FIRO Business™ Leadership Report

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Report prepared for

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INTRODUCTION

Working in an organization means working with other people. The effectiveness with which you interact with and relate to many different kinds of people plays a large part in your ability to be successful at work. The purpose of this report is to demonstrate how your results from the FIRO Business™ assessment can help you understand your interpersonal needs and how your needs affect how you interact with others in your organization. Information from the FIRO Business tool can help you maximize the impact of your actions and behavior, identify options for increasing your job satisfaction and productivity, and explore alternative ways to achieve your goals.

As you read through this report, keep in mind that all instruments have limitations. The FIRO Business assessment provides information on your fundamental interpersonal relations orientation. The instrument is not a comprehensive personality assessment but rather focuses on how you are oriented to interpersonal relations. The FIRO Business assessment is a measure of interpersonal needs in the areas of involvement, direction, and personal connection. It is not a test of abilities, career interests, or success.

This report is presented in five sections as shown in the chart below. It demonstrates how your FIRO Business results can be applied to understanding and improving how you relate to your co-workers, manager, and direct reports, and sheds insight on your approach to influence, decision making, and stress.

How Your FIRO Business Interpretive Report Is Organized

• Relating to Your Co-Workers

• Relating to Your Manager

• Relating to Your Direct Reports

• Influencing and Negotiating with Others

• Making Decisions and Setting Priorities

RELATING TO YOUR CO-WORKERS

One of the important dimensions of being a leader is "leading across," or managing your relationships with your co-workers. People have different levels of interest in interacting with co-workers on a daily basis. This level of interest determines how much time is actually spent interacting. The level of interest you have in spending time with others is shown in the chart below. Your result based on responses to the FIRO Business assessment is shown in bold.

INTEREST LEVELS IN RELATING TO CO-WORKERS

Likely to spend the most of your time and energy working independently on your own projects rather than interacting with co-workers

Likely to spend a majority of your time and energy working independently on your own projects rather than interacting with co-worker

Likely to spend the majority of your time interacting with co-workers rather than working independently on your own projects

Likely to spend most of your time interacting with co-workers rather than working independently on your own projects

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Your Strengths in Relating with Co-workers

Based on your responses, your results show that you have some interest in spending time and energy relating to co-workers. You are therefore typically likely to spend somewhere between a quarter to half of your time interacting with others. This suggests that:

• Although you can be a team player when necessary, you may see yourself more as an individual contributor who adds value by the work you do on your own.

• You are likely to ask a lot of questions so that you know what you are committing to before jumping into a joint project or before joining a team.

• When people get too chatty or want to interact too much, you try to find ways to pull back and get some private time so that you can get some "real" work done.

• Although you prefer to work alone much of the time, you will welcome certain assignments that give you a chance to work with selected others, particularly if the interactions will be with smaller groups.

• You try to limit contributions in public situations (e.g., open meetings, staff meetings, team projects) to topics that relate directly to you or your acknowledged expertise.

• You tend to be a private person, except perhaps for a very small number of people who you've come to trust and whose opinions you value.

• When thrown into public situations, you are not known for "shooting off your mouth" or saying too much unless you are under a lot of stress.

Possible Challenges of Your Approach

- Your approach may be seen by others as skepticism or mistrust of them.

- You may find that people are not available or willing to support you when you need to get people engaged in something you are doing.

- You may not have a critical mass of people who know about you or your project when action is needed or when recognition is desired.

- If your organization emphasizes teamwork or collaboration, you may not be seen as a team player.

- You may get frustrated with all of the interaction and allow yourself to build up resentment against your co-workers.

Developmental Stretches

- Consider that social relations are a type of "bank account" and that you may need to interact a bit more in order to have a healthy "balance" to draw upon later.

- Volunteer for short-term projects that require you to gather or share information with a broad base of people. While this is not your natural strength, doing this occasionally will give you some interpersonal "bank deposits" that you might need at a later point in time.

- Think strategically about how you can demonstrate to others that you are cooperative and a team player, while also remaining true to your own style as an individual contributor. For example, volunteer for problem-solving groups but make sure to document your efforts and successes on such teams.

- When joining a team be sure to clarify your role and responsibilities so that it will be clear when and how much you are expected to contribute.

- If you work with a particularly social group of colleagues, set up your workspace and workday so that you have sufficient quiet time for thinking. Make it clear when you need privacy to return calls or emails or just to think and write. It will help to do these at regular times so that your colleagues will come to expect it.

- Consider talking with your manager about working off-site and telecommuting, either on a regular or ad hoc basis when you need it. Although you may not be able to do this regularly, just knowing that you'll have that time will be very important for your focus and creativity.

