Distributed Leader Profiler

Development Report for
John Sample

workevohlution
DISTRIBUTED WORKER SUCCESS

Overview

The *Distributed Leader Profiler* is a unique, empirically based leadership assessment that identifies a leader's capabilities and predicts their distributed leadership success. Distributed leadership means managing/leading one or more direct reports from a distance. This may include team members in different buildings, cities, or countries, as well as teleworkers or mobile workers in the same geographical location.

The *Distributed Leader Profiler* uses algorithms that empirically weight combinations of skills and attributes to predict fourteen distinct distributed leader capabilities. These skills and attributes are briefly identified below and defined/scored in Appendix A and B. Although these are important predictors of a distributed leader's success, they cannot predict a leader's ability to manage distributed workers with 100% accuracy, as leadership success is complex and multi-determined.

Instructions

As you review your feedback below, look for overall patterns and themes. To help you understand your levels on the skills, attributes, and capabilities, this leadership profiler contains visual representations in the form of charts. Consider moderate and cautionary levels as potential development opportunities, and continue to leverage your areas of strength to succeed in your current and future leadership roles.

Validity

Reliability and validity are important components of this assessment, and more information is available in our technical manual. Although this assessment is reliable, people can and do develop their leader capabilities by enhancing skills and changing their behaviors. Through various development activities and experiences, these capabilities can shift over time. With this in mind, we recommend that this report will be valid for up to 1 year. This assessment can be administered periodically over time to measure a distributed leader's capability improvements. In addition to this self-report assessment is a 360-feedback instrument, allowing for feedback about the impacts of the distributed leader on his direct reports, supervisor and peers. Together, these tools can help provide valuable information for development planning, as well as coaching and training initiatives.

Sample

To create the *Distributed Leader Profiler*, 34 leaders were interviewed from various organizations and industries that operate in North America and Europe. This process resulted in a comprehensive database of distributed leader behaviors. Specifically, 680 unique elements from the interviews were analyzed. To test the validity of the profiler, 200 leaders completed the *Distributed Leader Profiler* Pilot and 140 completed direct report ratings of their leader.

Score Interpretation

The *Distributed Leader Profiler* uses percentiles, which compare your individual scores to a large sample of distributed leaders. Your percentile, or 'level' on the skill, attribute, or capability indicates the percentage of scores in the sample that fall below your own score.

Report Sections

Distributed Leader Model: A brief introduction to the skills and attributes critical to success, followed by an overview of the capabilities framework. These skills, attributes, and capabilities are defined in the following sections.
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Customized Feedback: The "nuts and bolts" of how your skills and attributes relate to distributed leader success, and what you can *do* about it.
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Distributed Leader Model

Distributed Leader Skills and Attributes:

The *Distributed Leader Profiler* uses algorithms that empirically weight combinations of skills and attributes to predict 14 distributed leader capabilities. These skills and attributes are briefly identified below.

Distributed Leader Skills: Communication Medium Match, Communication Proficiency, Meeting Management, Organization, Tech-Savvy, and Time Zone Management.

Distributed Leader Attributes: Diligence, Emotional Control, Empathy, Adaptability, Gratitude, Improvement Focus, Industriousness, Analytical, Optimism, Planful, Trust, and Quick Starting.

Capabilities Framework:

The *Distributed Leader Capabilities Framework* is a unique, cutting-edge model of leadership. The framework is composed of four overall categories—Relationships, Flexibility, Productivity, and Culture—which encompass 14 capabilities that comprise, *distributed leader success.* This framework was developed from interviews and surveys of North American and European leaders, and extensive reviews of research conducted in Industrial-Organizational Psychology.

| Relationships	Flexibility	Productivity	Culture
Accessible and Supportive	Achieving Work-Life Balance	Driving High Performance	Cultural Awareness
Building Trusting Relationships	Promoting Work-Life Balance	Managing Work and People	Cultural Communication
Creating Team Unity	Exploring and Learning Orientation	Strategic Alignment	Openness to Cultural Diversity
Fostering Collaboration	Versatile Communication		

Snapshot

Distributed Leader Skills

When combined with your 12 leader attributes, the following 6 leadership skills help predict your levels on the capabilities needed for distributed leader success. Given that skills and attributes are combined using empirically validated algorithms, each skill is important to consider in your overall development as a distributed leader.

