

Manual
For the
LEADER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Andrew W. Halpin

Fisher College of Business
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

1957

MANUAL FOR LEADER BEHAVIOR DESCRIPTION QUESTIONNAIRE

The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) provides a technique whereby group members may describe the leader behavior of designated leaders in formal organizations. The LBDQ contains items, each of which describes a specific way in which a leader may behave. The respondent indicates the frequency with which he perceives the leader to engage in each type of behavior by marking one of five adverbs: Always, often, occasionally, seldom, never. These responses are obtained from the members of the leader's immediate work-group, and are scored on two dimensions of leader behavior. For each dimension, the scores from the several group members are then averaged to yield an index of the leader's behavior in respect to that dimension.

The LBDQ was developed by the staff of the Personnel Research Board, The Ohio State University, as one project of the Ohio State Leadership Studies, directed by Dr. Carroll L. Shartle. Hemphill and Coons (14) constructed the original form of the questionnaire; and Halpin and Winer (11), in reporting the development of an Air Force adaptation of the instrument, identified Initiating Structure and Consideration as two fundamental dimensions of leader behavior. These dimensions were identified on the basis of a factor analysis of the responses of 300 B-29 crew members who described the leader behavior of their 52 aircraft commanders. Initiating Structure and Consideration accounted for approximately 34 to 50 per cent respectively of the common variance. In a subsequent study based upon a sample of 249 aircraft commanders, the correlation between the scores on the two dimensions was found to be .38.

Initiating Structure refers to the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and the members of his group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and ways of getting the job done. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in relationship between the leader and members of the group.

Only 30 of the 40 items are scored; 15 for each of the two dimensions. The 10 unscored items have been retained in the questionnaire in order to keep the conditions of administration comparable to those used in standardizing the questionnaire. The scored items for each of the two dimension keys are listed on Pages 4 and 6.

The score for each dimension is the sum of the scores assigned to responses marked on each of the 15 items in the dimension. The possible range of scores on each dimension is 0 to 60.

The estimated reliability by the split-half method is .83 for the Initiating Structure scores, and .92 for the Consideration scores, when corrected for attenuation.

In several studies (5, 6, 7, 9, 10) where the agreement among respondents in describing their respective leaders has been checked by a "between-vs. within-group" analysis of variance, the F ratios all have been found significant at the .01 level. Followers tend to agree in describing the same leader, and the descriptions of different leaders differ significantly.

The LBDQ has been used for research purpose in industrial, military, and educational settings. Fleishman (2, 3, 4) and Fleishman, Harris and Burt (5) have used the LBDQ for use in their studies of factory foreman and have found the two leader behavior dimensions useful in evaluating the results of the supervisory training program. Halpin (7) has reported the relationship between the aircraft commander's behavior on these dimensions and evaluations of his performance made both by his superiors and his crew members; and has presented evidence (6) which indicated that the most "effective" commanders are those who score high on both dimensions of leader behavior. Similarly, Hemphill (12) in a study of 22 departments in a liberal arts college, found that the departments with the best campus "reputation" for being well administered were those whose leaders were described as above the average on both dimensions of leader behavior. Halpin has reported the LBDQ descriptions of a sample of 50 school superintendents (10), and elsewhere has compared the leader behavior of aircraft commanders and school administrators (8). A list of pertinent studies in which the LBDQ has been used is given on the last page of this manual. These studies are summarized in a monograph edited by Stogdill and Coons (14).

Administration of the LBDQ

The questionnaire may be given either individually or to small groups. The purpose, of course, should be explained. It is best not to have the leader physically present while the group members are describing his behavior. It also is preferable to be able to guarantee the protection of the anonymity of each respondent. Inasmuch as each index scores used to describe the leader's behavior is derived by averaging the scores by which his group members describe him it is not necessary to identify each respondent by name. The only name required on the questionnaire blank is the name of the leader who is being described.

