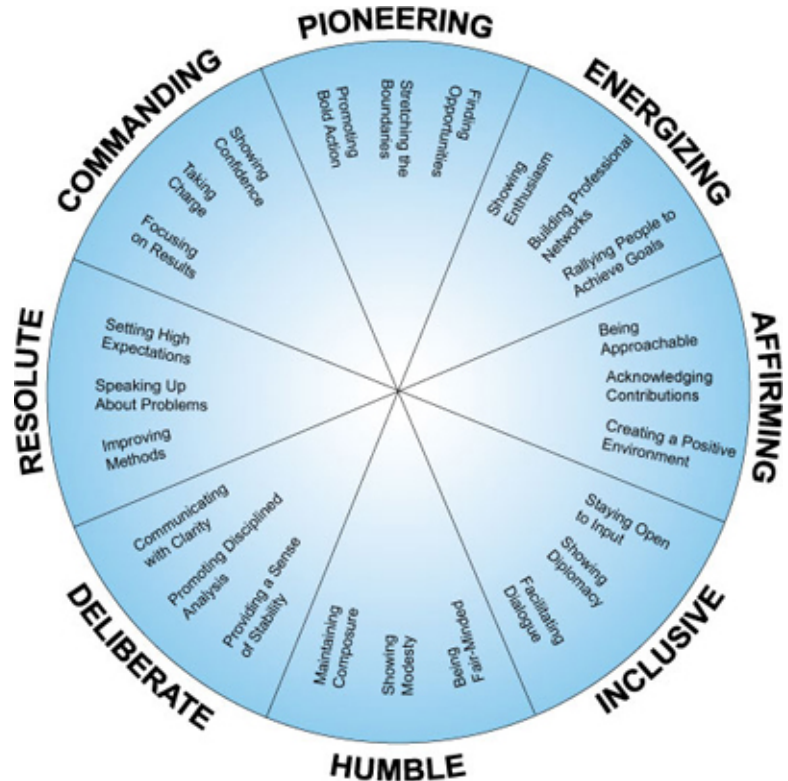


## The 8 Dimensions of Leadership

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No matter how good one-dimensional leaders are, they can't provide the kind of leadership that leads to innovation, social change, *and* business transformation. Multidimensional leaders understand that great leadership requires a range of competencies and skills and know that their own personality traits can work both for and against them.

So how do you begin to understand what a multidimensional leader looks like? It always helps me to have a big-picture perspective. By understanding all of the different styles, I can examine where I should focus my development. With that in mind, here's an overview of all eight dimensions of leadership.



**So what kind of leader are you?**

### The Pioneering Leader

**At their best:** Bold and passionate, they inspire others to take chances on new directions.

**At their worst:** Impulsive and overconfident, they use their charm to gain support for poorly thought-out ideas.

Pioneering leaders tend to be adventurous, dynamic, and charismatic. Their optimistic and persuasive style often inspires others to join their efforts, and because they're good at making connections, they're often able to leverage relationships to help reach their ambitious goals. They tend to be extremely action-oriented, and possibly impulsive at times. Because they thrive on exciting breakthroughs, they may jump on new opportunities without taking the time to consider the impact on others.

### The Energizing Leader

**At their best:** Upbeat and eager, they take chances on colorful new ideas.

**At their worst:** Scattered and erratic, they see little need for consistency.

Energizing leaders tend to be spontaneous, outgoing, and encouraging. They're often enthusiastic about new opportunities and unafraid of running with exciting new ideas. Because these leaders thrive on variety, they often generate more ideas than they're able to implement. They tend to be more collaborative than other fast-paced leaders, and they may struggle to complete solitary tasks that offer little opportunity for interaction. These leaders are extremely eager to connect with others who can help them realize their big-picture vision, but between their flurries of activity, they may drop the ball when it comes to specifics and follow-through.