Communication Medium Match	Chooses the appropriate medium (e.g., face-to-face, text, email, phone call, etc.) to meet the communication need.
Communication Proficiency	Clearly expresses thoughts; ensures messages are understood.
Meeting Management	Facilitates effective and efficient distributed meetings.
Organization	Works in an efficient and organized manner; able to establish and implement effective plans.
Tech-Savvy	Maintains awareness of the latest technologies and utilizes them efficiently and effectively when managing the team.
Time-Zone Management	Urges distributed team members to be sensitive to time zones when collaborating.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find a summary of your levels on the 6 leadership skills.
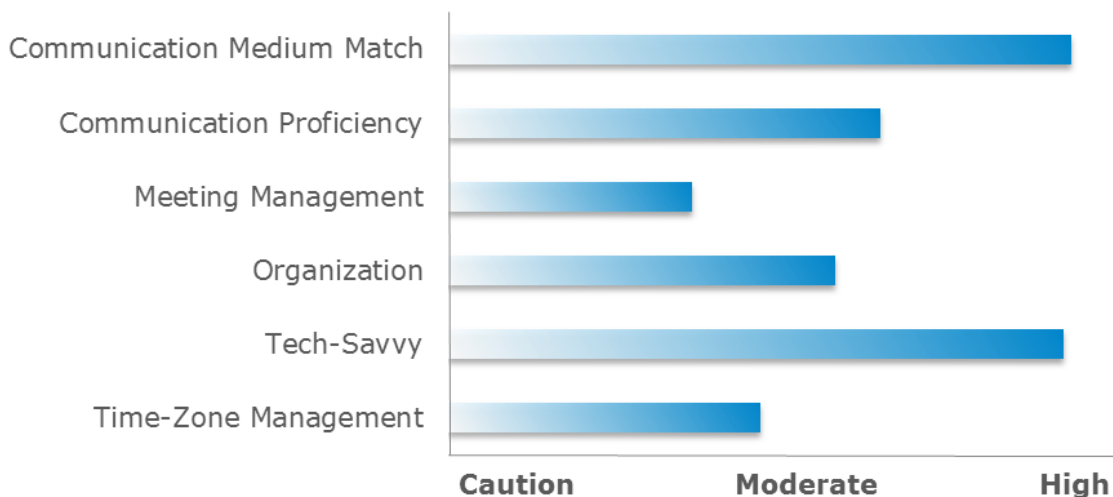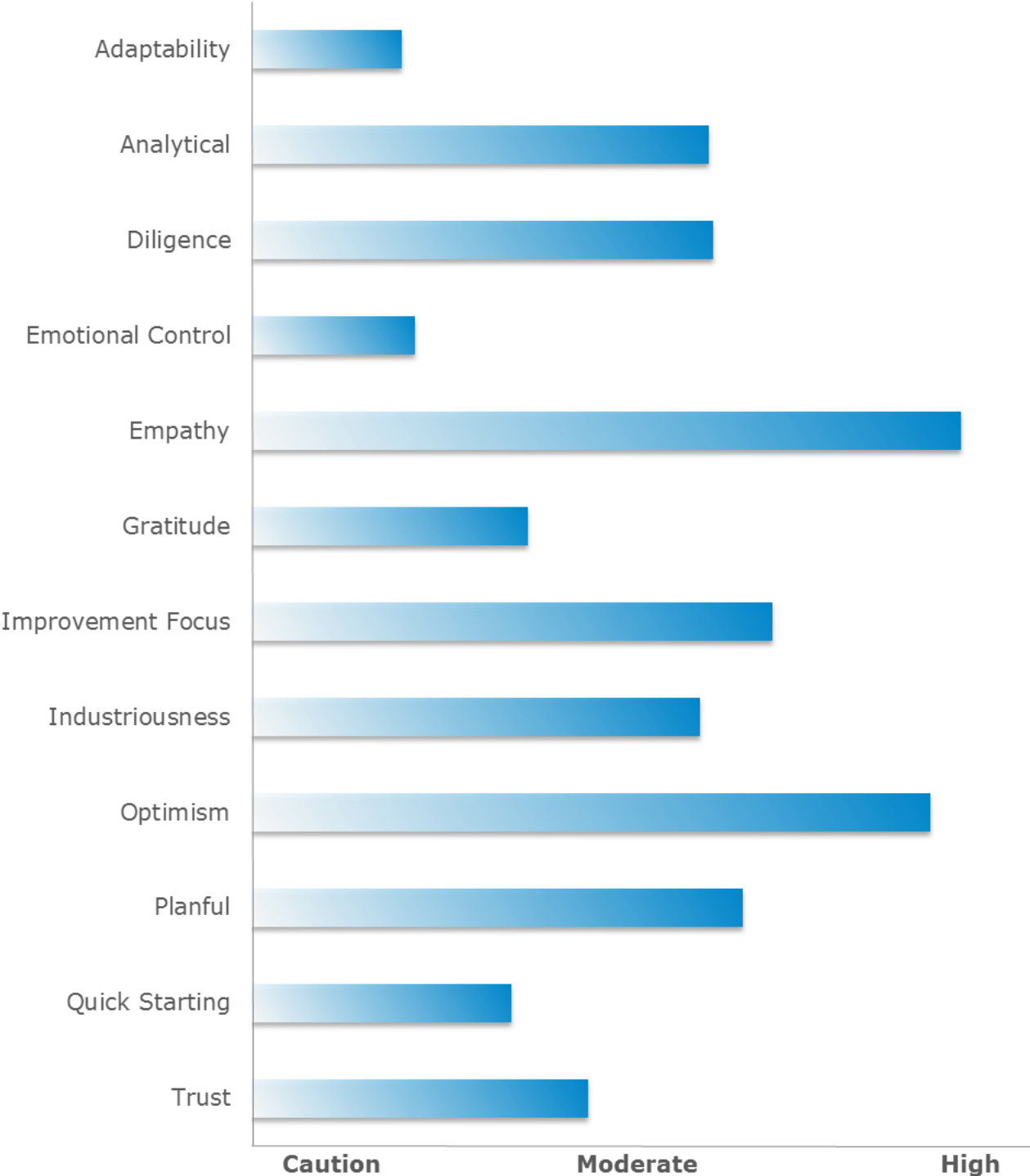
Snapshot

Distributed Leader Attributes

When combined with your 6 leadership skills, the following 12 leader attributes represent important elements of your personality and your work style. These attributes help predict your levels on the capabilities needed for distributed leader success. Given that skills and attributes are combined using empirically validated algorithms, each attribute is equally important to consider in your overall development as a distributed leader.

Adaptability	Adapts to the situation and makes adjustments in the face of unexpected events. Understands plans have to be flexible.
Analytical	Is objective and fact-driven. Makes decisions through research, analysis, and evaluation.
Diligence	Persists even during difficult or monotonous tasks; follows through on commitments.
Emotional Control	Is not overcome by emotions such as stress or frustration; does not feel emotions intensely in day-to-day work.
Empathy	Demonstrates concern for others and their needs. Makes people feel comfortable and at ease, and is interested in others' well-being.
Gratitude	Demonstrates a willingness to show appreciation and gratitude, recognizes hard work and accomplishments, and expresses sincere appreciation.
Improvement Focus	Is open to new experiences, different ideas, and alternative approaches.
Industriousness	Accomplishes a large volume of work at high levels of effectiveness. Sets high standards for self and others, and has a strong focus on progress and momentum.
Optimism	Maintains a positive outlook; finds the silver lining; does not get frustrated by setbacks.
Planful	Builds, adheres to, and updates plans in order to deliberately execute work. Acts in an intentional and structured way.
Quick Starting	Does not have trouble getting started on tasks and projects; avoids procrastinating or putting off challenging tasks.
Trust	Willing to trust that others will do what is expected, giving them the benefit of the doubt. Believes people usually have honesty and integrity, and that they can be trusted.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find a summary of your levels on the 12 leadership attributes.

