

## **Talking Technology**

# **Put your sense of leadership qualities to the test**

By Steve Burns, Capital News contributor



As we all transition to the new challenges that lie ahead in 2003, I have been thinking about the challenge of leadership.

In 2002, leaders from around the world have made and continue to make major mistakes—from the Enron leadership fiasco to the business blunders making headlines every week.

A real lack of leadership and integrity continues to pervade the corporate scene.

On the other hand, I have been thankful for our local business leaders who continue to lead us by example.

From Paul Mitchell giving unselfishly of his time to lead the Memorial Cup bid team to Maxine DeHart leading the United Way drive-thru fund raiser to its highest donations ever, we have examples of leadership all around us.

The leadership demonstrated in our business community is something to be thankful for as we enter a new year.

But what about how leadership applies to you?

How would you describe your leadership capabilities?

How much of a leader are you?

To help you assess your leadership capabilities, I have developed a leadership assessment tool that you might find useful.

The critical question isn't so much "Am I a leader?" but rather "How can I improve my leadership skills?"

The assessment is only part of the process—what you do about it is the most important.

Look at each of leadership characteristics listed below and think about yourself and where your own attitudes and behaviours fall on the five-part scale shown.

Circle the score that best indicates your level of development.

Then total the scores and compare your score with the comments provided at the end of this assessment.

Self-evaluation requires that you be completely honest with yourself.

The only right answers are honest answers.

I understand that it is difficult for most people to be objective about themselves so you might want to see yourself through the eyes of a trusted friend or associate.

Score yourself the way he or she would score you.

Remember, you are looking for information to guide your own self-improvement.

The more objective you can be, the more successful will be your efforts to improve.

The 5-1 scoring system is based on the following evaluation levels: major strength, true most of the time, average, needs attention and major weakness. (Five is the top score and one is the lowest.)

- Vision and ability to dream

5 4 3 2 1

- Seizing opportunities to lead 5 4 3 2 1

- In control, but not controlling

5 4 3 2 1

- Thinking systematically

5 4 3 2 1

- Fact based decision-making

5 4 3 2 1

- Honesty and integrity

5 4 3 2 1

- Willingness to be led or coached

5 4 3 2 1

- Fairness and reasonableness

5 4 3 2 1

- Thoroughness and persistence

5 4 3 2 1

- Willingness to listen

5 4 3 2 1

- Calmness

5 4 3 2 1

- Predictability

5 4 3 2 1

- Protectiveness

5 4 3 2 1

- Patience

5 4 3 2 1

- Compassion

5 4 3 2 1

- Commitment to improving

5 4 3 2 1

- Desire for learning

5 4 3 2 1

- Resiliency

5 4 3 2 1

- Loyalty

5 4 3 2 1

- Lack of cynicism

5 4 3 2 1

Your Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **Score Range**

85 to 100...Outstanding! You are a great leader.

70 to 84...Very good. You're well on your way.

50 to 69...So-so. You have a lot to work with, but also a lot to work on.

35 to 49...You have major development work ahead. But it will be fun!

20 to 34...Don't be discouraged. Think of the opportunity for leadership growth!

Now that you have performed your self-evaluation, what do you think others would say about you?

Why not have them complete the evaluation on you.

Compare their evaluation to your own. What differences are there? Why?

What did you think you were strong in but they didn't? What did they think you are strong in but you rated yourself lower?

Be prepared to be vulnerable—some feedback can be brutal so be prepared.

Assuming that you have areas to improve upon, give some thought to implementing the following action items:

- Work with another business leader, someone that you trust who will hold you accountable to improve your areas of weakness. You could also consider using a leadership coach.
- Start working on your leadership skills by utilizing the following resources:
  - Leader to Leader Institute ([www.pfdf.org](http://www.pfdf.org)), formerly the Drucker Institute, is a Web site rich with leadership resources.
  - Servant Leadership ([www.greenleaf.org](http://www.greenleaf.org)) is a practical philosophy which supports people who choose to serve first, and then lead as a way of expanding service to individuals and institutions. Servant-leaders may or may not hold formal leadership positions. Servant-leadership encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening, and the ethical use of power and empowerment.
  - Executive Thinking—The Dream, The Vision, The Mission Achieved ([www.kossoff.com/executivethinking.html](http://www.kossoff.com/executivethinking.html)) is management consultant Leslie Kossoff's second book invites executives to dare to dream and challenges them to take the actions necessary to align their organizations with their dreams.

If you have excellent leadership skills, why not seek out opportunities to mentor other leaders?

If you need help in this area, why not seek out those that you respect to become your mentor.

I see no reason why Kelowna can't have an informal leadership mentoring program of its own.

Perhaps the idea is missing one thing—your leadership skills to make it happen!

Next Week: Inside Synectic Innovations

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