Leadership Styles Self-Assessment Tool

Discover Your Dominant Leadership Style

I. Purpose of the Tool

Effective leadership begins with self-awareness. The purpose of this self-assessment is to help individuals identify their dominant leadership style, which can be transformational, servant, transactional, autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire. By recognizing your natural approach to leadership, you can build on your strengths, address potential blind spots, and adapt your style to meet the needs of diverse teams and situations.

This tool is designed for leaders at all levels, whether you're a seasoned executive, a team lead, or an emerging leader, providing insight into how your values, behaviors, and decision-making tendencies shape your influence on others.

II. How to Use This Tool

The self-assessment includes 30 statements that reflect different leadership behaviors. Read each statement carefully and respond based on how closely it aligns with your usual or instinctive behavior, not how you think a leader should behave. Use the following scale:

Rating	Description
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

There are no right or wrong answers. The goal is to gain honest insight into your current leadership tendencies. Once completed, you will total your scores across six leadership style categories. The highest scoring style is likely your natural or preferred approach, but you may see influences from multiple styles. After scoring, review the interpretation and reflection prompts to consider how your leadership style supports or hinders your effectiveness in various contexts.

III. Leadership Style Overview

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders inspire and motivate by creating a compelling vision and encouraging innovation. They focus on developing their team's potential and fostering meaningful change.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Technology, education, non-profits, creative arts, social entrepreneurship
- **Roles:** Startup founders, innovation directors, school principals, nonprofit executive directors, R&D managers

Servant Leadership

Servant leaders prioritize the needs and growth of their team members above all else. They lead with empathy, humility, and a strong commitment to serving others.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Healthcare, faith-based organizations, education, human services, counseling
- **Roles:** Nurse managers, pastoral leaders, school counselors, nonprofit program coordinators, social workers

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leaders emphasize structure, rewards, and consequences to manage performance. They focus on clear expectations and maintaining routine operations.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Manufacturing, logistics, law enforcement, military, finance
- **Roles:** Operations managers, compliance officers, shift supervisors, project administrators, financial controllers

Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic leaders make decisions independently and expect compliance. They thrive in situations requiring quick, decisive action and tight control.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Emergency services, construction, military, corrections, high-stakes security
- **Roles:** Police chiefs, military officers, emergency response leaders, foremen, prison wardens

Democratic/Participative Leadership

Democratic leaders actively involve team members in the decision-making process. They value collaboration and collective problem-solving to build ownership and commitment.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Education, consulting, nonprofit boards, creative industries, civic engagement
- **Roles:** Department heads, workshop facilitators, board chairs, team leads, community organizers

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leaders provide autonomy and trust their teams to self-manage. They take a hands-off approach, offering support only when needed.

Best suited for:

- **Industries:** Research, academia, design, software development, creative sectors
- **Roles:** Senior researchers, tenured professors, creative directors, freelance project managers, senior software engineers

IV. Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Instructions: Rate each statement from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Be honest and choose the option that best describes your typical behavior.

A. Self-Assessment Statements

1. I inspire others by casting a compelling vision for the future.

2. I focus on helping team members grow personally and professionally.

3. I give rewards or recognition based on performance outcomes.

4. I prefer to make decisions independently and quickly.

5. I regularly seek input from others before making a final decision.

6. I believe people perform best when given complete autonomy.

7. I challenge others to think creatively and push beyond their limits.

8. I prioritize listening and empathy in my interactions.

9. I prefer to have clearly defined rules and enforce them consistently.

10. I believe in maintaining strict control to ensure efficiency.

11. I take time to build consensus before taking action.

12. I trust people to manage themselves once expectations are clear.

13. I focus on motivating people through shared purpose.

14. I often ask, "How can I serve you better?"

15. I expect people to meet agreed-upon targets with clear incentives or consequences in place.

16. I take full responsibility for decision-making, especially under pressure.

17. I conduct meetings that allow everyone's voice to be heard.

18. I delegate without micromanaging, even if outcomes vary.

19. I help others see the bigger picture and connect their work to meaningful impact.

20. I care deeply about the emotional and spiritual well-being of my team.

21. I prefer systems that track performance and tie rewards to output.

22. I believe authority must be centralized to avoid confusion.

23. I prefer collaboration over authority in most team situations.

24. I trust others to work out problems without my direct involvement.

25. I aim to leave a lasting impact through empowering leadership.

26. I see my role as uplifting others rather than directing them.

27. I ensure compliance with standards through accountability systems.

28. I act swiftly and assertively when direction is needed.

29. I make decisions through inclusive dialogue.

30. I'm comfortable stepping back and allowing others to lead when appropriate.

B. Scoring Instructions

1. Group your responses by style using the guide below.

2. Add up the scores in each group.

3. The style with the highest total is likely your dominant leadership style.

Maximum score per style: 25

Minimum score per style: 5

Leadership Style	Questions
Transformational	1, 7, 13, 19, 25
Servant	2, 8, 14, 20, 26
Transactional	3, 9, 15, 21, 27
Autocratic	4, 10, 16, 22, 28
Democratic	5, 11, 17, 23, 29
Laissez-Faire	6, 12, 18, 24, 30

C. Interpreting Your Results

Transformational: You are visionary, motivational, and focused on driving change through inspiration and innovation.

Servant: You lead by uplifting others, valuing empathy, humility, and shared growth.

Transactional: You emphasize structure, rewards, and measurable outcomes.

Autocratic: You prefer direct control and fast decision-making, particularly in high-pressure environments.

Democratic: You value inclusion and collective wisdom, often fostering a sense of ownership among team members.

Laissez-faire: You trust others to self-direct and believe in freedom, often at the risk of under-supervision.

D. Reflection Worksheet

Take a few moments to contemplate your assessment results. Reflecting on your leadership style can deepen your self-awareness and guide your growth as a leader.

1. **What surprised you about your results?**

   Identify any aspects of your leadership style that were unexpected or new to you. Did your dominant style align with how you typically see yourself?

2. **How does this align with how others see you?**

   Consider feedback you've received from colleagues, mentors, or team members. Are there consistencies or differences between your self-assessment and others' perceptions?

3. **What adjustments might help you lead more effectively?**

   Think about the contexts where your natural style works well and where it might fall short. What behaviors could you strengthen, modify, or add to become a more versatile and impactful leader?