Attribute	Level
Adaptability	Caution
Analytical	Moderate
Diligence	Moderate
Emotional Control	Caution
Empathy	High
Gratitude	Caution–Moderate
Improvement Focus	Moderate
Industriousness	Moderate
Optimism	High
Planful	Moderate
Quick Starting	Caution–Moderate
Trust	Caution–Moderate

Caution   **Moderate**   **High**

Leader Capabilities

Relationships

Distributed leaders high on **Relationships** are accessible and supportive, able to build trusting and respectful relationships, create team unity, and foster collaboration. Below, you will find a summary of these four components, followed by your levels of each capability.

Accessible and Supportive • Makes himself accessible by being easy to get a hold of and retrieve information from. Remains approachable, such that employees feel comfortable reaching out with questions and concerns. Is responsive, communicates regularly, and gets to know employees.

Building Trusting Relationships • Forms strong relationships with team members that are built on trust and respect. Makes people feel important and valued. Communicates in a fair and consistent manner towards all employees and is present and focused during interactions.

Creating Team Unity • Cultivates a powerful sense of team unity by learning the team's history and integrating new members. Builds strong social and emotional bonds among team members, recognizes employees and shows appreciation, and makes it fun to be on the team.

Fostering Collaboration • Supports idea sharing and cooperation across locations, with other teams or leaders; identifies common ground among people in and outside of the team to accomplish goals. Builds alliances and connects team members in cross-department collaborations.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find your levels on **Relationships**, which indicate a Caution, Moderate, or High outcome.
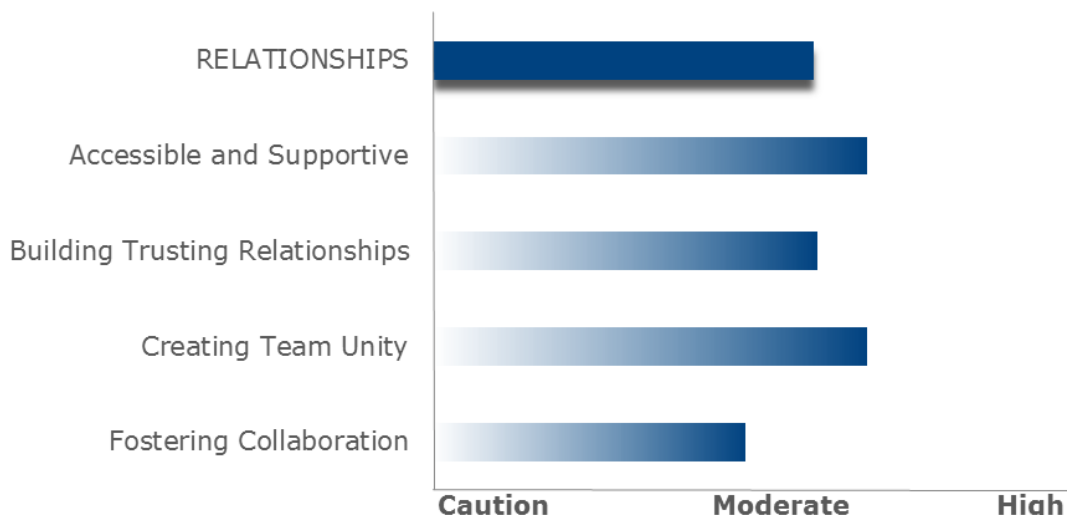
Flexibility

Distributed leaders high on **Flexibility** are able to achieve work-life balance, possess an exploring and learning orientation, promote work-life balance, and are versatile communicators. Below, you will find a summary of these four components, followed by your levels of each capability.

**Achieving Work-Life Balance** • Maintains a healthy balance between work and life commitments.

Promoting Work-Life Balance • Encourages team members to seek a healthy work-life balance; supports the use of strategies to achieve balance.

Exploring and Learning Orientation • Open to a distributed work environment, and willing to learn how to succeed in it. Is open to and accepting of change.

Versatile Communication • Knows and understands that employees' preferences for how to communicate from a distance will differ; is willing and able to adjust personal style to team members' preferences.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find your levels on **Flexibility**, which indicate a Caution, Moderate, or High outcome.
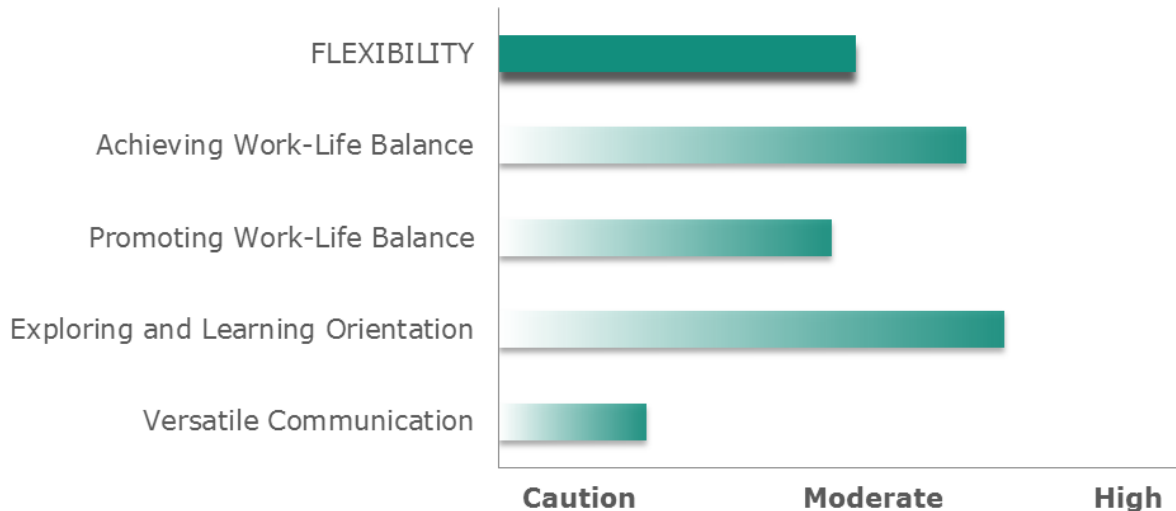
Productivity

Distributed leaders high on **Productivity** are continually driving high performance, are capable of managing work and people, and are strategically aligned. Below, you will find a summary of these three components, followed by your levels of each capability.

