

Article 1: Leadership

“A Model For Leadership Behavior”

Jonathan’s Morning



9:00 AM

Jonathan arrives at his office on the 26th floor headquarters of the multinational corporation where he works. He is a Director of Marketing. As he looks out his window, the morning is as foggy outside as it will seem inside to Jonathan as he goes about his day.



9:10 AM

Jonathan reads a terse e-mail that says, “Come see me. Ray.” That sends him down the hall to the Senior Marketing Vice President, his boss. Jonathan is a little puzzled, since he’s already scheduled to meet with Ray in a few minutes to discuss Jonathan’s proposal that their company become more involved in sports marketing, an area in which he feels they are missing out.

When he walks through the doorway, Ray holds up a piece of paper and booms, “What the hell is this?” As he recovers from this greeting, Jonathan realizes the document is a cost projection for a client’s marketing campaign. Ray wants an explanation for several items and drills Jonathan with pointed questions. Jonathan decides to do what he often does when Ray starts fuming about something: He tries to calm down Ray by being friendly and downplaying the problem. It seems to work, although Ray doesn’t express any regret for his initial, abrupt manner.

Ray is a marketing giant — smart, capable, hard-working, and successful. As a boss, Ray is also brash, egotistical, demanding, stubborn, and often sarcastic. Jonathan knows that Ray approves of the work he has been doing. However, Ray rarely compliments him for it. That’s what it has been like working with Ray for the past three years. Since Jonathan feels that life is about trade-offs, the price for having the job of his career is accommodating Ray’s leadership style. Jonathan doesn’t mind hiding his true feelings at times, but it does bother him that he seems to have so little influence with Ray. His ideas never get the hearing they deserve, and he’s not sure how to improve the situation.

This morning is a good example. As they move to the scheduled topic of sports marketing, Ray still seems agitated. As Jonathan outlines his ideas, Ray reacts to a point and starts giving his own, negative views on the subject. As Jonathan tries to wrestle the conversation back, he gets the helpless feeling that his opportunity to persuade is passing. Ray’s sweeping statements are sweeping Jonathan aside. Ray’s aggressive behavior makes Jonathan feel as though he’s a mere bystander. When he finally gets a chance to speak, Jonathan blurts out in frustration, “Do you really believe that we can hold our edge with the 18- to 29-year-old market segment when our competitors spend twice as much on sports?”

This only serves to anger Ray, who feels he’s just been asked, in effect, “Are you really that stupid?” Ray launches into a tirade. Jonathan can only wonder how his best intentions to get Ray at least to consider his ideas have turned into a complete rejection of his viewpoint. And he didn’t even get to develop one point in his favor. What happened?

Before he knows it, Jonathan is retreating from his boss’s office filled with negative emotions. It will be months before Jonathan can broach this topic again. He feels his company will, likewise, be months behind in a vital marketing area.





10:10 AM

Jonathan sits down, still bewildered by his inability to have much, if any, influence with his stubborn boss. He checks his desk calendar and is reminded of a meeting with Mary, his research assistant. Ah, yes, he is anxious to talk with her about implementing a new data-retrieval method he wants to test for possible use in his department.



10:30 AM

Mary arrives with media and marketing reports, takes a seat opposite Jonathan, and waits for him to speak. Mary has been with the firm longer than Jonathan, and he has never felt really comfortable interacting with her. She goes about her work methodically, but seems remote and uncommunicative. Jonathan doesn't know what she's thinking. She tends to shy away from getting deeply involved in a project. Jonathan hasn't figured out how to ignite her enthusiasm.

Today is no different. As Jonathan presents his ideas for data analysis, Mary seems to sink into her chair. She doesn't ask any questions. In fact, she doesn't say anything. Jonathan finds himself talking to fill the spaces, repeating his reasoning. She finally mentions that his approach has never been tried before in this company. Jonathan becomes annoyed and asks her, "What's wrong with that?" She turns silent again. Exasperated, Jonathan begins complaining that she is not helping him get this project rolling. He needs her cooperation. She becomes sullen and says in a low voice that she'll do whatever he wants.

