

Sample

Life Styles Inventory (LSI) Survey

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Abstract

This paper provides a descriptive analysis of the results of a Life Styles Inventory Survey intended to closely look at various aspects of my professional “Style” as a manager. The survey is done as a way to “examine your own unique way of thinking and how it influences your behavior” as a way of identifying and implementing self-improvement. This paper will analyze the results of the survey, identify and explain my “Primary” and “Backup” thinking styles, and discuss a “Limiting Style” that serves to reduce my effectiveness. It will also describe the influence of my personal style on my professional style and overall effectiveness and analyze how this personal style was developed including factors that influenced this development.

Life Styles Inventory (LSI) Survey**Part I: Personal Thinking Styles (primary, backup, limiting)**

My primary thinking style, as reflected in my *Life Styles Inventory (LSI) Survey* is “Humanistic – Encouraging” and my back-up thinking style is “Self – Actualizing”. These styles showed the highest percentile scores with 85% respectively. I agree that these are two of the more significant features of my personality and I am able to see how these particular styles manifest themselves in both my personal and professional life. “Humanistic – Encouraging” style is described as someone who “accepts others for who they are without question or criticisms... believe they can assist others in fulfilling their potential by providing a supportive climate that inspires self-improvement”. “Self Actualizing” style is described as someone who has a “strong interest in working to become everything they are capable of being...a strong curiosity about people and things and an acute awareness of both their own and others feelings.”

A primary example of these particular styles in my personal life is my current living arrangement. I am currently living with my younger brother whom after a 3 year break has decided to return to school to complete his Bachelors degree. I’ve always considered my younger brother to be “smarter” than me when it came to school; his main area of improvement has always existed within his own confidence and belief that he is able complete any task. This confidence in one’s own ability is an area that I have always excelled in, I’ve always believed that there is no task to difficult for me to complete given enough effort. Now that my brother has decided to complete his degree I find myself in a position of encouragement and support as he reenters higher education as he continues to face challenges that I know to be well within his ability.

Both the “Humanistic - Encouraging” and the “Self – Actualizing” style approach to situations are noticeable in my work life. I am an admissions advisor for ██████ University in New York; this position is very unique in that success in this field requires both the “Humanistic-Encouraging” and “Self-Actualizing” personality traits as described in the survey results. As advisors, we often meet adult students who have been out of an academic environment for an extended number of years and have concerns about whether they will be able to function at a high level in a college atmosphere. In this situation, an Advisors primary responsibility is to simplify the admissions and overall learning structure of the program so that the individual is able to see that with the appropriate level of focus and attention to detail early in the admissions process and class, they can excel and achieve the goals that they have set for themselves. During my initial interview with any potential student I make it a point to tell them that if this is something that they truly want to accomplish for themselves, then I will be there at every step of the process to provide the support that they need to achieve their educational goals.

Identifying a “Limiting Style” can sometimes prove to be a challenge for me when trying to address the root of problems. This is due to the fact that as I get older and spend more time in “corporate America” I am beginning to realize that what I see as my largest “Limiting Style” would in most situations be seen as a positive character trait. I believe this Limiting Style to be the “Conventional Style”. This belief may seem to contradict the low score (10) and percentile (20%) that was reflected in the LSI Survey results which defines this style as “a preoccupation with adhering to rules and established procedures” and says that “when we rely on established routines to determine how we do things, we risk losing our sense of uniqueness and individuality”. I have chosen this style as one that I believe is working against me to reduce my effectiveness due to the fact that I have learned that in every business there exists a need to

master the fundamentals before a person can effectively create and redefine new and existing methods.

I am in the early stages of my professional career, and in my experience thus far with various organizations I have constantly been told that “I have a lot of potential to be successful”. Earlier in my career I took this remark as compliment as I worked towards achieving this potential that my managers and mentors have seen in me. Now, however, I have had an opportunity to review the choices that have led me to this point in my career and I realize that to be a real leader and innovator I must first learn and master the lessons that are fundamental in that business. I’ve found myself trying to innovate and change the positions that I have had with the goal of extreme success, without first mastering the practices that are seen as “Conventional” that make up the fundamentals of the business. It is for this reason that the area of improvement that I believe I can focus on to increase my effectiveness at work is “Conventional Style” and find the appropriate balance between established fundamental practices and my natural eagerness to innovate and improve.