How many respondents are needed to provide a satisfactory index score for the leader's behavior? Experience suggests that a minimum of four respondents per leader is desirable, and that additional respondents beyond ten do not increase significantly the stability of the index scores. Six or seven respondents per leader would be a good standard. Obviously, much depends upon the particular leader and group in which one may be interested. If the group is large, then it is possible to select about seven respondents from the larger group by use of a table of random numbers. (The use of this method, with a built-in provision to counteract the effect of absences, is described in Reference No. 10).

In administering the LBDQ, no mention should be made of the Initiating Structure and Consideration dimensions. The respondents should merely be told that they are to describe the approximate frequency with which the leader engages in each of the behaviors specified in the questionnaire items. If questions arise, simply instruct the respondent to "make the best estimate possible." Urge, however, that every item be answered.

Interpretation of Scores

When each LBDQ answer sheet has been scored on each of the two dimensions, and the scores secured from the several respondents have been averaged separately by dimension, then

the two average scores may be designated as the leader's Initiating Structure and Consideration index scores. Each index score should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

How may these Initiating Structure and Consideration scores be interpreted? Preferably, the members of a given sample of leaders should be evaluated in respect to their relative position on each dimension, as compared with other members of that same sample. At present we do not have LBDQ data available on many different types of leaders. What data we have should therefore not be construed as norms, in the strict sense of the term. But in order to provide some basis for interpreting LBDQ scores, we may refer to data secured from three independent samples of leaders.

Sample I consisted of 251 B-29 and B-50 aircraft commanders (AC's), each of whom was described by an average of 8 crew members. In no instance were there less than 4 or more than 10 respondents descriptions.

Sample II was composed of 144 RB-47 aircraft commanders (AC's) each of whom was described by his 2 fellow crew men.

Sample III comprised 64 educational administrators (EA's) of Ohio public schools. The majority of this sample are school superintendents, each of whom was described b 7 staff members.

The means, standard deviations, and quartile points, for these three samples are given in Table 1 for Initiating Structure; and in Table 2, for Consideration. Because the three samples are not directly comparable, no attempt has been made to consolidate the data across samples. Although these data are not sufficient to serve as norms, they may be used s a rough guide for interpreting LBDQ scores.

Items in the Consideration Scale

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Item</u>
1	He does personal favors for group members.
3	He does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the group.
6	He is easy to understand.
8	He finds time to listen to group members.
12	He keeps to himself. *
13	He looks out for the personal welfare of individual group members.
18	He refuses to explain his actions. *
20	He acts without consulting the group. *
21	He backs up the members in their actions.
23	He treats all group members as his equals.
26	He is willing to make changes.
28	He is friendly and approachable.
31	He makes group members feel at ease when talking with them.
34	He puts suggestions made by the group into operation.
38	He gets group approval on important matters before going ahead.

Items 5, 10, 15, 19, 25, 30, 33, 36, 37 and 40 are not scored on either dimension.

* These items are scored in reverse.

SCORING KEY FOR CONSIDERATION

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Always</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>
1	4	3	2	1	0
3	4	3	2	1	0
6	4	3	2	1	0
8	4	3	2	1	0
12	0	1	2	3	4
13	4	3	2	1	0
18	0	1	2	3	4
20	0	1	2	3	4
21	4	3	2	1	0
23	4	3	2	1	0
26	4	3	2	1	0
28	4	3	2	1	0
31	4	3	2	1	0
34	4	3	2	1	0
38	4	3	2	1	0

Items in the Initiating Structure Scale

<u>Item No</u>	<u>Item</u>
2.	He makes his attitudes clear to the group
4.	He tries out his new ideas with the group.
7.	He rules with an iron hand.
9.	He criticizes poor work.
11.	He speaks in a manner not to be questioned.
14.	He assigns group members to particular tasks.
16.	He schedules the work to be done.
17.	He maintains definite standards of performance.
22.	He emphasizes the meeting of deadlines
24.	He encourages the use of uniform procedures.
27.	He makes sure that is part in the organization is understood by all group members.
29.	He asks that group members follow standard rules and regulations.
32.	He lets group members know what is expected of them.
35.	He sees to it that group members are working up to capacity.
39.	He sees to it that the work of group members is coordinated.

