

How Do You Fit the Design?

EVOLUTION OF STYLE

This questionnaire asks you to describe yourself. For each item, give the number “4” to the phrase that best describes you, “3” to the item that is next best, and on down to “1” for the item that is least like you.

- My strongest skills are:
 - Analytical skills
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Political skills
 - Flair for drama
- The best way to describe me is:
 - Technical expert
 - Good listener
 - Skilled negotiator
 - Inspirational leader
- What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:
 - Make good decisions
 - Coach and develop people
 - Build strong alliances and a power base
 - Inspire and excite others
- What people are most likely to notice about me is my:
 - Attention to detail
 - Concern for people
 - Ability to succeed in the face of conflict and opposition
 - Charisma
- My most important leadership trait is:
 - Clear, logical thinking
 - Caring and support for others
 - Toughness and aggressiveness
 - Imagination and creativity
- I am best described as:
 - An analyst
 - A humanist
 - A politician
 - A visionary

Scoring: Compute your scores according to the following rater. The higher score represents your way of viewing the organization and will influence your management style.

$$\text{Structure} = 1a + 2a + 3a + 4a + 5a + 6a = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Human Resource} = 1b + 2b + 3b + 4b + 5b + 6b = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Political} = 1c + 2c + 3c + 4c + 5c + 6c = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Symbolic} = 1d + 2d + 3d + 4d + 5d + 6d = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Interpretation: Organization managers typically view their world through one or more mental frames of reference. (1) The *structural frame* of reference sees the organization as a machine that can be economically efficient with vertical hierarchy and routine tasks that give a manager the formal authority to achieve goals. This manager way of thinking became strong during the era of scientific management when efficiency was everything. (2) The *human resource frame* sees the organization as its people, with manager emphasis given to support, empowerment, and belonging. This manager way of thinking gained importance after the Hawthorne studies. (3) The *political frame* sees the organization as a competition for scarce resources to achieve goals, with manager emphasis on building agreement among diverse groups. This frame of reference reflects the need for organizations to share information, have a collaborative strategy, and to have all parts working together. (4) The *symbolic frame* sees the organization as theater, with manager emphasis on symbols, vision, culture, and inspiration. This manager frame of reference is important for managing an adaptive culture in a learning organization.

Which frame reflects your way of viewing the world? The first two frames of reference—structural and human resource—are important for newer managers at the lower and middle levels of an organization. These two frames usually are mastered first. As managers gain experience and move up the organization, they should acquire political and collaborative skills (Chapter 13) and also learn to use symbols to shape cultural values (Chapter 10). It is important for managers not to be stuck in one way of viewing the organization because their progress may be limited.

Source: Roy G. Williams and Terrence E. Deal, *When Opposites Dance: Balancing the Manager and Leader Within* (Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black, 2003), pp. 24–28. Reprinted with permission.