### The Affirming Leader

**At their best:** Kind and supportive, they create a respectful and positive environment.

**At their worst:** Indirect and conflict-averse, they fail to hold others accountable.

Affirming leaders are friendly, approachable, and positive. They eagerly acknowledge others' contributions, which in turn breeds loyalty among their colleagues. Because they have a need for harmony, they work hard to create a positive environment where everyone can work in peace, free of fear and conflict. Affirming leaders tend to be more easygoing and don't have the fast-paced style of the Energizing leader, nor do they have the same degree of caution seen in the Inclusive leader. But because they want to make others feel comfortable, they may fail to deliver constructive feedback to others.

### The Inclusive Leader

**At their best:** Sincere and accommodating, they collaborate with others to make win-win decisions.

**At their worst:** Passive and overly trusting, they let others take advantage of their supportive, patient nature.

Inclusive leaders tend to be diplomatic, accepting, and patient. They're most comfortable in a stable environment where they can work steadily toward their goals, so they're often wary of ideas that would require change. Because these leaders want to be seen as dependable, they often prefer to work at a methodical pace to ensure that they have time to address specifics. They tend to give people the benefit of the doubt, and this can sometimes cause them to overestimate others' abilities. They're careful to include others in meaningful dialogue before moving ahead with major decisions, but because they often go out of their way to accommodate everyone, they may struggle to make timely decisions.

### The Humble Leader

**At their best:** Modest and fair-minded, they provide reliable outcomes through steadiness and consistency.

**At their worst:** Rigid and overly cautious, they are afraid to move beyond the status quo.

Humble leaders tend to be soft-spoken, modest, and precise. Their methodical and consistent style often models follow-through and diligence in dealings with others. Because they're fair and practical, they can often discern what particular systems and structures would meet other people's needs. However, they tend to be so cautious that they may hinder spontaneity or creativity. Because they want to maintain a stable environment, Humble leaders remain wary of change and often favor standard operating procedures over new and innovative ways of doing things.

### The Deliberate Leader

**At their best:** Conscientious and disciplined, they provide high-quality outcomes through careful analysis and planning.

**At their worst:** Risk-averse and perfectionistic, they pay little attention to the human element.

Deliberate leaders tend to be systematic, cautious, and analytical. Because ensuring accuracy is vitally important to them, they tend to work at a moderate pace. They want to be seen as experts, so they're often drawn to projects and roles where they can shape processes to meet their high standards. However, they tend to be detached and unemotional, and they often prefer to work independently. Also, because they want to be seen as competent, they may become defensive if people challenge their methods or ideas.

### The Resolute Leader

**At their best:** Questioning and independent, they aren't afraid to challenge the status quo to get better results.

**At their worst:** Cynical and insensitive, they seem intent on putting a negative spin on everything.

Resolute leaders tend to be challenging, determined, and rational. They set high standards for themselves and others and may have little patience for seemingly inefficient people. They tend to be blunt, and they aren't afraid to speak up when they see problems with plans or methods, even if it means stepping on some toes. Not only do they want to get efficient results, but they want those results to be of the utmost quality. Because these leaders want to be seen as highly competent, they may lose their patience with people or situations that they feel are standing in their way.

### **The Commanding Leader**

**At their best:** Powerful and decisive, they enlist others to work quickly toward ambitious goals.

**At their worst:** Forceful and egotistical, they push others at the expense of morale.

Commanding leaders tend to be competitive, driven, and assertive. They have such a natural take-charge presence that others often look to them for leadership. And, because they want to reach their goals as quickly as possible, they tend to create a sense of urgency for themselves and others. They're often challenging and demanding, and they may be less concerned with social niceties. Since they're extremely motivated by results, they may show little regard for other people's needs and feelings.

**Which of these eight approaches do you use most naturally in your leadership?**

**Which dimension is the hardest for you to use?**

In order to become an effective multi-dimensional leader, you first need to understand your own strengths and challenges. The next step is to understand what other people think. Experience an on-line 363 For Leaders Assessment that will help you identify your strengths and developmental opportunities.

**If you are interested in bringing the 8 Dimensions of Leadership into your organization, please contact us:**

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