- Learn how to better manage or facilitate meetings so that they are more efficient and effective for you (and for others). Become skilled at effective meeting management and effective group facilitation techniques.

RELATING TO YOUR MANAGER

One of the important dimensions of being a leader is "leading up," that is, managing your relationship with your manager. However, different people like to work for people with different kinds of characteristics. Three different managerial styles are described in the chart below. The characteristics most important to you in a manager are shown in bold.

MANAGERIAL STYLES

Involves and brings people together, and makes you feel a part of it all

Provides direction and focuses on goals and tasks

Encourages, supports, and shows a personal interest in you

Your results suggest that you prefer a manager who sets a direction and provides a clear set of expectations, roles and responsibilities. What is least important to you in a manager is someone who strives to develop a close one-to-one relationship with you; likewise, you don't expect your manager to be your only source for mentoring, coaching and development.

Your Best Performance is Stimulated by a Manager who

- Clearly identifies problems and gets you working with others to solve them.

- Breaks down your role and responsibilities in relationship to others.

- Allows you and others opportunities to participate while also maintaining critical momentum.

- Makes priorities clear, delegates authority and resources but also stays engaged with the project.

- Challenges you to reach stretch goals and provides access to others who can help.

- Brokers visibility for you with other decision-makers and influencers.

- Builds alignment through involvement, engagement and clarity about goals.

- "Runs interference" by working through differences or potential conflicts in a public, transparent way.

- Outlines processes and procedures so that everyone knows what is fair, appropriate and within correct limits.

- Networks outside your area to bring in the right ideas and people as needed to achieve projects, objectives and goals.

Possible Challenges of Your Preferences

Without knowing more about your manager, it is difficult to predict precisely how your relationship will unfold. However, given what you want from a manager, and unless he or she already meets your ideal definition, here are some issues that are likely to surface:

- You may want your manager to be more directive and provide more structure than he or she is comfortable with.

- You may ask too many questions and check-in too often to see whether you are on track.

- You may seem to focus too much on obstacles, barriers, and potential problems.

- You may request information that he/she believes is not appropriate to share.

- You may lose your motivation too quickly if your manager does not involve you in something and does not explain why.

- You may resist your manager's attempts to get to know you personally.

Developmental Stretches

- Take the initiative to identify other tasks that could improve a project; go beyond what your manager has asked for.

- Take the initiative to identify opportunities and to provide solutions, not just problems or barriers.

- When faced with a barrier, try to overcome it yourself or with the help of colleagues, without always a problem and then report on the results.

- Avoid the temptation to bring your manager into your work. He or she may only need you to solve and how much you are expected to contribute.

- Identify colleagues who are experts or highly knowledgeable in particular areas who might be able to answer some of your questions.

- Don't wait for your manager to connect you with other people who can help with your project— take the initiative to find others whom you need to engage and let your manager know that you are doing so.

RELATING TO YOUR DIRECT REPORTS

Another important dimension of being a leader is "leading down", that is, managing your relationship with people who report to you. People have different preferences for how much they like to be in charge of others. See the chart below for how this breaks out, with your result highlighted in bold.

ORIENTATION TO DIRECTING OTHERS

Likely to prefer working on your own projects rather than managing others

Largely depends on the situation and what is expected of you

Likely to enjoy managing and directing others

Your Approach to Leadership

Managers and leaders feel like they are *supposed* to be in charge 100% of the time. Your results indicate that you like to assume leadership or management responsibilities over others just some of the time. So for you, this expectation may feel like a pressure rather than a welcomed burden. This doesn't mean you won't be an effective leader, it just indicates that you don't always need to be in charge; you can find ways to fulfill your responsibilities without having to be an ever-present dominant force. You may be more comfortable exercising your leadership by:

• Only speaking up when it relates to your duties or area of expertise

• Providing new ideas or proposals, especially in writing

• Asking others to set the agenda or take the lead on a particular discussion

• Regularly delegating authority to direct reports so that you don't have to be responsible for continually moving things along

• Making roles and responsibilities clear with your direct reports and then encouraging them to take initiative and follow-through on projects

• Picking favorite projects to work on while letting others assume responsibility for projects that you are not as interested in

• Setting broad but firm limits within which people can be free to do what they think is best

• Leaving room for sudden changes and the need for others to adapt as needed

• You are more likely to exhibit strong visible leadership when you need to be a representative of others' points of view

Possible Challenges of Your Approach

- Your role or title may lead others to see you as the "point" person and want and expect you to take visible command of an issue, decision, project or initiative

- During crises or high demand periods you may not seem to be on top of every detail

- Direct reports may not be ready to take the level of responsibility you want them to have

- You may seem parochial—only speaking up and "pushing" on an issue when it has a direct relationship to one of your favorite projects or to something in your area

