

Assessing Characteristics of Leadership Effectiveness – Self Report Survey

By Carl Robinson, Ph.D., copyright 2003

Circle Yes or NO. 24 questions.

Comfort with ambiguity:

Y or N Are you willing to take calculated risks?

Y or N Are you comfortable with a certain level of disruption and conflict?

Y or N Are you comfortable making decisions and taking action without having "all the facts?"

Empathy:

Y or N Do you empathize with other people's needs, concerns, and goals?

Y or N Would staff members confirm that you show such empathy?

Insight:

Y or No Can you accurately understand the needs and motivations of others?

Y or No Do you have an accurate understanding of your own limitations...not just your strengths?

Persistence; frustration tolerance

Y or N When pursuing a goal, do you maintain a positive, focused attitude, despite obstacles?

Excellent communicators

Y or N Do you listen closely (rather than have a response ready before the other person finishes)?

Y or N Are you comfortable running meetings?

Y or N Are you comfortable making presentations and speaking in public?

Y or N Do you have the skills needed to negotiate in a variety of settings?

Politically astute

Y or N Could you diagram for yourself your organization's power structure?

Y or N Can you articulate the concerns of your organization's most powerful groups?

Y or N Can you identify those individuals within your organization that will support you when needed?

Y or N Do you know where to turn for the resources you need?

Able to use humor

Y or N Do you know how to use humor to relieve tense or uncomfortable situations?

Emotional self-control:

Y or N In situations that are full of turmoil and confusion, do you stay calm and levelheaded?

Y or N Would your colleagues and subordinates say that you are able to acknowledge your mistakes, failures and limitations without being overly defensive?

Y or N I am able to be flexible in my dealings with others.

Self-aware

Y or N Are you aware of and can you describe how your own patterns of behavior impact others?

Y or N In assessing a situation, I look at my biases and adjust my assessment accordingly.

Y or N I watch how others react to me to better understand my own behavior.

Y or N It's easy for me to recognize what emotions I'm experiencing in a particular situation.

The more questions you answered "yes" the better.

If you answered "no" to some or many of these questions, you may want to consider how you can further develop those effective leadership characteristics.

Remember that this non-validated survey should be used as an "early warning" system only. If you really want to measure your effectiveness as a leader, to get a more granular bead on how well you are doing and to figure out where to put your developmental energy, you'll need to conduct a formal assessment that uses valid tools and criteria linked to your organization's particular needs and culture. Leadership characteristics that work at Microsoft may not necessarily work at Washington Mutual.

Please note, that the questions I included in this survey come from my research and experience working with executives and the Harvard continuing education ManageMentor program called "Leading and Motivating."