Driving High Performance Sets high standards for the team, communicates the standards and expectations clearly, and holds himself and the team accountable. Is outcome and objective focused.

Managing Work and People Manages the flow of work within the distributed team in an effective, efficient, and detailed manner. Provides frequent feedback.

Strategic Alignment Communicates a vision, provides direction, and establishes strategic plans. Engages both the team and individual members to overcome feelings of isolation from objectives.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find your levels on **Productivity**, which indicate a Caution, Moderate, or High outcome.
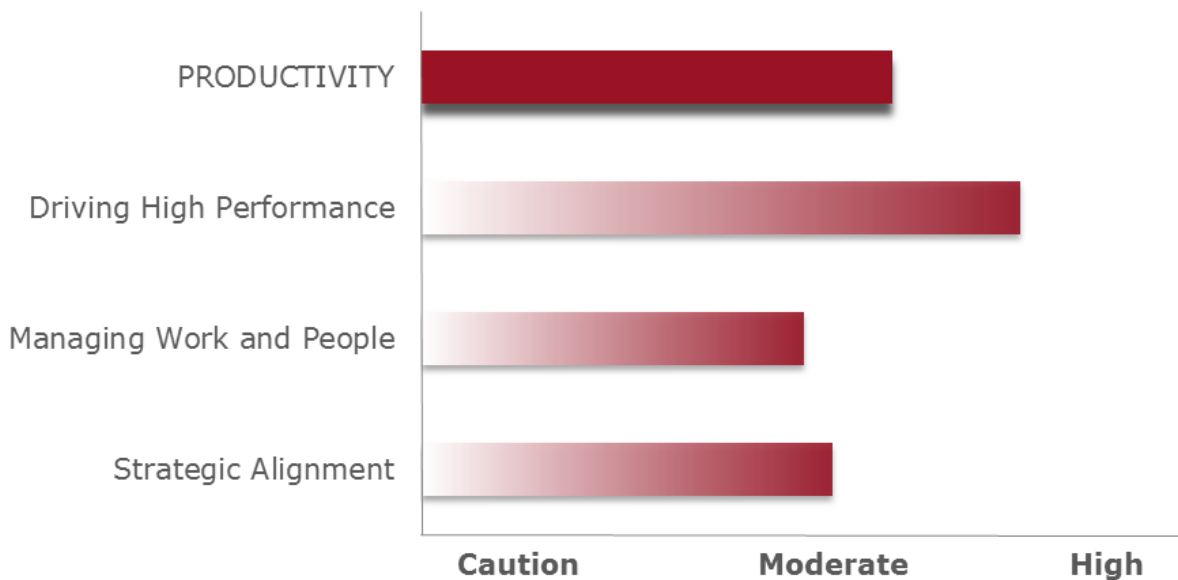
Culture

Distributed leaders high on **Culture** possess cultural awareness, are capable of effective cultural communication, and are open to cultural diversity. Below, you will find a summary of these three components, followed by your levels of each capability.

Cultural Awareness • Conscious and respectful of cultural differences among team members; considers the impact of cultural diversity on the team's interactions.

Cultural Communication • Capable of adjusting verbal and nonverbal behaviors during cross-cultural interactions; uses communication to create an inclusive working environment.

Openness to Cultural Diversity • Open attitude towards diverse backgrounds; enjoys learning about and interacting with people from different cultures.

John's Outcomes

Below, you will find your levels on **Culture**, which indicate a Caution, Moderate, or High outcome.
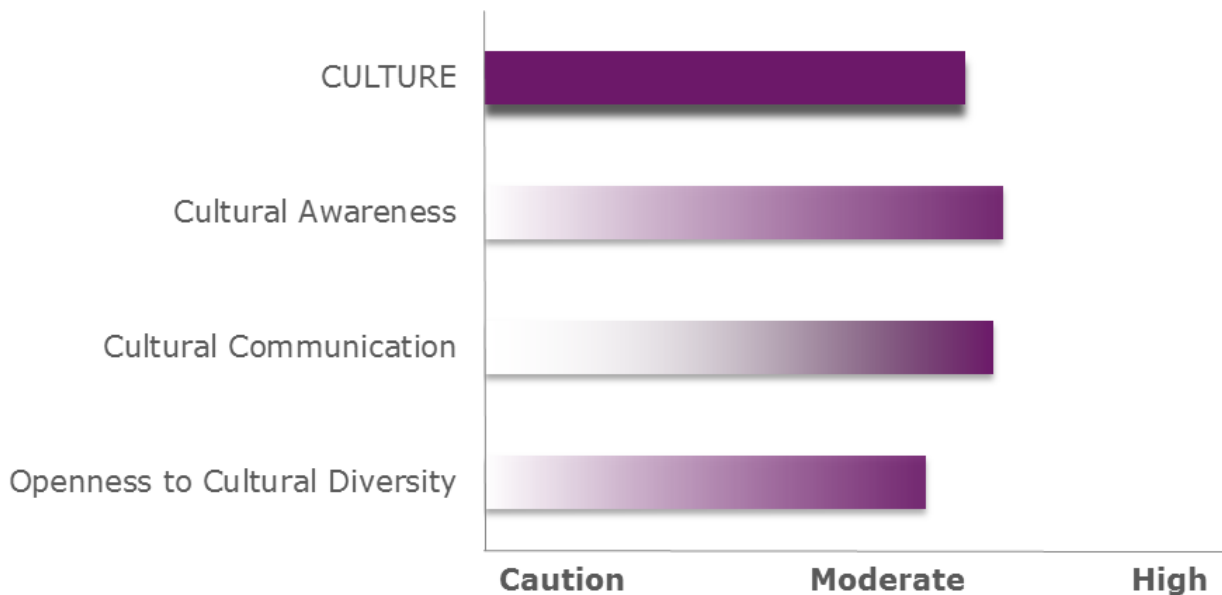
John's Customized Feedback for Growth and Development

