Developing Versatile Leadership

A Two-Sided Model and a Cutting-Edge Tool

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Learning Objectives

1. Recognize serious oversights in the design of standard leadership models and assessment tools.

2. Know how to expand your assessment tool kit to detect overkill and imbalance.

3. Understand how to help executives become more versatile and effective by using overkill and imbalance to surface and work the internal drivers of performance issues.
A Curious Disconnect

What we know about leadership

How we assess leaders
Case: Rodney Strong

Oversight #1

Overkill is rampant. But do we assess it?
How often does this manager do the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency Rating Scale</th>
<th>1. Lets people know clearly where he stands on issues. Declares himself.</th>
<th>2. Direct; a straight-shooter. Tells people candidly what he thinks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often</td>
<td></td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Effectiveness Rating Scale

How effective is this manager on the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>ineffective</th>
<th>adequate</th>
<th>effective</th>
<th>very effective</th>
<th>extraordinarily effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lets people know clearly where he stands on issues. Declares himself.</td>
<td>![X]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Direct; a straight-shooter. Tells people candidly what he thinks.</td>
<td>![X]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to measure Overkill?

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

**Too little**

**Too much**

**The right amount**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Much too little</th>
<th>Barely too little</th>
<th>Barely too much</th>
<th>Much too much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-4</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aristotle's notion of virtue
### The "Curvilinear" Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Too little</th>
<th>The right amount</th>
<th>Too much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Much too little</td>
<td>Barely too little</td>
<td>Barely too much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Lets people know clearly where he stands on issues. Declares himself.

   -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

   ![Rating Scale](image)

2. Direct; a straight-shooter. Tells people candidly what he thinks.

   -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

   ![Rating Scale](image)
Detecting Excess Too

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

Average subordinates' ratings for 107 executives.
Versatility

The ability to **turn** the dial up or down depending on the situation.

Versatility isn't moderation in all things. Certain situations call for very immoderate responses.
What are the truths about effective leaders?

For every truth about leadership there is an equal and opposing truth.
Case: Lynda Lovecraft

Oversight #2

Lopsidedness is rampant. But do we assess it?
How to measure lopsidedness?

1. Have to measure overdoing.

2. Have to conceptualize leadership as two-sided.
The Two-Sidedness of Leadership
Complex Versatility

The ability to freely draw upon opposing virtues, unrestricted by bias in favor of one and prejudice against the other.
Forceful & Enabling

**Forceful Leadership**

*Leading off of your own intellect and energy*

taking charge, taking stands, having leadership presence, being decisive, setting challenging expectations for people, holding them accountable, making tough calls, asking probing questions, and so on.

**Enabling Leadership**

*Creating conditions for other people to be forces in their own right*

empowering them, being receptive to where they stand on issues, being responsive to their needs, understanding when they don’t deliver, sharing the limelight, and so on.
From Virtue to Vice

- Going overboard corrupts an otherwise valued quality
- "Strengths become weaknesses"
Forceful and Enabling Leadership

How do the two relate statistically?

- **Positive**: Forceful increases with Enabling.
- **Negative**: Forceful decreases with Enabling.
- **No Relationship**: Forceful and Enabling are not related.

\[ \text{Enabling} \quad \text{Forceful} \]

\[ \text{Enabling} \quad \text{Forceful} \]

\[ \text{Enabling} \quad \text{Forceful} \]
What Prior Research Has Found

What We Have Found

Why the Difference?
Versatility

The ability to freely draw upon opposing virtues, unrestricted by bias in favor of one and prejudice against the other.
Versatility Score

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

-1 100%
-1 84%
+1 75%
+2 61%

100%
84%
75%
61%
Versatility & Overall Effectiveness

Overall Effectiveness (All Coworkers)

Forceful & Enabling Versatility

$\ r = .81 $
Two Overarching Balances

Forceful-Enabling  (how you lead)

Strategic-Operational  (what you lead)
Strategic & Operational

- **Strategic Leadership**

  *Positioning the organization for the future*
  setting long-term direction, thinking broadly about the organization, seeking ways to grow the business, aligning people with the vision and strategy, and the like.

- **Operational Leadership**

  *Driving the organization to execute in the near term*
  focusing on results, getting involved in details, being grounded in the realities of implementing strategy, using processes to keep people on track, and so on.
**Forceful & Enabling — Average Ratings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rater Groups</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>+1</td>
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<tr>
<td>+2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+3</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1f.** Takes charge—in control of his unit.

**1e.** Empowers subordinates; able to let go.

**2f.** Lets people know clearly and with feeling where he/she stands.

**2e.** Interested in where other people stand. Receptive to their ideas.

**3f.** Makes tough calls—including those that have an adverse effect on people.

**3e.** Compassionate. Responsive to people’s needs and feelings.

**4f.** Holds people accountable—firm when they don’t deliver.

**4e.** Understanding when people are not able to deliver.

**Legend:**
- **All** (black bar) = All Coworkers (12), S = Superiors (2), P = Peers (5), D = Direct Reports (5).
The Outer Work of Dev't

Do less. Be more selective. Use a counterweight.

Do more. Don't hold back or avoid it. Compensate.
The Inner Work of Dev't

Underrating yourself . . . get the strengths to sink in.

Crooked thinking . . . straighten it out.

Prejudicial attitude . . . get over it.

Blind spot . . . turn around.

Faulty gauge . . . recalibrate.