Leadership Versatility
*Capturing Tensions and Trade-offs in Executive Assessment*

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**Ground to Cover**

- Problems with typical assessment tools
- Solutions to those problems
- Dev’t/validation of a new approach
## Problem 1: Overkill is overlooked!

### Rating “Bad Boss”

**How often does this manager do the following?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct—tells people when he is dissatisfied with their work.</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>rarely</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**How effective is this manager at the following?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct—tells people when he is dissatisfied with their work.</th>
<th>ineffective</th>
<th>adequate</th>
<th>effective</th>
<th>very effective</th>
<th>extremely effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- X
How to measure overkill?


Rating “Bad Boss”
with the new scale

Direct—tells people when he is dissatisfied with their work.
Detecting Excess Too

*Item text:* "Lets people know clearly where she stands on issues. Declares herself."

Average subordinates’ ratings for 107 executives.


### Top 10 Behaviors Most Commonly Rated “Too Much”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>% rated “too much” by coworkers</th>
<th>% of selves also rating “too much”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsive to superiors</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t back down</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stays with the tried and true</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure of self</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused on short-term results</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumes authority</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps in when problems come up</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes charge</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lets you know where he/she stands</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action-oriented</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detail-oriented</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>50%</strong></td>
<td><strong>20%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Problem 1

Overkill is overlooked

A solution: add a provision for raters to indicate "too much."

![Diagram showing scale for too little to too much]

Problem 2

Gary Goodhart
Gary Goodhart

Problem 2: Lopsided leadership is rampant.

Problem 2

Lopsidedness is undetected

A solution:

1. Measure overdoing. 2. Conceptualize leadership as two-sided.
Problem 3

1. Typically, lists—long uni-dimensional lists
2. Not very conceptually compelling
3. Don’t reflect tensions and trade-offs

Competency Model

1. Drive for results
2. Team player
3. Visionary
4. Upward influence
5. Political savvy
6. Decisive
7. Action-oriented
8. Customer focus
9. Delegation
10. Participative
11. Networking
12. Integrity
13. Mentoring
14. Coaching
15. Networking
16. Interpersonal skill
17. Resourcefulness
18. Public speaking
20. Empowering
21. Stress tolerance
22. Honesty
23. Master complexity
24. Manage self
25. Compassion
26. Emotional IQ
27. Learning agility
28. Diversity
29. Culturally Aware
30. Change agent
31. Courage
32. Creativity

Leadership models are not integrated.

The two-sidedness of leadership

For every truth about leadership there is an equal and opposing truth.

(With all apologies to Isaac Newton.)
Problem 3

Leadership models lack integration

A solution: Use a higher-order, integrative concept—for instance, versatility in terms of opposites.

New Approach to Assessment

360° tool
- Measures overkill—too much of a good thing.
- Based on a two-sided model of leadership.
- Integrated around the concept of versatility.
Versatility

Having a full range of motion; able to freely use opposing dimensions, unrestricted by bias in favor of one and prejudice against the other.


Two Fundamental Oppositions

Forceful-Enabling  (how you lead)

- Initiating Structure—Consideration
- Power-oriented—Power-sharing
- Autocratic—Participative
- Task-oriented—People-oriented
- Performance—Socio-emotional

Strategic-Operational  (what you lead)

- Vision—Implementation
- Long-term—Short-term
- Prospector—Defender
- Change—Continuity
- Leadership—Management
How You Lead

**Forceful Leadership vs. Enabling Leadership**

- **Exercising power and authority to push for performance.**
  - Takes charge
  - Declares/decides
  - Pushes

- **Creating conditions for other people to be influential and contribute.**
  - Empowers
  - Listens/includes
  - Supports

What You Lead

**Strategic Leadership vs. Operational Leadership**

- **Positioning the organization for the future.**
  - Direction
  - Growth
  - Innovation

- **Driving the organization to get results in the near term.**
  - Execution
  - Efficiency
  - Order

Leadership Versatility Index

- Forthcoming—tells people what is on his mind.

- Defends his position—doesn’t back down easily.

- Open to influence. Can be persuaded to change his mind.

- Makes it easy for people to challenge his thinking—to push back.
Summary of Research

Relations Among Opposites

How do Forceful and Enabling relate statistically?

- POSITIVE
- NEGATIVE
- NO RELATIONSHIP
**Prior Research**

Correlations commonly reported
- Task-oriented—People-oriented
- Autocratic—Participative
- Factor I—Factor II in most 360s

*Correlation values:
- $r's$ from .00 to .60 (most from .40 to .60)
- $\hat{\rho} = .46$

**Meta-analysis of "Ohio State" studies***
- Consideration—Initiating Structure
- LBDQ-XII (most valid measure)


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**Illustration of Prior Research**

[Graph showing correlation between Decisive Task Orientation and Empowerment with $r = .49$]
What We Have Found

Why the Difference?
Validity


Too Much FORCEFUL

Too Little ENABLING

Too Much ENABLING

Too Little FORCEFUL

Too Much FORCEFUL
Too Little FORCEFUL
Too Little ENABLING
Too Much ENABLING

+2  +1  0  -1  -2

75%  100%  84%  61%

Overall Versatility

N = 423 senior managers

M = 80%
SD = 9%
### Versatility & Team Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall Versatility</th>
<th>F-E Versatility</th>
<th>S-O Versatility</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Productivity</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Vitality</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.57</td>
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\( N = 268 \) senior managers


### Versatility & Commitment/Retention

- **Job Satisfaction**
  - Forceful-Enabling Versatility \( + .29^* \)
  - Extrinsic Rewards \( + .29^* \)
  - Intrinsic Rewards \( + .38^* \)
  - Funding \( + .15^* \)

- **Org'l Commitment** \( + .59^* \)

- **Retention Cognition** \( + .25^* \)

**Versatility & Overall Effectiveness**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>r</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>Executives</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Executives</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Middle managers</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Middle managers</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>Executives</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>Execs &amp; MMs</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>718</td>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>.71</td>
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**N = 268 Execs and MMs**

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$r = .71; r^2 = .50\%$

Versatility accounts for half of what separates the most highly regarded leaders from the least well regarded leaders.

Take-aways for Executive Ass’t

- Check for overkill—*strengths overused*
- Look for imbalances—*lopsided leadership*
- Assess the *how* (interpersonal) and the *what* (organizational) of leadership
At the Wiley booth in the Exhibition Hall