Overview

This section presents **specific development suggestions** to address potential challenges John may face given his levels of skills, and attributes, which can help develop John's overall capabilities as a distributed leader. Note that capabilities falling in the cautionary range and in the moderate range are included for specific development advice.

> **IMPORTANT NOTE:**
> As every situation and arrangement is unique, it is important to view this advice as a list from which to choose the options that best suit your learning style (check these using the **Try It!** column). Some of these may not be relevant to your specific leadership activities. Ideally, these ideas should be discussed with your coach or supervisor so as to best establish ways to maximize distributed leadership success.

Relationships Distributed Leader Development Area	What to do?	✔ Try it!
Building Trusting Relationships Forms strong relationships with team members that are built on trust and rapport. Makes people feel important and valued. Communicates in a fair and consistent manner towards all employees and is present and focused during interactions. **John's score is Moderate** John's score on *Building Trusting Relationships* is calculated using the following skills and attributes. • **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Time Zone Management • **Relevant Attributes:** Empathy, Trust, Adaptability	**Recommendation #1:** **Be Present in Conversations** • An essential key to building trusting relationships is being fully present during conversations with dispersed team members. This means minimizing distraction and trying to avoid multi-tasking. For example, shut off your monitor or your email so you do not find yourself being distracted while on the phone with a remote employee. This will show the employee that you respect them and are dedicated to the present conversation and to their issues in particular. • Practice active listening techniques by listening to a speaker without asking him/her questions or interrupting; really try to understand what he or she is explaining and avoid leading the conversation. Once the speaker has finished, then try to express what was said, allowing the speaker to correct any errors or misunderstandings and to clarify or add additional thoughts. This technique will help you better understand the message and will keep you from jumping to conclusions or steering the conversation too strongly.	

Recommendation #2:
Deliberately Manage Conflict

- A small, misworded response could turn into a dramatic situation if it is incorrectly interpreted. This is where getting to know your people are essential. There will inevitably be some conflict that takes place between you and your employees, especially when the workload is large and complex. You need to be responsible for addressing any passive-aggressive remarks, rude and disrespectful behavior, etc. Your job is to protect the integrity of your team members.

- Be aware that the chance of misunderstandings through text, email and live chatting software greatly increases the risk for conflict. When there is any chance that something could be controversial, or if a message carries emotion, you will be more effective if you use phone or videoconference.

- Reach out to employees by phone or videoconference to discuss the conflict and make clear that you appreciate their views. To 'soften the edge' and establish the idea was not personal, but about the ideas, follow up, discuss, and resolve the conflict. Be curious about their reasoning and feelings and be non-judgmental.

- Recognize that some conflicts may require an in-person conflict resolution process.

Recommendation #3:
Be Diligent with Your Communication Process

- Perceptions of honesty and integrity are built into the communication process. There are many ways that trust can be broken between team members when messages are not appropriately communicated, particularly in a distributed work environment where personal relationships may not be as well established.

- For instance, ensuring that all team members receive critical information at the same time can avoid the perception that some are more in tune with the leader, or that there are "favorites." Online communication tools may be of utmost importance, especially in a distributed environment where team members cannot determine whether or not they were purposefully excluded.

Recommendation #4:
Build The Relationship

- Try and facilitate a face-to-face meet up for new employees and team members, especially when first working together. Getting to know each other face-to-face very early on is crucial to building "swift" trust. However, when this is not a possibility, building a virtual 'water cooler' with your entire team becomes especially important. You can create a specific chat room where everyone is free to socialize and make jokes. During the team's natural break points, members can turn to this chat

room to unwind and reflect on process before moving on.

- Developing bonds among team members will help improve subsequent distributed communications (e.g., video conference, phone, email) since it becomes easier to pick up on non-verbal cues/body language that is less obvious in a videoconference or on the phone.

Fostering Collaboration

Supports idea sharing and cooperation across locations, including with other teams or leaders; identifies common ground among people in and outside of the team to accomplish goals. Builds alliances and connects team members in cross-department collaborations.

John's score is Moderate

John's score on *Fostering Collaboration* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Tech Savvy, Time Zone Management

- **Relevant Attributes:** Industriousness, Trust, Adaptability, Emotional Control, Quick Starting

Recommendation #1:
Find Peer Groups

- Find a peer group by actively seeking out other distributed leaders in similar roles or even leaders in more advanced positions to share tips and advice for leading in this context. Communication with other leaders to build trusting relationships will increase your opportunities to share ideas and even collaborate with them and their teams.

Recommendation #2:
Prevent "Us versus Them"

- The "us versus them" attitude can develop when a sense of unity is not clearly defined. To manage this, make it a point to continually share the organization's goals and vision with your team. Especially in a distributed work team, when common goals and challenges are presented, this changes the culture to one where team members "fight" for the common cause.

- Finding common ground between members can reduce this us vs. them thinking. Finding opportunities for geographically dispersed team member s to collaborate on projects is the most natural way to build the team approach.

Recommendation #3:
Maximize The Meeting

- Be sure that your team meetings (via videoconference or phone) are well organized and collaborative. One recommendation is to make sure that everyone has access to the meeting materials before the meeting and that everyone has the same materials. Make an agreed-upon rule for how far in advance the meeting agenda and materials should be distributed (e.g., 24 hours) and stick to it.

