

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Employability Skills Area: Leadership and Team Work

### Assignment Name: Leadership Self Test

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I think more about immediate results than I do about mentoring others.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** People will be motivated if you pay them enough.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** It's nice to know about people's long-term goals, but not necessary to get the job done.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** If you have a consistent recognition system that rewards everyone in the same way, then that is enough.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** The best way to build a team is to set a group goal that is highly challenging, maybe even "crazy."
6. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** My greatest pleasure in my job comes from making the work process more effective.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I spend more of my time and attention on my weaker performers than I do on my top performers, who basically take care of themselves.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** It's better not to know anything about the personal lives and interests of the people who report to me.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** Sometimes, it's almost as if I'm a "collector of people" because I'm always recruiting and getting to know new people.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I like to surround myself with people who are better at what they do than I am.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I am a lifelong student of what makes other people tick.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** People talk about "mission" too much – it's best just to let people do their work and not try to bring values into the conversation.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** It's my job to know everything that goes on in my area.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I pay close attention to how and where I spend my time, because the priorities I put into action are the ones that other people will observe and follow.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ **TRUE or FALSE:** I've worked hard to get along with or understand people who are very different from me.

Answers:

The little “Self Test” above is meant to provoke thought, and there are no standards here for how many “leader” responses would make you a “true leader.”

The answers and ideas offered come from experience with assessments involving hundreds of leaders and managers over time, but this is not a standardized test. I hope you find the discussion below interesting and educational.

Remember, most managerial jobs require some leadership practice, and executives need both strong management and leadership skills. The idea that real people are either “leaders” or “managers” is false - different jobs require different balances of each.

1. **TRUE or FALSE: I think more about immediate results than I do about mentoring others.**

Managers focus on the process and immediate efficiency more than leaders do. Leaders think about how they invest their time to develop the strongest talent so that those people can grow and do more and more over time. Leaders figure if they do that, those people will do a better job of watching and improving processes than they themselves will. “True” is more of a manager’s response, and “False” is more of a leader’s response.

2. **TRUE or FALSE: People will be motivated if you pay them enough.**

Leaders understand that pay is a satisfier, not a true motivator. Once the satisfier is in place at an acceptable level, people are motivated by the nature of the work and challenges, opportunities to learn and grow, and based on whether or not they feel their bosses support or care about them. “True” is more of a manager’s answer, and “False” is more of a leader’s answer.

3. **TRUE or FALSE: It’s nice to know about people’s long-term goals, but not necessary to get the job done.**

Someone once said that managers get “work done through people,” but leaders get “people done through work.” Since leaders need to know what makes individual people tick, they want to know long-term goals and aspirations, so they can craft ways to combine personal goals with the work at hand, or even the organization’s goals. For a given project, it may be less important to know people’s long-term goals, but for organizational success and growth, it is necessary. “True” is more of a manager’s answer, and “False” is more of a leader’s answer.

4. **TRUE or FALSE: If you have a consistent recognition system that rewards everyone in the same way, then that is enough.**

Leaders’ recognize that everyone is motivated a little differently, and so consistency is not an absolute virtue in recognizing people. Some people may like public praise, and others may emphasize more the opportunity to have flexible family time, for example. Since managers emphasize systems more than they do people or personalities, “True” is more of a manager’s response, and “False” is more of a leader’s response.

5. **TRUE or FALSE: The best way to build a team is to set a group goal that is highly challenging, maybe even “crazy.”**

Managers tend to think more in terms of what has been done before and try to make more incremental improvements, while leaders like to challenge people to bring out their best in ways they themselves may not have imagined possible. The best way to build team coherence is to take people through a shared, difficult challenge – something any military platoon leader can tell you. “True” is more of a leader’s response, and “False” is more of a manager’s response.

