

Leadership Compass: Appreciating Diverse Work Styles

Overview:

This workshop allows participants to explore four primary work styles, as a tool for self-reflection and leadership growth. It encourages participants to delve more deeply into their strengths and weaknesses in all four styles, in the context of leadership and a working team. The purpose of this exploration is to enable participants to articulate at a higher level why they work the way they do, as well as identify skills and strengths they would like to enhance. It also is a tool for bolstering team accountability, by pushing people to consider the way in which their style(s) plays out on a team and how each person might become better at changing work styles to balance a team or fit a given work situation.

Category:

Diversity; leadership development; problem-solving; team and personal management

Level:

Suitable for all levels (introductory to advanced)

Recommended

Bonner Sequence:

This workshop could be used at any time during the Bonner experience, but may be most suitable for during sophomore or junior years as students are expanding their leadership repertoires and can think about work styles. It can be used in conjunction with building students' skills in diversity awareness (sophomore developmental baseline), because it helps students explore leadership and personal style dimensions of diversity. It could be a valuable supplement to project coordination or student leadership role training.

expectation	explore	experience	example	expertise

VALUES: ALL - community engagement, community building, diversity
(modifications may be made to apply framework to other levels or areas)

Type:

Structured set of activities for workshop (e.g. retreat or training)

Focus or Goals of this Guide:

In sum, Leadership Compass is about:

- Developing a deeper sense of self-awareness about one's leadership style and approach
- Developing a more balanced approach to work style; seeking out areas of growth or change
- Developing an understanding of how one's work style affects team functioning
- Deliberately building skills in all four directions to enhance personal and team performance

Materials:

- Ensure all participants come with pen and paper
- Handouts on the four directions and Leadership Compass
- Flip charts must include:
 - √ 1-2 posters for each of the four directions listing "approach," "overuse," for each direction (essentially, copy the handouts onto large poster paper, preferably 2 for each direction – one with approach and one with overuse)

In addition, other helpful charts are:

- √ goals
- √ three questions to ask yourself when determining primary direction
- √ each set of questions asked to the small groups
- √ large visual compass with directions
- √ blank flip chart sheets and 2 markers for each direction

How to Prepare:

Walk through workshop and revise to fit participants, if necessary. Prepare all materials, including directional flip charts. Prepare any case studies or scenarios to fit the group and its work. Prepare your own relevant introduction, including history, applications, context. Set up space.

How to Do/Brief Outline:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1) Introduction and Framing | suggested time 5 minutes |
| 2) Goals and Expectations | suggested time 5 minutes |
| 3) Review Four Directions | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 4) Primary Direction Discussion | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 5) Report Backs | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 6) Going To Extremes Discussion | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 7) Rotate Through 3 Directions | suggested time 5 minutes |
| 8) BREAK (5 MIN- BRINGS TOTAL TO 60 MIN) | |
| 9) Case Scenario & Processing | suggested time 25 minutes |
| 10) Personal Maps | suggested time 5 minutes |

- 11) Team Sharing Personal Maps
- 12) Pairs - Commitments To Change
- 13) Wrap

suggested time 10 minutes
suggested time 10 minutes
suggested time 5 minutes

Step 1) Introduction and framing of the exercise

Suggested time: 5 minutes

You may want to start with a simple, physical warm up to get everyone's attention. See the **Games Galore** handout for ideas.

Introduce the basic concept and its history. Perhaps show the book [The Four Fold Way](#) (you can find this online).

History

The Leadership Compass draws from a Native American Indian -based practice called the Medicine Wheel or the Four-Fold Way. In the Four-Fold Way, the four directions are described as warrior (north), healer (south), teacher (west), and visionary (east). All directions have profound strengths and potential weaknesses, and every person is seen as capable of growing in each direction. Each direction has a primary "human resource," including power (north), love (south), wisdom (west), and vision (east), as well as primary struggles, associated with loss or difficulty. Each person can access the gifts associated with each direction- through work, ritual, a variety of practices- in order to become more whole.

This workshop builds on the Leadership Compass framework to allow individual participants to dig deeper in their perceptions of self and team. Non-profit organizations modified the original framework and language to be more suited to the professionally-oriented cultures of organizations. This workshop pushes the notion of the "learnable" qualities of each direction, when a person adopts a willingness to learn and change.