- Given the nature of distributed work, team members might be hesitant to speak their minds. Having select team members be active collaborators, while others stand on the sidelines and listen is not the ideal situation. In these cases, you may have to "mine for conflict". Go around the "table" and have every member speak. When decisions are made, wait for input from all members before implementing any decisions. During idea development, assign members to take on the role of devil's advocate and have ideas challenged.

Recommendation #4:
Watch The Clock

- Always consider the impact of time zones when collaborating. Even a one- or two-hour difference can mean that a 9 a.m. meeting for some team members is outside of normal working hours for others.

- It is important that you "share the pain" among the team and everyone takes a turn joining meetings outside their typical work hours. Repeatedly expecting some individuals to adjust their workday will damage trust, cause frustration, and result in individuals missing out on meetings where their perspective may be important.

Recommendation #5:
List Employees' Expertise

- Individuals frequently work/collaborate with those who are closely located to them, which can be complicated for distributed workers. Their lack of informal communications with other team members makes it difficult to gain knowledge about what skills other employees have. Conversely, team members may not be familiar with the distributed team members' skills. Creating more opportunities for distributed team members to collaborate and share ideas with others can be highly valuable.

- At the team and/or organizational level, one way to increase knowledge sharing and collaboration is to create a list of team member skills. Specifically, leaders can create lists to identify the expertise of each member within the distributed team, and to share that list with all individuals in the organization and/or within their own team. This could involve setting up a corporate intranet site where members can access this information through employee profiles.

Promoting Work-Life Balance

Encourages team members to seek a healthy work-life balance; supports the use of strategies to achieve balance.

John's score is Moderate

John's score on *Promoting Work-Life Balance* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Time Zone Management

- **Relevant Attributes:** Trust, Gratitude, Improvement Focus

Recommendation #1:
Explore The Issue

- If you find that your employees are staying late or skipping lunch in order to complete their work, arrange to have a one-on-one meeting with them. In that meeting, focus on investigating what the deeper issues is. Has too much work been assigned? Are they lacking in some of the skills needed in order to complete the task efficiently? Do they need added support? What kind of an effect is their workload having on their personal life?

- Once you better understand their unique situation, ask them to list the top areas they feel they need support in. Work with them to create a concrete plan to attain this support.

Recommendation #2:
Provide Some Perks to Enhance Work-Life Balance

- Offer creative alternatives for your team that would help them alleviate some of the stress associated with having to fulfill non-work related tasks. For example, depending on your organization, you may have the resources to support the health and fitness activities of your remote employees (i.e., a stipend for health related activities or a corporate plan to join a gym). When this is not feasible, you can make sure that your team understands that you support their health and well-being in other ways. For instance, offer flexibility in work hours in order for them to integrate a workout into their workday (i.e., encourage a longer lunch break). A healthy worker, after all, is a more productive worker.

- Use special occasions (i.e., birthdays, anniversaries) as a means to show your team that you value and support a work-life balance. For instance, rather than buying a gift-card, give an employee an afternoon off!

Recommendation #3:
Encourage Flexibility

- Encourage your employees to be flexible with how they manage their time, tasks, and deadlines. If an individual starts their workday early to accommodate a meeting in another time zone, then urge them to leave work earlier. This approach can be incorporated into company policies to formalize this in the culture.

- Additionally, be aware of evaluating performance on deliverables and results, not time spent working. Encourage an environment where individuals take charge of their work and are allowed the flexibility to attend an appointment during the day, or take a day off after working overtime.

Recommendation #4:
Practice What You Preach

- It is critical to model the behaviors that you want from your team. If you try to promote work-life balance without living it yourself, your employees may feel nervous about creating their own boundaries.

- Encourage your team members to take a lunch break, and take one yourself. Explicitly let employees know why you are unavailable during that time.

- Try not to schedule meetings during the lunch hour—if they are necessary, encourage team members to bring their lunch to make the meeting less formal and encourage socializing.

- If you find yourself catching up on emails late at night, use a "delayed send" feature so that the messages do not send until the next morning. Same thing on weekends, delay sending until Monday morning. This can prevent employees from feeling pressure to respond to communications at all hours.

Versatile Communication

Knows and understands that employees' preferences for how to communicate from a distance will differ; is willing and able to adjust personal style to team members' preferences.

John's score is Caution

John's score on *Versatile Communication* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Communication Proficiency, Time Zone Management

- **Relevant Attributes:** Adaptability, Gratitude

Recommendation #1:
Build Your Communication Toolbox

- Continuously work on improving your communication proficiency. Ask for feedback from your team and peers about what works and what isn't working with respect to your communications. This is a necessary requirement for being able to effectively adapt your communication style to different employees.

- Think about your use of email, for example—are you over-relying on that medium, or are your messages being misinterpreted? Make a conscious effort to pick up the phone or send an instant message instead of emailing when it makes sense. When employees can see you effectively using different media they will be more confident in your ability to adapt to their communication preferences, and in turn will be more likely to do the same.

Recommendation #2:
Learn How Employees Want to Communicate

- Explicitly ask team members how they prefer to communicate. For instance, do they prefer to be contacted through e-mail, text message, phone, Skype, or an instant message? Go into more depth: what do they prefer for particular kinds of tasks, for certain times of the day, for varying levels of importance?

- As you learn to adjust to team members' preferences, it may be helpful to create a quick spreadsheet to map their preferences. Your willingness and ability to adjust your communication with employees will foster appreciation and will likely increase their productivity.

Recommendation #3:
Diagnose Your Team's Effectiveness

- A team diagnostic is a great way to understand how your distributed team is doing when it comes to communication, as well as other factors like collaboration and conflict. A diagnostic involves each team member completing an online survey about the team, and data is aggregated to present overall levels of team effectiveness and areas to improve. If there are communication weaknesses as a team, productivity and engagement can increase by acting upon these recommendations.