6. **TRUE or FALSE: My greatest pleasure in my job comes from making the work process more effective.**

This is a classic manager's priority, deriving most pleasure from process and efficiency. Leaders enjoy that a lot too, but they tend to enjoy most when they can help people and organizations grow. "True" is more of a manager's response, and "False" is more of a leader's response.

7. **TRUE or FALSE: I spend more of my time and attention on my weaker performers than I do on my top performers, who basically take care of themselves.**

Leaders use their time as a reward, and seek to invest their attention where it can have the most upside impact. Generally speaking, people have the most opportunity to grow and become truly great where they already demonstrate strong performance, and so leaders tend to avoid remedial projects or the constant oversight of weaker performers. Instead, they spend more of their attention on the people who are the best at what they do, since those are the people who will bring invent the greatest process and performance improvements in the future. Managers tend to focus more on problems to solve than they do on opportunities to boost people toward previously unachieved levels of excellence. "True" is more of a manager's response, and "False" is more of a leader's response.

8. **TRUE or FALSE: It's better not to know anything about the personal lives and interests of the people who report to me.**

Leaders try to learn what makes each person tick, so that means knowing getting to understand them in a more personal way, without being invasive or inappropriate. Managers tend to be more cut-and-dried in their work relations. "True" is more of a manager's response, while "False" is more of a leader's response.

9. **TRUE or FALSE: Sometimes, it's almost as if I'm a "collector of people" because I'm always recruiting and getting to know new people.**

Some of the best managers are very good at studying best practices – ways to "build a better mousetrap" to improve performance and efficiency. Leaders tend to look more for the "Einstein's" and star performers of the world who are more likely to invent those better mousetraps in the first place. Leaders think about people and their talents as if they were investment opportunities, and so "True" is more of a leader's response, and "False" is more of a manager's response

10. **TRUE or FALSE: I like to surround myself with people who are better at what they do than I am.**

This is a classic leadership statement, since leaders are all about finding and cultivating talent, and are not threatened by it. Managers may tend to want to feel more in control of their surroundings – not least of all because highly talented people can be very independent and difficult to "manage!" Since leaders tend to have stronger social skills than managers do, and so are better prepared to deal with other strong egos, "True" is more of a leader's response, and "False" is more of a manager's response.

11. **TRUE or FALSE: I am a lifelong student of what makes other people tick.**

"True" is more of a leader's response, and "False" is more of a manager's response, for reasons already discussed.

12. **TRUE or FALSE: People talk about "mission" too much – it's best just to let people do their work and not try to bring values into the conversation.**

While it's true that "mission" and "vision" are concepts that have become watered down by careless misuse, leaders still understand that it is best to connect daily work and projects into a larger framework that gives work a sense of purpose and meaning. People would rather feel that their work has some purpose and meaning in order to do their work well and care about results. "True" is more of a manager's response, and "False" is more a leader's response.

**13. TRUE or FALSE: It's my job to know everything that goes on in my area.**

Since leaders focus more on knowing the people who know what is going on, rather than on the details of everything that is going on, "True" is more of a manager's response, and "False" is more of a leader's response.

**14. TRUE or FALSE: I pay close attention to how and where I spend my time, because the priorities I put into action are the ones that other people will observe and follow.**

Leaders realize that the little things they do ripple out in wider and wider ways, and that their actual priorities will be mimicked throughout an organization. As a result, they make their choices wisely, knowing that people, and other managers or supervisors, do imitate the "boss," who sets the ultimate tone. "True" is more of a leader's response, and "false" is more of a manager's response.

**15. TRUE or FALSE: I've worked hard to get along with or understand people who are very different from me.**

As headstrong as many leaders can be, they know from experience that being so headstrong can be a liability, and they have learned to work hard at accepting and listening to other points of view. Managers may be more focused on what they believe to be the "right way" to do some job or work process, and may be less open to widely divergent views. Leaders may not always enjoy hearing other views, but they often have learned the critical importance of the saying, "Let the best idea win!" "True" is more of a leader's response, and "False" is more of a manager's response.

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