Ask participants to make a "leap" and allow themselves to go with the categorizations of the exercise. Some important introductory comments are:

- This is a diversity exercise that introduces a framework of four "directions" ~ representing qualities of work styles. When appropriately incorporated, the diversity of our work styles can be a great source of productivity and creativity; when inappropriately understood or incorporated, this diversity can bring about a lot of misunderstanding, tension, and confusion.
- For our purposes today we will be concentrating on the directions in which we personally use at work, particularly at work in community service efforts. Please answer and evaluate your responses in terms of how you currently approach your work.

- One style isn't better than any other. In fact, this workshop will allow us to look more deeply at the primary and other styles we use at work. All of the styles offer different strengths and challenges.
- You may find yourself critical of the categorizations or of having to reveal things about your own work styles. We request that you hold from making judgments about the usefulness of the exercise as you go through it. "Try on" this exercise. Go with it for awhile. We are confident you will find it useful.
- You may also want to introduce some of the history of this activity (see above).

Step 2) Lay out goals and expectations

Suggested time: 5 minutes

The goals of this are:

- To develop a more balanced approach to personal work style development
- To build an understanding how one's work style may affect team functioning
- To deliberately build skills in all four directions to enhance personal and team/group performance

Make sure to introduce some Ground Rules for the activity:

- Introduce "hands up" as a tool to keep the activity moving and participants focused.
- Ask people if they want to suggest any Ground Rules for the group or session.
- Again, ask people to go with the exercise. Acknowledge that a person may be tempted to tell all of us that he/she isn't *always* "south." It's normal for people to feel that they have qualities of all of the sides, so it's not necessary for people to explain themselves at every step. Stick with the exercise which allows people to later explore and discuss their many sides.
- Observe basic group facilitation/setting guidelines.

Step 3) Start introducing the four directions

Suggested time: 10 minutes

You should have the boards with each of the directions "approaches to work/work style" listed (do not have the "overuses" or other elements visible at this point)

Explain that you're going to read off some of the approaches of each direction. Before you begin, present the following questions:

- 1. What's your first inclination when you get a new project?**
- 2. What's your tendency when you're under pressure?**
- 3. What feedback have you been given about yourself**
- 4. What seems most comfortable?**

Ask people to listen carefully and consider what is their PRIMARY DIRECTION, that is the direction they most identify as their own style, WHEN ACTING AS A PROJECT

DIRECTOR OR STUDENT LEADER, keeping in mind that many of us work in some of all of the directions at different times.

Have participants write down the direction that best fits them. Again, remind people that later in the workshop, people will explore skills from all of their directions.

Step 4) Have people go to primary direction

Suggested time: 10 minutes

After everyone is finished writing, (re)introduce hands up, and have people move physically to one of four areas that represents that primary direction. Explain that in those directions, people will have the opportunity to discuss their styles in more detail.

Give people designated time (suggest 8 minutes) to discuss the following:

- **What's really great about being your direction?**
- **What's really hard about being your direction?**
- **What's difficult about working with the other directions?**

In those discussions, people can recognize that although they are at the same "primary" direction, they have different responses to these questions. Make sure to inform groups that someone should keep notes and be prepared to summarize what the group discusses.

Step 5) Have each group give a report back and exchange

Suggested time: 12 minutes

Ask each group to offer one report of their responses to the above three questions. You may want to ask that no group speaks twice until every group speaks once (NOSTUESO).

After all groups has given their complete report allow for *some* direct questions and conversation between the groups. You can ask, "Does anybody want to ask anything of anyone from one of the other directions?" You can also ask the group for their observations or note some of your own. You probably want to keep a tone and pace that doesn't encourage the group to degenerate into "name calling" or criticizing of other directions. Try to bring out interesting questions and points of agreement and difference.

You can also provide an opportunity for anyone who thinks that they're in the wrong place to move to a new direction now.

Step 6) Discussion of Going to Extremes

Suggested time: 10 minutes

The purpose for this portion is to have people focus on how their style might be misunderstood, conflict with others, or be taken too far in a group dynamic. This should raise awareness of people for the "balancing" possibility of different styles.

