

Leadership Orientations

Bolman and Deal's Four-Frame Model

Leaders need to be able to look at the situations they face from different perspectives. The need to be able to reframe the situation to really understand what it going on, and deal with it effectively.

One single approach will only be “right” a small percentage of the time. Too often leaders approach everything they deal with from their dominant orientation and insist that the world is as they see it. Leadership Orientations allow leaders to grow and shift their perceptions.

Complete this self-assessment questionnaire to find out your preferred orientation.

Instructions:

1. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.
2. Total up the numbers listed on each “a” row and mark it above the “a” line. Repeat this process for “b,” “c,” and “d”.
3. You can then total your scores horizontally—**a + b + c + d**. It should equal 60.
4. Plot your score on the axis opposite. Place a dot on the axis which corresponds to the orientation. **ST** = Structural, **HR** = Human Resource, **PL** = Political, **SY** = Symbolic.
5. Then join up your dots using straight lines and you should end up with a kite or diamond shape.

The Educator Leadership Academy – Leadership Module

1. My strongest skills are:

- a. Analytic skills
- b. Interpersonal skills
- c. Political skills
- d. Flair for drama

2. The best way to describe me is:

- a. Technical expert
- b. Good listener
- c. Skilled negotiator
- d. Inspirational leader

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:

- a. Make good decisions
- b. Coach and develop people
- c. Build strong alliances and a power base
- d. Inspire and excite others

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:

- a. Attention to detail
- b. Concern for people
- c. Ability to succeed in the face of conflict and opposition
- d. Charisma

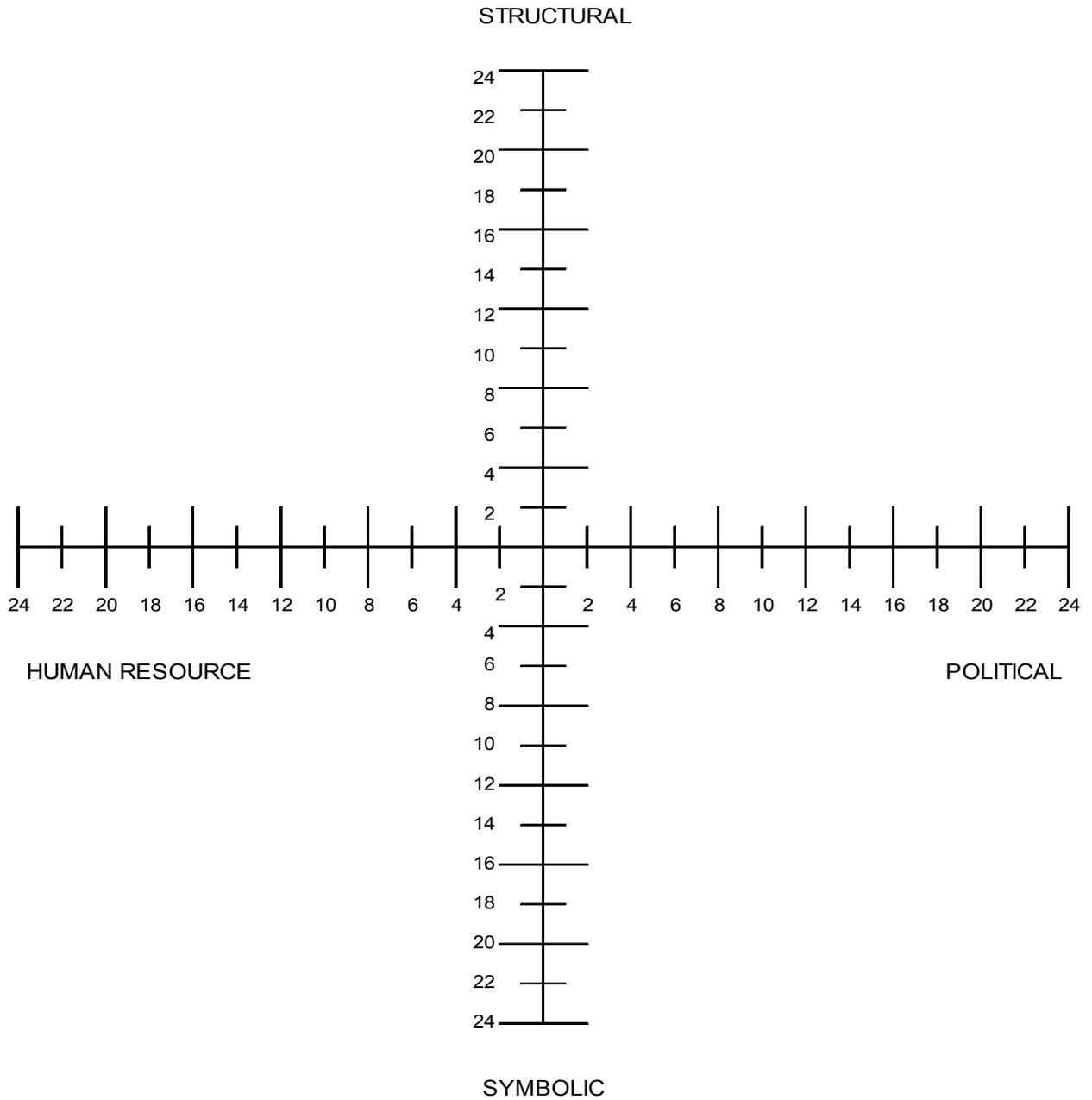
5. My most important leadership trait is:

- a. Clear, logical thinking
- b. Caring and support of others
- c. Toughness and aggressiveness
- d. Imagination and creativity

6. I am best described as:

- a. An analyst
- b. A humanist
- c. A politician
- d. A visionary

The Educator Leadership Academy – Leadership Module



“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.” Maya Angelou

Leadership Orientations Descriptions

Structural

Keywords: Goals, task, technology, rationality, environment, rules, roles, linkages, differentiation, integration.

Structural leaders emphasise rationality, analysis, logic, facts, and data. They are likely to believe strongly in the importance of clear structure and well-developed management systems. A good leader is someone who thinks clearly, makes the right decisions, has good analytical skills, and can design structures and systems that get the job done.

Human Resources

Keywords: Needs, skills, feelings, motivation, satisfaction, norms, interpersonal interactions, fit (between person and organisation).

Human resources leaders emphasise the importance of people. They endorse the view that the central task of management is to develop a good fit between people and organisations. They believe in the importance of coaching, participation, motivation, teamwork, and good interpersonal relations. A good leader is a facilitator and participative manager who supports and empowers others.

Political

Keywords: Power, conflict, coalitions, scarcity, enduring differences, politics, bargaining, negotiation.

Political leaders believe that managers and leaders live in a world of conflict and scarce resources. The central task of management is to mobilise the resources needed to advocate and fight for the unit's or the organisation's goals and objectives. Political leaders emphasise the importance of building a power base: allies, networks, coalitions. A good leader is an advocate and negotiator who understands politics and is comfortable with conflict.

Symbolic

Keywords: Symbols, meaning, belief, faith, culture, ceremonies, rituals, myths, stories, play.

Leaders believe that the essential task of management is to provide vision and inspiration. They rely on personal charisma and a flair for drama to get people excited and committed to the organisational mission. A good leader is a prophet and visionary who uses symbols, tells stories, and frames experience in ways that give people hope and meaning.