- Direct reports may not understand your limits or why you seem to "suddenly" get involved

- You may be unwilling to voice your separate, individual perspective, so others may assume that you are in agreement with positions that you may advance on behalf of others

Developmental Stretches

- Identify what mission-critical duties will require your constant involvement, particularly when higher levels of management are worried about falling short of goals and targets

- Provide "presence" or symbolic involvement on special projects that are important to others

- Noticeably speak up on a range of issues (even if only to ask questions), particularly those in areas that seem a bit distant from your everyday duties and known area of expertise

- Stay visibly engaged with discussions even when they don't seem to be headed in a productive direction; if things seem off course, propose that everyone take a break or that the discussion be finished at a later time (rather than "checking out" or excusing yourself from the conversation)

- Be more transparent about your limits, when you need to be kept informed and when you are likely to get back involved with something you have delegated

- Explain to others why you may suddenly become silent or appear to withdraw from a conversation after having been more active at an earlier point

- Learn to advance your own, different position while also standing in support of those you represent

- Be careful not to over-estimate the extent of unity present in a group that you are representing and do not make personal promises dependent on their ongoing consensus

INFLUENCING AND NEGOTIATING WITH OTHERS

Working with others often involves trying to influence them or negotiate with them. There are three tactics that you can use to attempt to influence others. If the first strategy doesn't work, people often have a back-up approach. And there are also approaches to influence that you may just prefer not to use. The three basic tactics for influencing others, along with your results, are shown in the chart below.

INFLUENCE AND NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES

Identifying common goals and appealing to common interests	→	**your primary strategy**
Relying on formal authority and attempting to legitimize your position	→	your back-up strategy
Empathizing with the position of others and understanding their personal motive	→	your strategy of last resort

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Your Approach to Influence and Negotiation

Your results suggest that the first strategy you will likely use to influence others is trying to engage the other person in finding some common ground—a sense of the bigger goal or objective that you can both agree upon, despite your differences. You will try to put the negotiation into a larger context that is big enough to encompass both of your positions. Your back-up strategy will be to use a more power-based approach. This may involve making an "executive decision," appealing to higher authorities, asserting what you can and cannot do, standing firm on a decision only you can make, pulling rank, or using formal laws, rules or standards. You are least likely to attempt to influence others by making a personal connection, show that you deeply understand and can empathize with their position, and offer to make concessions in order to increase good feelings between you and the other party. Advantages of your approach are as follows.

• You can get people more focused on the larger goal and less focused on specific positions, requests and demands that they then have to defend.

• You suggest early in the negotiations that win-win solutions are possible. You help others feel that you are all "on the same side of the table" or "in the same boat."

• You begin by trying to get all the information on the table and getting everyone involved who needs to be engaged.

• You provide a fair, balanced process so that everyone has an opportunity to express his or her point of view and feel heard.

• However, given that your follow-up strategy is to claim formal authority, you are careful not to over-step your bounds early on and not give up any discretion that you might need later.

Possible Challenges of Your Approach

- It takes time to get all the information out in the open; you may not have time for this if the situation is urgent.

- You may not have a sufficient level of trust or legitimacy with the other side to establish an equal playing field.

- You may share information too quickly in the interest of finding some common ground.

- Others may feel co-opted by the process of participation and engagement and not feel that the content of their position is truly understood and validated.

- Where good data and clear standards are lacking, it may be very hard to agree on the facts of the situation.

- You may find it difficult to fall back on formal authority after having first established a level playing field; others may see this as heavy-handed and as a kind of "bait and switch" tactic that could greatly reduce trust.

- Since you don't start by trying to make a personal connection, others may feel you don't have their individual best interests at heart. If there has been a history of mistrust or when others are not confident about what they want, they will need more time to get a sense of your values and motives before wanting to be influenced.

- The lack of individual personal connections may cause others (often incorrectly) to doubt your sincerity or loyalty.

Developmental Stretches

- Try to get early agreement on the process for the negotiations.

- Be sure to get all the facts out and hear both sides before you begin selling the other side on common interests.

- Outside of the negotiations, try out your reasoning and share your ideas with some very carefully selected confidants who can help you test your assumptions.

- Avoid using formal authority as a fall back position until you are sure that you have exhausted all of the possibilities to establish common ground.

- If tensions are high and trust is low, consider involving someone allied with you who can lead with a more personal, empathic approach.

MAKING DECISIONS AND SETTING PRIORITIES

Another aspect of leadership is making decisions and setting priorities. There are generally three methods that you can use to make decisions as outlined in the chart that follows. Your results are delineated.