Give the groups **five minutes** to focus on the following question:

- **When you take your direction to an extreme, or an inflexible with your style, what do you think the other directions are saying about working with you?**

Ask groups to brainstorm their responses. Have each group report out (**10 minutes of report backs and discussion**) what they say.

Then, go around the room and flip the carts to reveal the "OVERUSE" portions of the charts for each direction. You can introduce them by saying: "Take a look at these charts. Some of the items you may recognize came up in your group. Some may be new."

The discussion of OVERUSE of styles is a good lead in to the next part, which is a focus on how one can balance one styles.

Step 7) Quickly move to secondary, third, and fourth styles

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Now you want to really get the group moving. Ask the group to physically get up and move to their SECONDARY direction - the side s/he feels is second most likely to use in the Executive Director role.

Give them 30 seconds to move. Ask everyone to look around. Take a few comments or ask a few questions -- e.g. to point out who moved "across" (west - east, north - south) and who moved "around" (west - south, west - north, north - west, north - east, and so on).

Now ask the group to move to their THIRD style. Give them 30 seconds to move. Ask everyone to look around. Take a few comments or ask a few questions.

FINALLY ask the group to move to their FOURTH style (what they perceive as their weakest). Give them 30 seconds to move. Ask everyone to look around. Take a few comments or ask a few questions. **TELL PEOPLE TO TAKE SEATS IN THIS DIRECTION.**

Close this brief round of movement by explaining that this exercise prefaces the next part of the workshop, which is to focus on developing strengths in all of the sides.

55 minutes in - 5 minute break

Step 8. From their fourth (weakest) directions, introduce a scenario or case to “MOCCASINS”

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Choose a scenario that represents some typical work of the team. It's good to have elements in the scenario that will allow people to grapple with the relevancy of different approaches and styles. Explain that you are going to present a scenario, and you would like people to tackle it FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THEIR FOURTH (WEAKEST) STYLE (the one they are in now).

POSSIBLE SCENARIO:

You are a team of Bonners/students that have been asked by the campus leadership and staff to help address an issue. There is just not enough campus-wide support and student involvement in community service. While there is a small core (like you) who are involved regularly, other students don't seem to understand the value, benefits, or great things about being involved, and the community service office/resources are being underutilized and could be cut as a result. Campus leadership and staff want this to change and they think you, as active students, can do something about it. They have given you a budget of \$2,000 and a timeline of nine weeks. By the end of this time, your group is expected to show that it has helped generate more campus-wide student (and other) interest in community service (in a way that will last).

Read the scenario and have it on paper as well. Give people 1-3 specific questions to address in relation to the scenario, like:

- *"How do handle this situation?"*
- *"Generate a proposal and proposed work plan, within the timeline and budgetary limits, to take on this challenge."*

Give people a designated time for discussion (5 minutes), flip chart paper, and markers. Then, take report backs (10 minutes) from each direction.

Step 9) Lead the group in processing the scenario/case study

Suggested time: 10 minutes

As facilitator, lead another round of report backs to draw out the following information:

1. *How did your group approach this?*
2. *What did you identify as the issues?*
3. *What did you decide/recommend?*
4. *What did you notice about how your group handled this situation?*
5. *How was it to work in your "weakest" direction?*
6. *Was anything a surprise about this?*

Allow for *some* direct conversation after each group has given their complete report:
"Does anybody have any comments or observations to share? Did the various styles seem to influence how the group approached the situation?"

This is where you can start to bring in questions about the team's ordinary work together:

- *Was it challenging to have to play out your weakest direction? What did you learn?*
- *Does this resemble or counter dynamics of our team? How? When?*
- *Does this make you think that you may have more of that direction than you thought?*

This leads in to the opportunity for each person to explain more about their work styles.

Step 10) Map out personal wholeness as individuals

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Pass out the packets with the separate grids (if you haven't already done so) and the compass personal charts. Explain that the next exercise is an opportunity for individuals and the team to go deeper in looking at personal and team strengths.

REVIEW THE FOUR DIRECTIONS:

Ask people to take 5 minutes and look over the four directions again. As they do so, ask them to CHECK OFF characteristics they feel that they have in EACH direction (both regular and overuse).

MAP THEIR SKILLS:

Then, map where they believe they fall on in each of the four directions on a Cartesian grid. Explain that the farther from the center (5) represents the strength in that direction. Use an example, blown up on a flip chart, to show the group. Tell people not to be sidetracked by the "numbers" but to use their own sense of judgment. Have people "connect the dots" in the form of an inner circle.

