

What's New In Leadership?

Study Shows Impact of Assessing Leadership Consideration and Structure in Potential Leaders

As employers you strive to hire the best leaders. What characteristics do you look for in a potential leader of your organization? Although one can compile an endless list of desirable leadership attributes, throughout the years two important qualities have continually surfaced in leadership research: Consideration and Structure.



What are Leadership Consideration and Structure?

Before discussing the findings of the study, it is important to understand the meaning of leadership Consideration and Structure. An individual who possesses leadership Consideration displays interest and respect for his/her reports, shows concern for the well being of others and expresses appreciation and support. He/she recognizes the importance of people skills to success in a leadership role.

In conjunction with leadership Consideration is leadership Structure. A leader who effectively plans, organizes, delegates and controls the work of others is said to have strong leadership Structure. He/she sufficiently defines and organizes his/her role and the role of direct reports. These leadership attributes, although independent factors, go hand in hand. The blend of both Consideration and Structure reflects an effective leader. In other words, a successful leader is one who is capable of organizing and delegating work for others in a considerate manner.

To illustrate these leadership qualities, consider the presence of consideration and structure in effective teachers. At the onset a good teacher sets down the rules and expectations and students understand the consequences if the rules are not followed. Once these rules and expectations are established, the teacher's people skills begin to emerge. This illustration reflects the importance of the blend of leadership consideration and structure.

General Findings

The impact of leadership Consideration and Structure was reaffirmed in the study conducted by the University of Florida. The researchers performed a quantitative review of previous Consideration and Structure studies whereby they examined the relationship of these attributes to:

• Employee job satisfaction	• Leader job performance
• Employee satisfaction with the leader	• Group-organization performance
• Employee motivation	• Leadership effectiveness

The results of their review revealed that the above leadership outcomes were indeed related to Consideration and Structure. In particular, a leader who displayed strong Consideration insights had higher employee job satisfaction, leadership satisfaction, motivation and leadership effectiveness.

Similarly, leaders who demonstrated strong Structural insights displayed higher leader job performance and group-organization performance. These results reflect how the blend of a leader's Consideration and Structure insights impacts employees, leaders and the organization as a whole.

Conclusions

Results of the study once again illustrate the advantage of examining Consideration and Structure insights of potential leaders. Furthermore, this study corresponds to Applied Assessments' findings that effective leaders are those individuals who demonstrate a blend of strong Consideration and Structure insights. So when answering the question, "What qualities should a good leader possess?", consider the value of assessing your future leaders for leadership Consideration and Structure.

Reference: Judge, Timothy A., Piccolo, Ronald F. and Ilies, Remus. (2004). The Forgotten Ones? The Validity of Consideration and Initiating Structure in Leadership Research. Journal of Applied Psychology. Vol. 89, No. 1, 36-51.