Actually, what Jonathan wanted was for Mary to run with this project. He was hoping he could motivate her to apply her experience to make it thrive. Instead, it's like pulling teeth just to engage her in conversation. Jonathan finds himself raising his voice and lecturing her about how she needs to change her attitude and get on the team. In his heart, though, he knows that nothing he is saying right now will improve her contribution. She'll do enough to get by. Jonathan realizes that if he doesn't end this meeting, he'll just become louder and say something he'll regret. So, he quickly finishes up outlining the assignment. Mary slinks out of the room. What happened?





11:15 AM

Jonathan heads for the coffee machine to clear his mind, and sees people interacting. He wonders if they have the same problems he seems to have dealing with people.

He sees Adam, a division sales V.P. who is working with Jonathan on a joint marketing/sales project for a client, in an animated conversation with a group in the coffee area. Adam's a nice guy, but he has a hard time staying on track when working.

Jonathan wants to pull Adam aside and ask about progress on the project. After their last meeting, Adam's department was going to complete several tasks related to the project. Jonathan broaches the subject, but Adam steers the conversation to a somewhat vague comparison of this project to similar ones he's worked on in the past. All well and good, but the morning is slipping away, and Jonathan feels nothing has been accomplished so far. Finally, he simply cuts off Adam to ask a pointed question about the project. Adam looks somewhat hurt. He recovers his amiable manner and talks about the project, but still doesn't quite answer Jonathan's question.

Jonathan gets the sense that the tasks they agreed to have not been completed. Yet, Adam's behavior doesn't show much concern or urgency about it. Adam seems more interested in having a pleasant conversation than dealing with the issues. After Adam once again strays from the topic, Jonathan loses his patience. He demands to know the status of the project. Adam's demeanor changes. He tells Jonathan to take it easy as his smile fades. His face turning red, he explains to Jonathan that his department is very busy and hasn't had time to complete the tasks. As quickly as that, Jonathan feels he has raised a barrier between them. Adam's smile slowly returns, but he begs off further discussion. Jonathan is frustrated that he spoiled their conversation but wonders what he was supposed to do. Adam wasn't being responsive. What happened?





11:45 AM

Jonathan tries to understand his morning. His intentions had been good, but his attempts to have productive interactions with the people around him have failed. Jonathan hasn't accomplished much and can't understand why not. It's ironic, because Jonathan not only sees himself as getting along with people, he aspires to be an active leader in his company. But his goals seem unattainable if they depend on this kind of performance.

Leading by Understanding Behavior

While Jonathan's morning may be a concentrated version of reality, anyone can identify with his frustration. Often, leaders are not able to marshal the efforts of others as effectively as we would like. Yet, like Jonathan, we can't complete most of the assignments and projects we have all by ourselves. We must enlist others' help to accomplish the goals of our company. So, it's a given that we will be called on frequently to manage, direct, motivate, and even inspire others in order to succeed. In a practical sense, that's what leadership is about.

However, what if Jonathan spent more time observing and understanding the *behaviors* of the people with whom he interacts? And thinking more about his own behavior in response? If he knew that the effort would bring better results than he's been having, it would be well worth it. Best of all, he could draw on his own common sense and experience to understand his observations.

For instance, Jonathan can see that Ray's behavior is intimidating. Mary's is passive and appears distrustful. Adam's behavior is outgoing and friendly, but seems too eager to please and drifts from the task at hand. Yet, people aren't one-dimensional cartoon characters. Their behavior can change, and we can facilitate that change under the right circumstances. Jonathan focused on task but did little to respond effectively to people's behaviors to help achieve his goals. Is there a practical and efficient way he could have done this?