SKILL IDENTIFICATION:

Ask people to jot down 3 TRAITS/SKILLS they have in each direction AND 3 TRAITS/SKILLS they would like to further develop.

Step 11) Have people present their personal maps to the team and map a TEAM MAP

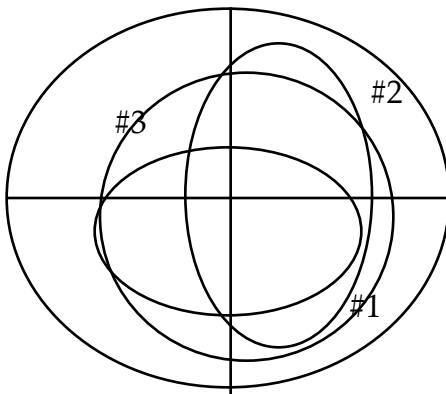
Suggested time: 15 minutes

Go around the group and have each person present their personal map to answer the following questions (put this on flipchart):

- *(main question) WHY DO YOU LEAD THE WAY YOU DO? Tell us more about WHY YOU IDENTIFIED THE PRIMARY STYLE YOU DID. When you did the whole map, did it change your sense of yourself at all?*
- **Then also:**

- What are 1-2 THINGS you think you do well in each direction? (note: these can be improvements or reducing overuse tendencies)
 - What are 1-2 you would like to get better at in each direction?
 - Of all of those, what direction and what 2 qualities would you most like to develop this coming year?
- **DRAW THE TEAM MAP AND NOTE DOWN PEOPLE'S SKILLS AND GOALS:** As people present, 2 facilitators should MAP the whole team (using different color markers, draw what each person drew on a BIG FLIP CHART CIRCLE - then label each circle) AND note (on separate paper) each person's name, skills, and goals in a grid like this:

example



GRID sample:

<u>Student's Name</u>	<u>1-2 Strong Traits/Skills in Each Direction</u>	<u>1-2 Traits/Skills to Learn in Each Direction</u>	<u>Overall BIGGEST GOALS</u>
Maria	north- motivator	north- improve	Get more West and more East overall- reduce tendency to bounce between counseling and acting; more orientation towards long-term big picture
Joe	south- good listener	tendency to act too fast without info	
Jones	west- pays attention to budget east- integrates big ideas with what students like	south- improve ability to say no west- improve overall attention to details east- get more visionary	

- After all have presented, DRAW A WIDER LINE around all of the map - representing the furthest point for the whole TEAM. Note: if some people were more modest, you may want to "equalize" the basic circles - or raise it as debrief points).

- **Then, engage the team in a discussion.** You might lead it with the following:
 - *Does this circle give an accurate representation of our team?*
 - *Does it surprise anyone?*
 - *Does anyone have questions for someone else in the group about their style or the skills they have or want to develop?*
 - *What does this make you think about the way we usually operate as a team? Are we operating as effectively as we could? How could the information we learned in these exercises help us grow and get better?*

Step 12) Committing to building skills and strengths personal and as a team

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Ask people to look again at the big team map and the GRID. You can also introduce a point of CHECK IN among the group by introducing the following questions:

- *In what ways can each of you personally SUPPORT your colleagues to develop in the way s/he described wanting to? Go around the group, and have each person describe ONE THING s/he could do to support a colleague to grow in one skill.*

AND/OR introduce specific scenarios and have the team as a whole RESPOND to them:

1. Given this situation, what would be your first impulse response? Would it be the most productive for you personally? For the team as a whole? For your group as a whole?
2. Given what we have learned and talked about, how might you personally or we as a team respond best (or better) to this situation?

If the discussion from this is rich, you might lead straight into the closing (skip simple debrief Step 13).

Step 13) Group Debrief and Closing

Suggested time: 5 minutes

You can lead the group in a simple debrief by asking:

- *What have you learned?*
- *What struck or surprised you?*
- *How are you going to use this information? How might you use it with your own staffs and corps?*
- *At the beginning we said that this is a diversity exercise, now that we have completed the exercise how is this a diversity exercise?*
- *What concrete things might you do to develop more balance as a person or team? How has this been a step in skill building for you?*

Step 14) Closing

Suggested time: 5 minutes

You want to close the workshop with your own summary comments, take feedback, do evaluations, and lay out next steps. (You will probably want to figure out some specific, concrete next steps for using this information as a group and give specific individuals follow up roles in doing so).



