

**HIGH PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP:  
FROM CONTROL TO EMPOWERMENT**  
A free resource from the [Optibility Performance Group](#)

**Leadership** - As organizations prepare themselves to compete in the chaotic and challenging environment of today, there is not a more important theme than leadership. In fact, take a moment to think about the word "leadership." What does it mean? What feelings and images does it arouse inside of you?

For us, it is a rich and meaningful word. It stirs up a sense of idealism, excitement, hope, and courage. It is a word that inspires us to be our best. It is a word that we associate with the finest and most influential among us; people like: Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Moses, Martin Luther King, Winston Churchill, Mahatma Gandhi, Madame Curie, and many more.

**Excitement** - So, we believe, probably as you do, that the topic of leadership is exciting. Yet perhaps most exciting is that we know that everyone has great leadership potential inside. You will learn as you become a better leader that it is not necessary to change the world or become a household name to become a great leader. It means that you can be a positive influence to those around you. It means that you can create an organization founded on the vision of an ideal and that you can create conditions which encourage others to rise above mediocrity and perform at their best. Our objective is that you understand the foundation principles of leadership and practice them within your organization and your life, with those people you interact with daily. It doesn't really matter whether you lead a staff of two, a household of five or a nation of millions, the principles are the same--and they can be learned.

**Application** -Of course, knowing about leadership, and getting excited about it are only the first steps. It is the APPLICATION of leadership that will yield the results. We've studied the topic of leadership and worked with leaders of many organizations over the past many years, and what we've found is that a key component of successful leadership is EMPOWERMENT. Empowerment, is a great buzzword, but rarely gets developed to its full extent by most organizations, due to many factors. Not least of which, is the failure to understand the fact that empowerment is a process, or a series of specific behaviors, which leads to a positive result. In short, empowerment is a cultural value.

**Culture** - The culture development process moves more quickly when people understand how others experience the culture and leadership. This is especially true in workgroups and is essential in any leadership team attempting culture change. This exercise quickly helps a group understand itself better.

On the following page is a questionnaire, which you may use for your entire team. For each question separately, tally the numbers circled by each person and divide the sum by the number of people who answered. This gives the group's average score for each question.

The questions are written so that "yes" is "better" than "no". This implies problems where the group average number is low, however a low score may not necessarily mean "important". This is why you ask people to "Mark with an X, any questions you would particularly like to see discussed." These are the "important" areas.

The "important" areas are a good starting point for analyzing the current situation, and creating a plan to lead the culture toward empowerment.

# Questionnaire—People, Culture, and Leadership

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. Answer how you personally feel about the statement in your present job, not how you think it “should” be. Your answers are confidential. Circle a number for each question.

**1=No, 2=Mostly No, 3=Not Sure or Uncertain, 4=Mostly Yes, 5=Yes.**

**N**            **Y**  
**O**            **E**  
                 **S**

## People

- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you feel useful and productive?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Can you be creative?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you see endless opportunities for improvements?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you know how you fit into the big picture?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you feel you belong?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Are you valued for your work and contributions?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you have fun?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Are you well managed?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Are relationships at work mature and non-political?
- 1 2 3 4 5 Do you have enough information to make good decisions?

## Culture

- 1 2 3 4 5 People bring their full energy and creativity.
- 1 2 3 4 5 This is a powerful company that engages employee’s hearts and minds.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Procedures here are designed with real people in mind.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Relationships and communications are fine.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Senior managers keep in mind their early work experiences.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Power and control is widely shared.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I am involved in decisions that affect me.
- 1 2 3 4 5 The company is open to challenges, suggestions, and change.

## Leadership

- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here put people first.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here are good coaches.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here ask people how they can help them.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here set a clear direction—“This is where we are going.”
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here celebrate and recognize and reward desired behavior.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here give everyone background information, the big picture.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here protect people from abuse from the system above them.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Leaders here make cooperative, team decisions.

**Mark with an X, any questions you feel are particularly important.**

**Please write any other comments and suggestions on the back of the page.**