A Beneficial Tool

A helpful tool for analyzing the behaviors around us is the DIMENSIONAL[®] MODEL OF BEHAVIOR[™]. It's a convenient way to categorize certain aspects of behavior into logical categories. The better we understand behavior, the better we can respond to it in an effective way. Our model is "dimensional" because it is made up of two intersecting lines, or dimensions. The vertical line in Figure 1 represents a task continuum from Initiates to Avoids. The horizontal dimension describes relationships from Low Regard to High Regard. Together, these four dimensions are a foundation for sizing up the behavior of people we encounter:

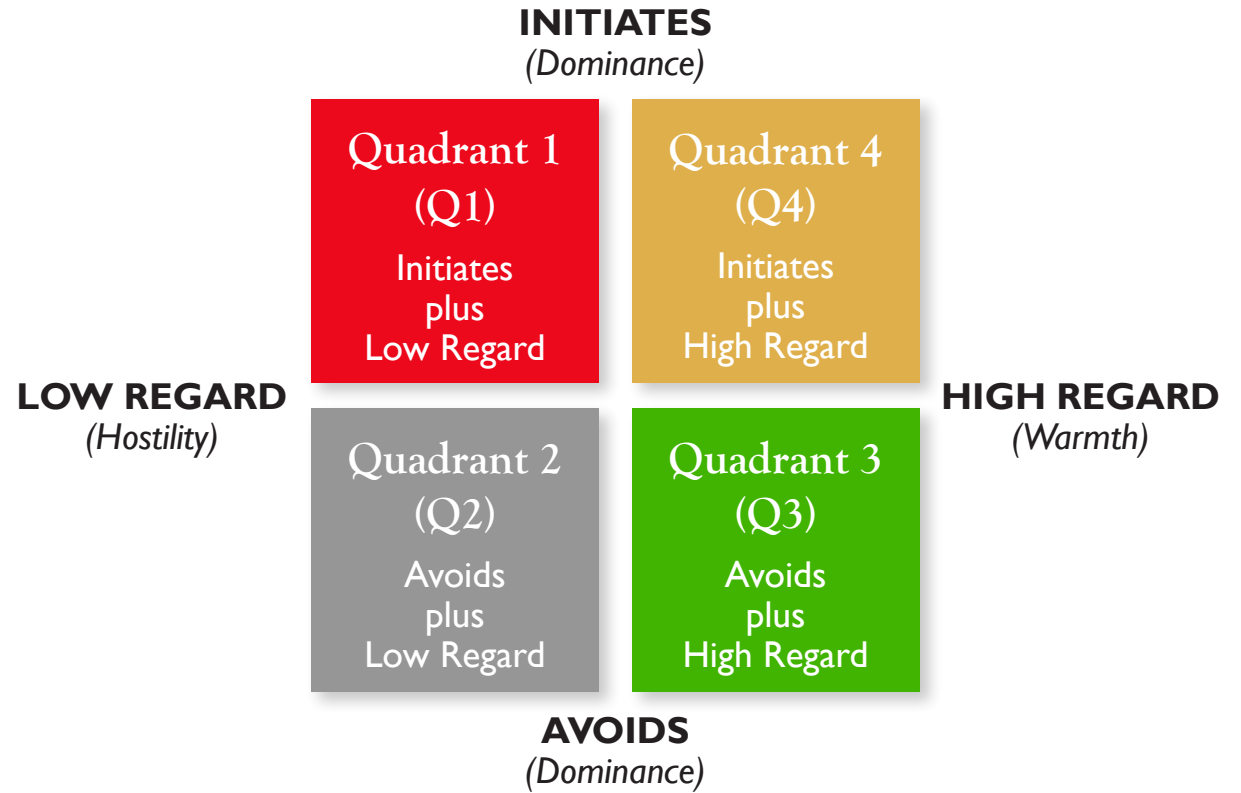


Figure 1

Initiates	Assertive	Making things happen by exercising control, taking charge.
Avoids	Passive	Letting things happen by giving in to people and not attempting to influence.
Low Regard	Unresponsive	Being insensitive to other people and their needs, feelings, and ideas.
High Regard	Responsive	Being sensitive to others and their needs, characterized by openness and a high regard for others' feelings and ideas.

Jonathan could certainly recognize elements of these basic behaviors in the people he works with. Of course, we can observe and evaluate anyone's behavior along these two dimensions. However, people are more complex than that. So, we combine the two dimensions into a matrix, as shown in Figure 2.

At any given time, we can view behavior as falling within one of the four quadrants. We give each quadrant (Q) a number to indicate four basic behavior patterns: Q1 — Initiates-Low Regard, Q2 — Avoids-Low Regard, Q3 — Avoids-High Regard, Q4 — Initiates-High Regard. Based on these categories, how were Ray, Mary, and Adam behaving while meeting with Jonathan? What about Jonathan?