DECISION-MAKING METHODS

Striving for common understanding and consensus

Pushing for closure, consistency, and follow-through

Promoting candor, openness, and depth of commitment

Your Approach to Decision Making

While you do not cast a wide net or engage a lot of other people in your decision making, your results suggest that you do have a small selective group of people who you engage when making a decision or solving a problem. Among that group of individuals, or when faced with the need to guide a decision-making process within a larger group, you are most likely approach routine decisions by openly sharing data and information, working through barriers to consensus and building common understanding. Alternatively, you will approach new and unfamiliar decisions by increasing individual consultation, strengthening others to handle the situation through coaching and development and devoting intense personal commitment to working through the decision. The advantages of your decision-making approach are:

- Flexibility to change your decision-making approach - group collaboration when situations are routine and intense individual support and consultation when situations are non-routine

- Engaging others and bringing them into decisions with the expectation that they will support and encourage each other

- Building buy-in before a decision is final and relying on loyalty and mutual commitment for implementation

- Creating an understanding of how different parts impact the whole so that people can be more sensitive to their impact on others

- Producing a sense of shared burden and reciprocal trust during challenging times

- Bringing people together so that they can cope together and provide mutual assistance

Possible Challenges of Your Decision-Making Approach

- People can become overwhelmed with all of the information and with the different ways that it can be interpreted.

- Building consensus takes time and such "process costs" can leave many issues unresolved or poorly addressed through temporary solutions. Often, in the pursuit of consensus and integration, some decisions can be made that are not specific enough to guide others in concrete action. Instead, some may feel that past decisions are being re-opened and re-hashed.

- Some people desire a more structured and less ambiguous environment. They will look to you to be more authoritarian and to provide direction so that people can have a sense of progress and forward movement.

- Transparency can invite critique and dissent when exceptions have to be made. Leaders can invest much time into explaining and defending decisions.

- Some of the reasons for decisions and inequities may not be appropriate to share publicly, particularly if they are related to personnel actions, health-related restrictions, proprietary processes, or other matters.

- Placing a lower priority on building loyalty and talent may lead to an underdeveloped workforce and a workforce unwilling to go the extra mile when needed.

- Without spending some time surfacing personal needs and concerns, workplaces can suffer from lack of follow-through or poor levels of compliance to decisions and new procedures.

Developmental Stretches

- Be sure that you are not striving for 100% agreement in favor of a decision when only consensus is needed (i.e., no one will actively block the decision). Develop rules for decision making that make it clear when people are disagreeing but will not block their support for a particular course of action.

- Get expert help in minimizing the process costs associated with achieving greater understanding and shared sense of direction. There is often a temptation to "struggle together" in this process while the hidden costs of time delays are rising. Outside process experts or trained group facilitators can help accelerate the pace and minimize those costs.

- Decide where transparency, fairness, and equity are most needed or will result in the most gains, rather than trying to use this process for all decisions.

- Rely on a trusted colleague or a second-in-command to help you regularly and systematically attend to the issues of commitment and talent development in your organization.

NEXT STEPS

There were many Developmental Stretches identified for you in this report. Don't be discouraged by this. Everyone who obtains this report receives approximately the same number. The list is different for everyone, however, because every person's interpersonal needs are different. To become more effective in organizations you need to understand how you interact with others.

Review the first three sections of your report that describe how you relate to your co-workers, manager, and direct reports.

- Identify which of these groups you *most* need or want to improve your working relationship with at this time. If all three are important, prioritize them. Your relationships with all three may be good, but there is probably room for improvement.

- In the section that is most important to you now, look over the Developmental Stretches. Don't try to do all of these at once. Prioritize the suggestions on this list. Pick ones that are the most important for you to develop and that you think you can and are willing to commit yourself to. You can go back and work on the others later.

- Make a plan for dealing with each of the suggestions that you have identified. What are the steps you will need to take to learn new behaviors? Draft an action plan for yourself and discuss it with someone who can give you feedback and/or encouragement.

- Another option is for you to identify someone whom you are interested in working better with. Ask them to take the FIRO Business assessment and then discuss your reports together and what each of you needs from the other to be more effective.

Go back over the next three sections of your report that describe how you influence others, make decisions, or approach leadership tasks.

- Identify which of these leadership skills you *most* need or want to improve. If all three are important, prioritize them. You may already have skills in each of these areas, but there is probably room for improvement.

- In the section that is most important to you now, look over the Developmental Stretches. Don't try to do all of these at once. Prioritize the suggestions on this list. Pick ones that are the most important for you to develop and that you think you can and are willing to commit yourself to. You can go back and work on the others later.

- Make a plan for dealing with each of the suggestions that you have identified. What are the steps you will need to take to learn new behaviors? It may help to put the plan to paper or to discuss it with someone.