Part II: Impact On Management Style

When assessing my personal style and the impact that it has on my management style it is very clear that my management style is directly derived from my personal style. For example, when I meet someone in a nonprofessional environment I am always intrigued to learn about their background and how traits such as race, religion, gender, etc have worked together to create the person that they have become. I am able to discover what is important and motivates them both personally and professionally. This same “curiosity” or “need for understanding” is very prevalent in my view of an effective manager. I believe that a manager must first understand

what it is that motivates the individual members of his/her team to be able to effectively perform the four primary functions of management as stated in the textbook. These four functions are described as planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Planning is explained as “defining goals, setting specific performance objectives, and identifying the actions needed to achieve them. Organizing is explained as “creating work structures, divides tasks, and arranges resources. Leading is explained as “motivating other toward high performance through effective communication good interpersonal relations. Controlling is explained as “monitoring performance and taking necessary corrective action”.

Each of these four functions require a manager to first understand that each member of a team must be treated as an individual within a group, therefore must understand the strengths and weaknesses of each person as they perform each of the four essential functions of a manger. My Personal Style and belief that trying to understand a person’s values, motivations, and overall personality is the best way of developing personal relationships, is the same strategy I employee in work related situations and overall effectiveness as a manager. I believe that the only way to develop each of the four functions of effective management is to first understand the members of your team.

When reviewing the results of the LSI Survey, my profile shows that my strength lie in areas of “Humanistic – Encouraging Style”, “Affiliative Style” and “Self Actualizing Style”. This profile effectively supports my efforts of become an efficient manager and carrying out the four functions of management previously defined. The profile shows that as a leader I show considerable concern for the individual members of my team and accept both their strengths and weakness as I carry out the four functions of management. As a manager I make an attempt to understand each member of my team and develop individual relationships with each member

based on their individual characteristics. As described earlier the four functions of a management are to plan, organize, lead and control. Each of these aspects require a different approach, but one common element in that each approach must be designed in part according to the individual team member. It is in this individual application that my Personal Style has the largest impact on my Management Style.

Part III: Genesis of Personal Styles

When reviewing the development of my personal styles revealed in my LSI survey is it very clear that these styles are a result of my family upbringing. I would say that my parents have had the largest influence on the person that I have become personally and professionally. While individual events, affiliations or achievements have contributed to the person that am, I always reflect on the way that I was raised as young man. I grew up watching my father work incredible long hours at a family business in Washington DC. I witnessed him push his body to the point of exhaustion as he worked to provide for his family. This incredible unrelenting work ethic and refusal to accept anything less than greatness has always been an attribute that I have both admired and strove to match in every aspect of my life and is very evident in the portion of the profile describing my style as “Self Actualizing” and “Competitive”.

The aspects of my profile which describe my personal style as “Humanistic – Encouraging” & “Affiliative” are clear examples of the impact my mother has had on my personal development. My mother has been a kindergarten teacher for over 20 years and during this time she has worked in various types of school systems and environments. These environments include urban low income systems, suburban systems and private systems as both teacher and director. Throughout this time in these varying situations she has always told me that “you can never judge anyone based on their environment”. She always taught me that to really understand

someone you must first be willing to listen and learn what makes them who they are and what they value in life. My mother never allowed her students or parents of students to set low expectations for themselves or their children based on what they considered to be their “negative circumstances”. Nor did she allow parents to assume their children didn’t require extra help based on status in life. She always approached each child and parents as individuals. This attention to the individual is something that I have always admired and continue to strive to achieve in both personal and professional environments.