Before you answer, here is more detail about the characteristics of the DIMENSIONAL behaviors.

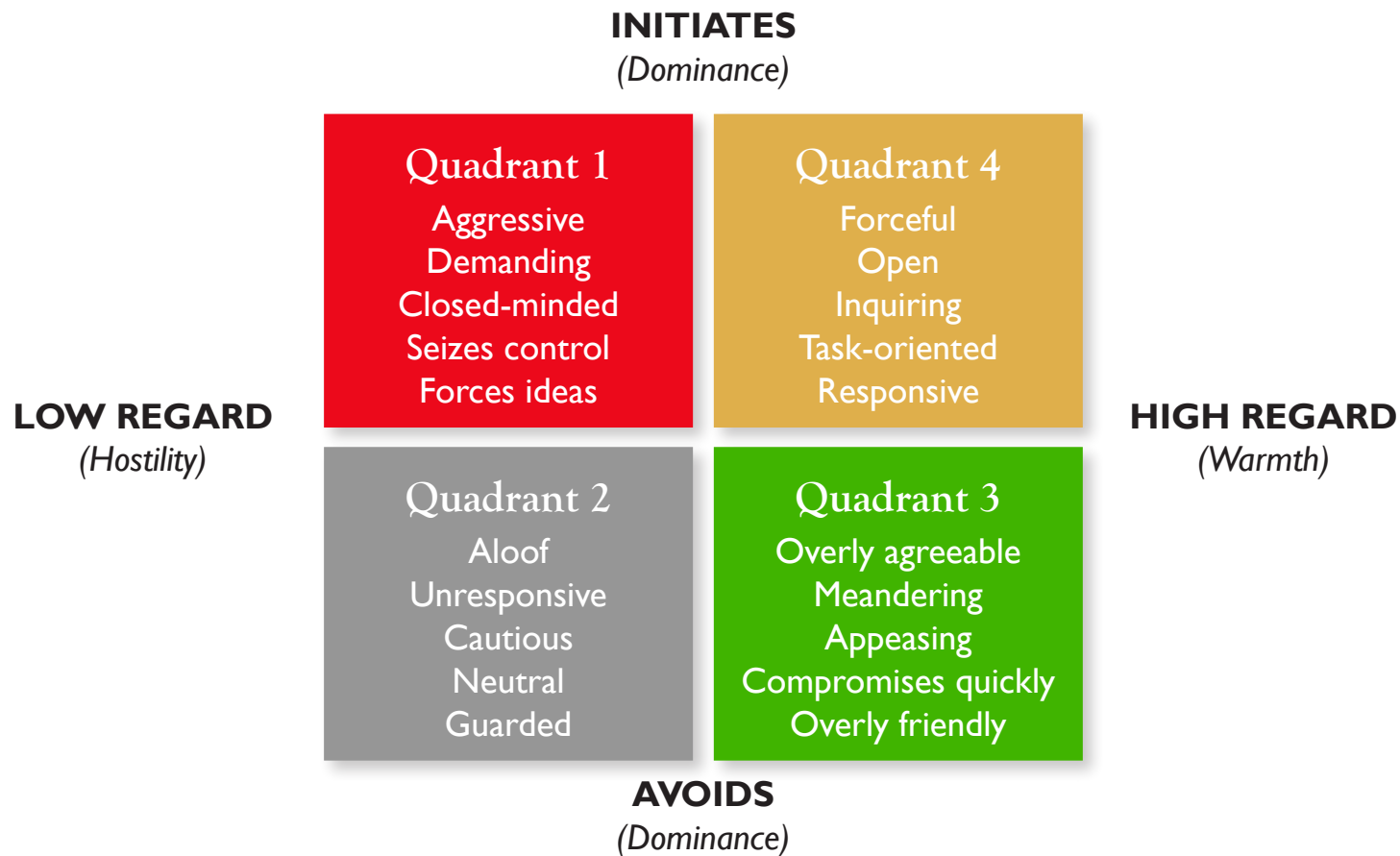


Figure 2

Q1 Initiates/Low Regard

Typical Q1 behavior is domineering and insensitive to others. Getting results comes first. Intimidation and pressure are used to win out. This behavior makes decisions with little regard for what others think or want to do. Communication is one-way, and Q1 typically likes going it alone. This behavior blames but seldom praises others.

