully, deliberately, and follows procedures and guidelines
- Use data to make logical and analytical decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue, balanced
- Introspective, self-analytical, focused, reserved
- Careful, thoroughly examines people’s needs in situations
- Works well with existing resources – gets the most out of what has been done in the past
- Skilled at finding the fatal flaw in an idea or a project
- Value Words: “Objective,” “Organized”

Best Ways to Work with a West

- Allow plenty of time for decision-making
- Provide data – objective facts and figures that a West can trust
- Don’t be put off by critical “NO” statements
- Minimize the expression of emotion and use logic when possible
- Appeal to tradition, a sense of history, and correct procedures

Leadership Compass: Reflection Questions

1. What is your work style? North, South, East or West?
2. What resonated with you from your work style descriptions?
3. What are three strengths of your work style?
4. What are three challenges of your work style?
5. What do your coworkers need to know about working with you?