Part IV: Conclusion and Reflection

I cannot say that I am surprised by the results of the LSI Survey. My primary thinking style is “Humanistic – Encouraging” and my back up thinking style is “Self – Actualizing”. In addition to these styles I also received high scores in “Self – Actualizing” and “Competitive”. These high scores are contained within both the “Constructive” & “Aggressive/Defensive” Style categories. I believe my most limiting style to be the “Conventional Style”, even though it represented a lower score and percentage according to the survey. I see the attention to conventional or fundamental aspects of a business to be an area that I can improve upon as I strive to understand and develop ways of “thinking outside the box” without overlooking the core practices that have proven successful. Finding this delicate balance between core values and innovation is a key aspect that I believe would enhance my skills not only as a leader, but also in my personal aspirations.

This connection and overall influence that my personal style has on my management style is something that I take pride in as a leader. By approaching every member of my team as an individual with distinct strengths, areas of improvement, and motivations I believe I can effectively perform as a leader and effectively complete each of the four primary functions of

management. This profile has also helped me to directly link my development as a child to the major impact that my mother and father have had on my personal and professional development.

While I do not think that I was surprised by the results of this survey I do think that it has helped me to isolate my strengths as a leader as I continue to develop and identify specific areas in which I can work towards improving. This survey has helped me to see that even a trait typically seen as strength, such as opposition to conventional thinking and innovation, can also be a hindrance if the proper balance is not achieved between tested core practices and forward thinking. No longer do I want to be told that “I have so much potential” to then find myself not reaching the expectations of myself and others. So, when evaluating the overall value of this exercise I believe that it has helped me work through a personal obstacle that I’ve faced throughout my professional career.

Personal Goal for GM591

It seems like this course will provide the fundamentals of not only a good leader but also a good organization. Often these fundamentals are overlooked in professional settings as manager’s focus on achievement of goals, while overlooking areas of improvement by returning to the basics. My goal for this course is to really learn and implement these fundamental characteristics of an effective leader as well as identify areas of my personal life where these principles can also be applied.

References

1. Human Synergistics, International, Inc

Life Styles Inventory

http://www.survey-server2.com/lsiuniversity/pers_report.asp

2. John Wiley & Sons, Inc

Chapter 1 – Introducing Organization Behavior

Slide 1 – 26 : Notes Section

Sample

Life Styles Inventory™ (LSI): Self-Description

Feedback for: _____

Date survey taken: _____

The raw and percentile scores in the table below and the extensions on the circumplex shown on the next page depict your perceptions of how you think and behave.

The CONSTRUCTIVE Styles (11, 12, 1, and 2 o'clock positions) reflect self-enhancing thinking and behavior that contribute to one's level of **satisfaction**, ability to develop healthy relationships and work effectively with **people**, and proficiency at accomplishing **tasks**.

The PASSIVE/DEFENSIVE Styles (3, 4, 5, and 6 o'clock positions) represent self-protecting thinking and behavior that promote the fulfillment of **security** needs through interaction with **people**.

The AGGRESSIVE/DEFENSIVE Styles (7, 8, 9, and 10 o'clock positions) reflect self-promoting thinking and behavior used to maintain one's status/position and fulfill **security** needs through **task-related** activities.

Your LSI Results

Position	Style	Raw Score	Percentile Score
1	Humanistic-Encouraging	36	85
2	Affiliative	36	83
3	Approval	15	63
4	Conventional	10	20
5	Dependent	9	15
6	Avoidance	0	1
7	Oppositional	3	18
8	Power	2	10
9	Competitive	16	70
10	Perfectionistic	20	50
11	Achievement	28	38
12	Self-Actualizing	35	85

The raw scores potentially range from 0 to 40. The percentile scores represent your results compared to those of 9,207 individuals who previously completed the *Life Styles Inventory*. For example, a percentile score of 75 means that you scored higher along a particular position than 75% of the other respondents in the sample and, in turn, indicates that the style represented by that position is strongly descriptive of you. In contrast, a score of 25 means that you scored higher than only about 25% of the other respondents and therefore indicates that the style represented by that position is not very descriptive of you.



Sample

Your LSI Styles Circumplex

To accurately interpret your LSI results, it is important for you to consider your score on each style in terms of its range (high, medium, or low) on the profile. The three ranges correspond to the percentile points in the circumplex and in the table on the previous page.