Q4 Initiates/High Regard

Q4 behavior is self-assured and gets results while being responsive to others. This behavior is energized to make things happen. It involves others, tries to enable and even challenges people to be their best and fulfill their potential. Q4 motivates by showing benefits and giving honest feedback. Someone with Q4 behavior is open to disagreement as a way of finding a better solution.

Q2 Avoids/Low Regard

This behavior pattern is typically reluctant and unresponsive, opting for the predictable way to do things over the untried. Q2 postpones risky decisions, stays out of the spotlight, and resists change. The philosopher Jean Paul Sartre wrote, "Hell is other people." Q2 behavior seems to reflect this idea, being pessimistic about human nature and reluctant to deal with others.

Q3 Avoids/High Regard

Passive, easygoing Q3 behavior makes few demands. Expecting too much of others can lead to stress in relationships, something to be avoided. A person displaying Q3 behavior wants to be friends and will often be overly sociable. Praise and compliments are much more likely than criticism or disapproval. Q3 behavior also tends to be loose and unstructured.



Sizing Up the Behaviors Around You

From these descriptions, we can say that Ray was exhibiting almost all Q1 behavior. You undoubtedly have witnessed this behavior, often demonstrated by people in authority.

By contrast, Mary showed basically Q2 behavior; she is unresponsive and doesn't commit to Jonathan's plan. In fact, her Q2 behavior becomes more extreme as the conversation goes on. What is it about the meeting that might account for this?

Adam's behavior is mostly Q3. He is outgoing, expansive, and finds it difficult to stay on task. However, when pushed by Jonathan, he loses some of his Q3 qualities, exhibiting more of a Q1 response when pinned down about his department's results. His Q3 demeanor returns before their conversation is ended.

What about Jonathan? Let's assume that Jonathan starts off with a basic Q4 outlook. He is naturally open and wants to take a positive approach with people. He's also intent on asserting himself to get things done. However, he could be much more responsive to the behavior of others, which is a trait of Q4 behavior at its best.

Primary, Secondary, and Mask Behavior

When Jonathan is first exposed to his boss's dominant behavior, Jonathan responds in a Q3 manner, trying to smooth things over. Then, he flashes a Q1 reaction and withdraws from the discussion in a passive, Q2 way. He certainly behaves that way more with his boss than he does later with others. This is a common and often common-sense change we all frequently make under similar circumstances. Why?

Each of us has a way we behave most of the time. This is called our *primary* behavior. It's habitual and the kind people expect to see in us most of the time. However, situations may arise for which we purposely choose to alter how we act. This is called *mask* behavior because we decide to hide our primary behavior in order to cope better with a specific circumstance. At first, Jonathan acted in a Q3 way to Ray's onslaught. He wasn't really feeling all that friendly, but he masked his true feelings, calculating that at that moment, changing his behavior would serve him better.

During the discussion, Jonathan becomes frustrated and then even angered by his boss's harangue. When his emotions overtake him, Jonathan has a Q1 outburst that only serves to ratchet up Ray's Q1 behavior. This is a shift to what is called *secondary* behavior. It's how we act when we become sufficiently frustrated. Since it is a reaction to a temporary situation, most of us shift back to our "normal" or primary behavior quickly when the special circumstances end. Were there any other examples of secondary behavior that morning?

Since the meeting deteriorates, Jonathan's behavior has not served him well. He has neither managed his boss's behavior nor his own. More important, he has not accomplished his goal.

Mary's primary behavior at work appears to be Q2. She does her job, but doesn't take any risks. Q2 behavior wouldn't want to embrace change when predictability is a much safer alternative. Consequently, Mary does not respond well to Jonathan's enthusiasm about a new way of retrieving data. Perhaps, if Jonathan were better at assessing behav-

ior, he would see that Mary is not the best candidate for this project. However, if she is the most qualified to take it on, how might he have changed his approach to make the project more inviting and less threatening?