Leadership Compass: **NORTH**

Approaches to Work/ Work Style:

- Assertive, active, decisive
- Likes to determine course of events and be in control of professional relationship
- Enjoys challenges presented by difficult situations and people
- Thinks in terms of “bottom line”
- Quick to act or decide; expresses urgency for others to take action
- Perseveres, not stopped by hearing “No,” probes and presses to get at hidden resistances
- Likes variety, novelty, new projects
- Comfortable being in front
- Values action-oriented phrases, “Do it now!”, “I’ll do it”, “What’s the bottom line?”

Overuse: Style Taken to Excess:

- Can easily overlook process and comprehensive strategic planning when driven by need to act and decide
- Can get defensive, argue, try to “out expert” others
- Can lose patience, pushes for decision before its time, avoids discussion
- Can be autocratic, want things their way, has difficulty being a team member
- Sees things in terms of black and white, not much tolerance for ambiguity
- May go beyond limits, get impulsive, disregard practical issues
- Not heedful of others’ feelings, may be perceived as cold
- Has trouble relinquishing control - find it hard to delegate, “If you want something done right, do it yourself!”



Leadership Compass: **SOUTH**

Approaches to Work/ Work Style:

- Understands how people need to receive information in order to act on it
- Integrates others input in determining direction of what's happening
- Value-driven regarding aspects of professional life
- Uses professional relationships to accomplish tasks, interaction is a primary way of getting things done
- Supportive to colleagues and peers
- Willingness to trust others' statements at face value
- Feeling-based, trusts own emotions and intuition, intuition regarded as "truth"
- Receptive to other's ideas, builds on ideas, team player, noncompetitive
- Able to focus on the present
- Values words like "right" and "fair"

Overuse: Style Taken to Excess:

- Can lose focus on goals when believes relationships or people's needs are being compromised
- Has trouble saying "No" to requests
- Internalizes difficulty and assumes blame
- Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary to task
- Difficulty confronting or handling anger (own or others'); may be manipulated by emotions
- Can over-compromise in order to avoid conflict
- Immersed in the present or now; loses track of time; may not take action or see long-range view
- Can become too focused on the process, at the expense of accomplishing goals



Bonner Curriculum

Leadership Compass: **EAST**

Approaches to Work/ Work Style:

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Generative and creative thinker, able to think outside the box
- Very idea-oriented; focuses on future thought
- Makes decisions by standing in the future (insight/imagination)
- Insight into mission and purpose
- Looks for overarching themes, ideas
- Adept at and enjoys problem solving
- Likes to experiment, explore
- Appreciates a lot of information
- Values words like “option,” “possibility,” “imagine”

Overuse: Style Taken to Excess:

- Can put too much emphasis on vision at the expense of action or details
- Can lose focus on tasks
- Poor follow through on projects, can develop a reputation for lack of dependability and attention to detail
- Not time-bound, may lose track of time
- Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, then burn out over the long haul
- May lose interest in projects that do not have a comprehensive vision
- May find self frustrated and overwhelmed when outcomes are not in line with vision



Leadership Compass: **WEST**

Approaches to Work/ Work Style:

- Understands what information is needed to assist in decision making
- Seen as practical, dependable and thorough in task situations
- Provides planning and resources, is helpful to others in these ways and comes through for the team
- Moves carefully and follows procedures and guidelines
- Uses data analysis and logic to make decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue, balanced
- Introspective, self-analytical, critical thinker
- Skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project
- Maximizes existing resources - gets the most out of what has been done in the past
- Values word like “objective” “analysis”

Overuse: Style Taken to Excess:

- Can be bogged down by information, doing analysis at the expense of moving forward
- Can become stubborn and entrenched in position
- Can be indecisive, collect unnecessary data, mired in details, “analysis paralysis”
- May appear cold, withdrawn, with respect to others’ working styles
- Tendency toward remaining on the sidelines, watchfulness, observation
- Can become distanced
- May be seen as insensitive to others’ emotions or resistant to change