- There are various team diagnostics currently available, including the Distributed Team Diagnostic offered by Work EvOHlution.

Recommendation #4:
Adjust Your Leadership

- Go beyond adapting just your communication medium to employees and also think about adapting other behaviors. For example, some employees are very independent and can thrive in a distributed workplace if you simply give them direction. For these individuals, set clear expectations and have periodic check-ins but trust them to get the work done.

- Other employees may require more support. Try to be sensitive to these differences, such as whether an individual may want more social interaction. For those requiring more social interaction, schedule a "virtual coffee" or allow time for informal chats.

Managing Work and People

Manages the flow of work within the distributed team in an effective, efficient, and detailed manner. Provides frequent feedback.

John's score is Moderate

John's score on *Managing Work and People* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Organization, Communication Medium Match

- **Relevant Attributes:** Planfulness, Trust, Adaptability, Gratitude, Quick Starting

Recommendation #1:
Managing Priorities and Progress

- Without the ability to directly observe employees' behaviors, it can be difficult to keep track of employees' priorities and their progress on certain tasks. You could keep communicating back and forth with the employees, but there may be an easier way that will save you time and effort.

- Through Microsoft OneNote, Google, Docs, Dropbox, etc., create a living document that can be viewed and edited by all employees. Within this document, create a list of top priorities with your team. Then, because the document can be edited, employees can write about their status on a given priority or whether there are any roadblocks or issues that need to be addressed. You can refer to this document as needed, but the added benefit is that it will also allow employees to see what other employees are currently working on, which will enable more collaboration within the organization.

Recommendation #2:
Managing Workflow with Software

- With distributed work, there are often times when work is duplicated because the workflow has not been properly planned or communicated.

- One way to help you plan your distributed team workflow more efficiently is through the use of software such as Basecamp and Asana. This software can help you and your team communicate and coordinate workflow.

- These software options allow you to create To Do lists, share files, and assign tasks to complete. Tasks can even be tracked through more advanced metrics to see how projects are progressing.

Recommendation #3:
Frequent Feedback

- Providing frequent feedback is key to successful distributed leadership, but can be difficult to accomplish with limited opportunities to actually observe performance. Rather than waiting for annual or semi-annual performance reviews with your employees, get in the habit of regular debriefs with your employees. Maintain open communication and have regular developmental conversations where you discuss their successes and challenges, as well as how you can better support them.

- Ask your employees how they want to set up their developmental reviews. How frequently do they want to meet? What are their short-term goals and long-term goals, and how do they want to be assessed on whether they have attained these? Make it clear ahead of time what projects will be evaluated so that they won't be caught off guard. This will help

you earn their trust.

- Encourage two-way feedback about your approach to distributed leadership.

Recommendation #4:
Be Clear and Take Notes

- Distributed meetings are an important opportunity for you and employees to interact and actually get work done. Make sure that you are leveraging these opportunities. Set and communicate clear meeting guidelines. For example, keep track of who is speaking and make sure everyone is given a chance to contribute.

- With videoconferencing, and particularly with teleconferencing, it is easy to lose track of who has already had an opportunity to talk. Make a list of everyone's names and make a tick every time they talk to give you an idea of whether they have had an opportunity to voice their opinions.

- Additionally, carefully document meetings and create specific "action items" for follow-up. It can be easy to forget tasks and items if something is "out of sight, and out of mind", and this can create inefficiencies within the team.

- Assigning a scribe for each meeting can be an excellent way to ensure notes are being taken and distributed afterwards for shared understanding.

Strategic Alignment

Communicates a vision, provides direction, and establishes strategic plans. Engages both the team and individual members to overcome feelings of isolation from objectives.

John's score is Moderate

John's score on *Strategic Alignment* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Communication Medium Match, Communication Proficiency

- **Relevant Attributes:** Diligence, Industriousness, Emotional Control

Recommendation #1:
Communicating Your Vision, With Help

- Leaders must be diligent when it comes to creating and communicating the vision for the group. This is even more essential for leaders in distributed roles because when you do not see employees on a daily basis, you have to regularly make sure they understand the purpose of the work they are doing. Schedule time regularly to clearly explain the organization's vision.

- To help communicate your vision, enlist the aid of your employees. Get them involved: tell them about the vision (or where the business is headed), and get their feedback. Ask them how that vision/direction might affect them and their own work roles, and what changes it might mean for them.

- By involving distributed employees in these conversations, especially those who may already be feeling isolated from the culture of the organization, you are helping to bring them back into the fold and to convey their value to the organization.

Recommendation #2:
Keep Employees Involved

- Through ongoing communication, keep employees involved with

the strategic plans for the organization, even if these plans do not directly affect them. If employees are not involved or are unaware of important changes, they will eventually feel isolated and/or less engaged.

- A simple way of dealing with this issue is to cc (carbon copy) relevant team members on any recent updates. If employees have time, they can read through those e-mails and get up-to-speed.

- For important changes/issues, videoconferences or phone conferences should be arranged to signify the importance of the message.

- Make a personal plan for yourself and ask employees to do the same so that they make the link of how they fit into the organization's plan. Share these plans so that others know what everyone is working on, what they are working towards, and how they fit into the team and the organization.

Recommendation #3:
Be Transparent Early On

- Any major organizational changes must be communicated to distributed employees as soon as possible, with as much transparency as possible.

- Because of their degree of separation from other employees, distributed employees are typically the last individuals to hear new information through the grapevine. Steps need to be taken to have early, frank conversations with them about any organizational changes.

- There may be instances when you want to delay a conversation until you have the opportunity to deliver it in person, or have more time to discuss the situation at length. However, you may be better served by having an early conversation, and then to have more in-depth, follow-up conversation for a later date.