Caution: Behavior Is Not Personality

It's important to remember that the MODEL describes behavior, not personality. Your personality is *who you are* — that unique mixture of heredity, environment, experiences, and values. Your behavior is simply *what you do* — what people can see and hear. Behavior can shift from one quadrant to another very quickly even though no personality change takes place. An individual might display all four behaviors in a single meeting but is still the same person.

We can say for certain that Jonathan's behavior only serves to make Mary behave in a more Q2 manner. Also, rather than changing Mary's behavior in the way he wanted, her behavior changes Jonathan's. He becomes frustrated, reverting to a Q1 secondary behavior that threatens her. No wonder she seems to shrink. Her own worst Q2 fears seem to be playing out right before her eyes. Whatever opportunity Jonathan had for gaining her support will probably not be realized.

In a similar fashion, Jonathan's handling of Adam's Q3 behavior pushes Adam into a momentary Q1 response. While it's true Adam's behavior wasn't productive and frustrated Jonathan into his own Q1 response, it won't help further Jonathan's goals to push Adam into behaving in a Q1 or even Q2 manner.

Behavior Changes Behavior

Jonathan's experience is an example of a well-established principle: Our own behavior has an effect on the people around us and often changes theirs. What you may not realize is that the change takes place in fairly predictable ways. In terms of DIMENSIONAL behavior, let's examine how behaving a certain way affects the people around us:

Q1 Behavior. Jonathan could probably threaten and bully Mary, or even Adam, into getting things done. They would give in, retreating into Q2 or Q3 behavior. But what would the cost be over time? Compliance is not commitment. Jonathan wouldn't be leading them to do great things. He would be dragging them to some mandatory level of performance. Of course, with his boss, Jonathan tries to respond in an equally Q1 manner. When the two simply lock horns, Q1 hostility spirals upward, while the productivity of their encounter plummets.

Q2 Behavior. Jonathan could expect one of two reactions if his behavior were primarily Q2:

1. If other people tend toward Q1 behavior, they may test the situation and start taking control. Just imagine if Jonathan's boss, Ray, were working for Mary.
2. Some people may withdraw, mirroring the Q2 behavior. Thus, a lack of assertive leadership triggers similar behavior — not a crucible for productivity or growth for either the individuals or the organization.

Q3 Behavior. We don't know enough to be sure, but Adam's undemanding Q3 behavior could affect the people in his own department, who would then mirror the same undemanding behavior. This can create congenial but unproductive relationships. There's also the chance that another person will respond in a Q1 manner and try to take advantage of Q3 submission.

Q4 Behavior. Q4 behavior that is responsive, involves people, and encourages self-development — by being open, direct, analytical, and candid — can inspire the same kind of behavior in others. Over time, Q4 can bring out the best in others, who themselves become more Q4 in their style.



The Rewards of Q4 Leadership

We advocate Q4 behavior as your best opportunity to accomplish your organization's business goals because you are enlisting the energy and enthusiasm of your greatest resource — your people. Once you begin thinking about the behavior of others (and your own) in terms of the DIMENSIONAL MODEL, you begin to realize just how much power you have to influence others. This is not speculation. We have monitored and tested it in countless business situations.

How could Jonathan have gotten better results by considering the *people* he was dealing with as much as the agenda he was pursuing? As you become more familiar with DIMENSIONAL behavior, you will learn the tools and strategies that make Q4 people skills effective in virtually any situation.

Let's look briefly at how Jonathan could have gotten off to a better start:

Meeting With Ray: Jonathan recognizes that Ray has a lot of negative feelings about sports marketing. He must deal with that first. So, Jonathan first tries to give vent to these emotions — letting Ray express his feelings in order to make him more receptive to giving Jonathan's views a fair hearing. In addition, this acknowledgment will cater to Ray's Q1 need to be center stage.

Jonathan states a benefit to Ray for discussing the topic. He portrays sports marketing as a possible coup

for Ray's division, both within the company and in the business community. In showing Ray what Ray will gain from considering Jonathan's ideas, Jonathan now has a much better opportunity for his views to be considered.