SCORING KEY FOR INITIATING STRUCTURE

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Always</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Never</u>
2	4	3	2	1	0
4	4	3	2	1	0
7	4	3	2	1	0
9	4	3	2	1	0
11	4	3	2	1	0
14	4	3	2	1	0
16	4	3	2	1	0
17	4	3	2	1	0
22	4	3	2	1	0
24	4	3	2	1	0
27	4	3	2	1	0
29	4	3	2	1	0
32	4	3	2	1	0
35	4	3	2	1	0
39	4	3	2	1	0

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Q₃, Q₂, and Q₁ for Initiating Structure
Index Scores for Three Samples of Leaders

	Sample I (251 B-29 & B-50 AC's)	Sample II (144 RB-47 AC's)	Sample III (64 Educational Administrators)
Q ₃	45*	44	41
Q ₂	42	41	39
Q ₁	39	36	35
Mean	41.6	40.3	37.9
O	4.5	6.1	4.4

*Quartile points rounded to nearest integer.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Q₃, Q₂, and Q₁ for Consideration Index
Index Scores for Three Samples of Leaders

	Sample I (251 B-29 & B-50 AC's)	Sample II (144 RB-47 AC's)	Sample III (64 Educational Administrators)
Q ₃	46*	51	49
Q ₂	42	48	46
Q ₁	37	40	42
Mean	41.4	44.8	44.7
O	7.3	8.7	6.0

*Quartile points rounded to nearest integer.

REFERENCES

1. Christner, Charlotte A. & Hemphill, J.K. Leader Behavior of B-29 commanders and changes in crew members' attitudes towards the crew. Sociometry, 1955, 18, 82-87
2. Fleishman, E.A. "Leadership climate" and supervisory behavior: A study of the leadership role of the foreman in an industrial situation. Columbus, Ohio.
3. Fleishman, E.A. The description of supervisory behavior. J. applied psychology. 1953, 37, 1-6.
4. Fleishman, E.A. The measurement of leadership attitudes in industry, J. applied psychology. 1953, 37, 153-158.
5. Fleishman, E.A., Harris, E.F., & Burt, H. E. Leadership and Supervision In Industry. Columbus: The Ohio State University, Bureau of Educational Research Monograph No. 33, 1956.
6. Halprin, A.W. Studies in aircrew composition III. The combat leader behavior of B-29 aircraft commanders. Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. Human Factors Operations Research Laboratory, September 1953. (HFORL Momo No. TN-54-7)
7. Halprin, A.W. The leadership behavior and combat performance of airplane commanders. J. abnorm. & Soc. Psychol., 1954, 49, 19-22.
8. Halprin, A.W. The leader behavior and leadership ideology of education administrators and aircraft commanders. Harvard Educ. Rev., 1955.
9. Halprin, A.W. The leadership ideology of aircraft commanders. J. applied psychology, 1955, 39, 82-84.
10. Halprin, A.W. The leadership behavior of school superintendents: A study of 50 Ohio superintendents. Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Press, School-Community Development Study Monograph (in press).
11. Halprin, A.W. & Winer, B.J. The leadership behavior of the airplane commander. Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1952 (Technical Report III prepared for Human Resources Research Laboratory, Dept. of the Air Force, under contracts AF 33(038) – 10105 & AF 18(600)-27 mimeographed.
12. Hemphill, J.K. Patterns of leadership behavior associated with administrative reputation of the department of a college. J. Educ. Psychol. (in press).
13. Rush, C.H., Jr. Group dimensions of aircrews. Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio State University Research Foundation, 1953 ((Out of Print)).
14. Stogdill, Ralph M. & Coons, Alvin E., Editors. Leader Behavior: Its Description and Measurement. Columbus: The Ohio State University, Bureau of Business Research Monograph No. 88, 1957.