Recommendation #4:
Write Out Unwritten Rules

- With little opportunity for informal conversations, it can be difficult for distributed workers, particularly new distributed workers, to pick up on some of the unwritten rules of a distributed team and/or the organization. Provide your team with as much information as possible in order for them to understand and execute your vision. Specifically, if there are unwritten rules about the team's operations, these should be verbalized or else it will act as a hindrance to the progression of team goals.

- Are there preferred communication tools (e.g., instant messaging, phoning, texting) for particular tasks? Do meetings need to be started 10 minutes early in case there are technical issues setting up the software? Once you have a list created, share it with your employees and have follow-up meetings every 3-4 months to make adjustments as needed.

Culture
Distributed Leader Development Area

What to do?

Try it!

Openness to Cultural Diversity

Capable of adjusting verbal and nonverbal behaviors during cross-cultural interactions; uses communication to create an inclusive working environment.

John's score is Moderate

John's score on *Openness to Cultural Diversity* is calculated using the following skills and attributes.

- **Relevant Skills:** Meeting Management, Time Zone Management

- **Relevant Attributes:** Empathy, Trust, Improvement Focus, Quick Starting

Recommendation #1:
Share Their Story

- Your team of distributed workers will often come from diverse backgrounds (i.e., ethnic, cultural, financial, educational), and each will have a story. Take the time to learn their story. Doing so will make your employees feel that you are invested in them, and this will help foster trust. This will also open the door to more discussion and growth.

- If all team members feel it is appropriate, you can set aside the time to allow team members to share their stories. This strategy will facilitate an openness and sense of community among your distributed team members.

Recommendation #2:
Shift Your Focus

- If you have an employee who is still learning the organization's culture, try to shift your focus. Rather than focusing solely on helping them learn how to fit in, focus on what they can teach you.

- By focusing on what you can learn from them, you may gain some unique insights, and you may see your organization differently. You can share your learnings with your employees to help them broaden their perspective as well.

Recommendation #3:
Be Mindful of Stereotypes

- Oftentimes, cultural stereotypes can be mental roadblocks. You cannot truly appreciate and understand a distributed team member if you believe they are one in the same as everyone else from the group you are stereotyping. Remember that everyone is unique, and value those differences.

- For instance, you may believe that offshore software developers aren't as good as domestic software developers. Broad statements like these are often false, and skillset cannot be limited to a particular geographical location. Be mindful of your biases at all times, and maintain a healthy skepticism of your own behaviors and intentions.

Recommendation #4:
Hands On Learning

- Due to financial and time constraints, in most cases, you would not have the opportunity to visit your distributed team member in their hometown. Take it upon yourself to learn, in your own city, about an individual's culture. One of the best ways to learn about different cultures is to experience it firsthand. Cities will often offer events that celebrate individual cultures by gathering

	food vendors, presenting cultural showcases, etc. You will be able to use this information to connect and understand those from certain cultural backgrounds within your distributed team.	

Personal Goal Setting and Action Planning

Instructions

Once you have reviewed your distributed leader capabilities, and your recommendations for growth and development, we recommend setting some personal goals and action plans. You can focus on addressing the recommendations above that you feel are most applicable to improving your distributed leadership.

Using the personal worksheet provided, fill in 1 to 3 priority capabilities in which you would like to set an improvement goal and build an action plan for reaching your objectives. To do this, follow these steps:

Step 1: Start by identifying a capability you would like to manage better

Step 2: Describe the capability's relevance for distributed work outcomes

Step 3: Set a specific, concrete, measurable goal

Step 4: Identify resources that can be drawn on to support your goal pursuit

Step 5: Identify a timeline

Go to the next page to start building your Goal Setting and Action Plan!

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Personal Worksheet
Goal Setting and Action Plan

Development Area	Relevance	Specific Goal	Resources	Timeline
What capability do I want to manage better?	*Why is it important to me to address this?*	*What do I want to accomplish?*	*Who can I ask to support my goal accomplishment? What books or resources should I consult?*	*When will I reassess my progress? What will be my indicators of success?*
Example: • Creating Team Unity	• I want my team to feel that they are one unit and that everyone has each other's backs	• Create a corporate intranet page where each team member is responsible for creating a bio, and where our vision and goals are clearly stated. Use the site to develop interpersonal relationships with/among team members	• I can delegate the work and create a committee to head this project (I will be the lead). • My team will write up bios and create ideas specific to the page • Use the IT department within the company to set up the page	• Set a 2-month deadline to have the intranet site complete. Check on progress every week. • Success will be achieved when everyone has a bio, and our team has a complete landing page with goals/visions, etc.
1.				
2.				
3.				

Appendix A

Distributed Leader Capability Percentiles

As mentioned previously, your levels of each capability are based on percentiles derived from a large sample of distributed leaders. Your percentiles reported below indicate the percentage of scores in the sample that fall below your own score.

Capabilities	Percentile
RELATIONSHIPS	57
Accessible and Supportive	66
Building Trusting Relationships	57
Creating Team Unity	66
Fostering Collaboration	45
FLEXIBILITY	48
Achieving Work-Life Balance	66
Promoting Work-Life Balance	44
Exploring and Learning Orientation	72
Versatile Communication	14
PRODUCTIVITY	58
Driving High Performance	77
Managing Work and People	45
Strategic Alignment	49
CULTURE	62
Cultural Awareness	67
Cultural Communication	66
Openness to Cultural Diversity	56

Appendix B

Distributed Leader Skill Percentiles

Your skill percentiles reported below indicate the percentage of scores in the sample that fall below your own score.

Skills	Percentile
Communication Medium Match	94
Communication Proficiency	65
Meeting Management	37
Organization	58
Tech-Savvy	93
Time-Zone Management	47

Distributed Leader Attribute Percentiles

Your attribute percentiles reported below indicate the percentage of scores in the sample that fall below your own score.

Attributes	Percentiles
Adaptability	20
Analytical	60
Diligence	60
Emotional Control	21
Empathy	93
Gratitude	36
Improvement Focus	68
Industriousness	58
Optimism	88
Planful	64
Quick Starting	34
Trust	44