

'BRIDGING THE GAP' IN LEADER SUCCESS

SODERQUIST RESEARCH NOTE

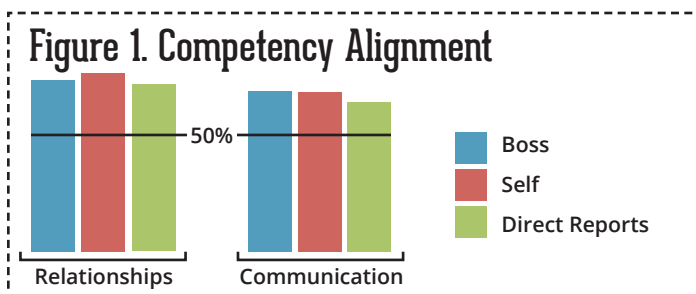
WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO LEAD SUCCESSFULLY?

Quite often, that depends on your position in the organization. The Soderquist Center helps answer that question by providing organizations, teams and individuals with values-based, impactful and actionable experiences and insights via programming and content. At the individual level, The Soderquist Center helps leaders identify specific strengths and development needs through personalized coaching of 360 degree assessment data from multiple feedback sources, including Bosses and Direct Reports.¹

TOP COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESS: Relationships & Communicating Effectively

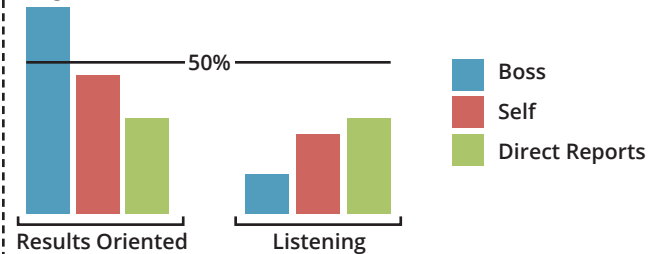
A comprehensive review of more than five years of Soderquist Center 360 degree assessment data found that Relationships and Communicating Effectively were collectively rated as the two most important competencies for organizational success.

Across groups of Self, Boss, and Direct Reports, the data show strong and consistent agreement on the importance of these competencies for leaders (Figure 1). This data alignment reinforces a common understanding of the central role leaders play connecting and engaging people throughout the organization.



However, the research also highlights two areas of substantial difference, or gaps, in competency ratings that have an important impact on leaders. The largest gaps in ratings between Boss and Direct Reports (Figure 2) are in Results Orientation and Listening.

Figure 2. Competency Gaps



With the leader in the middle of this key relationship, the gap highlights the common assumption that “where you sit in the organization determines how you stand.” In this case, the gap represents the classic dilemma of social versus task orientation. Bosses clearly expect leaders to value relationships AND deliver results, while Direct Reports express a substantial preference for relationships over results.

The second largest difference between the Boss and Direct Reports is in the role that listening plays in effective communication. Direct Reports appear to value the relational nature of communication, while the Boss values the role that communication plays in delivering results. Ultimately, leaders are expected to communicate effectively to motivate followers AND get the job done.

What does this mean for leaders and their development? Two things we know for sure: “perception is reality” and the most effective leaders build commitment and deliver results by understanding themselves, their relationships, and by engaging others to bridge the gaps in perceptions.

**More leadership development opportunities at:
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¹Center for Creative Leadership. 2013. 360 by Design®, “2007 – Present Soderquist Group Summary Report.” Greensboro, NC. N = 383 Leaders and 4390 Raters (Boss, Superiors, Peers, Direct Reports, Others).