Meeting With Mary: If Jonathan believes Mary is the most qualified person for implementing a new procedure, he must try to gain her commitment to it. He decides to be patient with her Q2 reluctance, and will meet with her several times just to get started. In their first meeting, he acknowledges her misgivings. He listens carefully and is respectful of her concerns and fears, making her more receptive to change. Jonathan also gives prior thought to other ways he might gain her trust. He explains the benefits *to her* of adopting the new procedure in order to counterbalance her uncertainties. Since this new system may eventually become the standard for the company, getting in on the ground floor and learning it well could actually be a form of job security for Mary. He will also explain the task carefully and provide her with the information she needs to get started, simply as a way for her to begin successfully. In responding to her concerns, he assures her that the responsibility for the new plan is his. This all takes more time at first,

but the advantage of having Mary committed to the project is a real plus and will give it a much better chance for success.

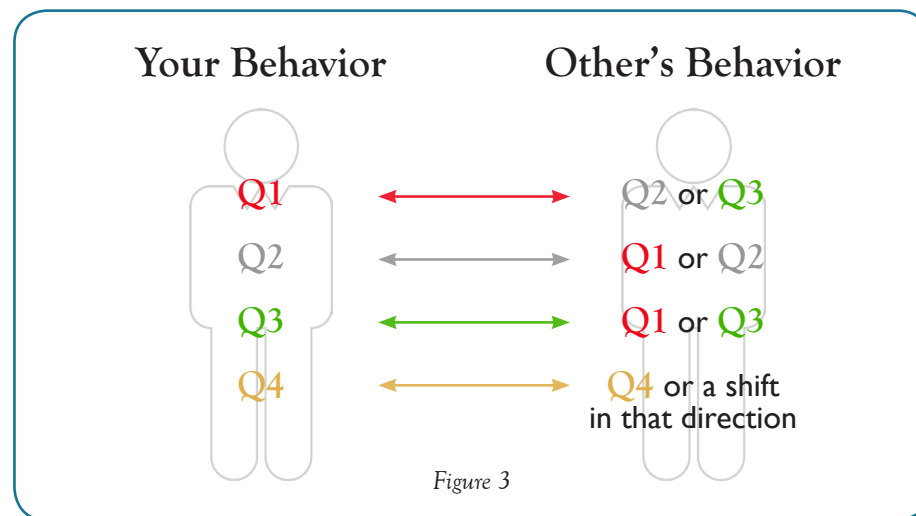


Figure 3

Meeting With Adam: Given Adam's Q3 tendencies to socialize, Jonathan realizes that the coffee area is not a good environment for conducting a business meeting. So, Jonathan arranges a meeting time with Adam and tells him the specific purpose of getting together — to check the progress of their joint project. While willing to socialize at the start of the meeting to make Adam feel comfortable, Jonathan will also structure it carefully to stay on track.

Ultimately, Adam must take responsibility for his lack of progress on the project. However, rather than dwelling on blame or reacting in a Q1 manner, Jonathan offers to help Adam overcome any impediments to accomplishing the tasks. He will appeal to Adam's desire to be accepted and avoid confrontation, pointing out how pleased others will be by Adam's contributions to the project. He finds another benefit by reminding Adam that embracing this project means Adam will be working with several researchers Adam knows quite well. He will check to be sure that Adam understands the benefits and consequences of his performance.

These people-oriented measures are more likely to get the results Jonathan desires. Behaving in a Q4 manner takes effort and can be challenging. But Q4 need not be accomplished all at once to get results. After all, we do not maintain the same, unswerving behavior all the time.

However, resolving to be *more* Q4 can reap enormous benefits. It puts you in the game and on top of it at the same time. Q4 not only offers insight into dealing with day-to-day interactions that are troublesome or frustrating, but being more Q4 also brings out the best in others and you as well. It's actually possible to develop and sharpen that supposedly indefinable "something" that we think of as effective leadership. Perhaps, that quality is not so indefinable after all.



Q4 Style in the Real World: A Study

The DIMENSIONAL MODEL is a scientifically verified means of categorizing behavior. Based on original research conducted in the 1940s and 1950s, its validity has been reinforced ever since in the business community, and it meets the test of common sense as well.

Q4 leadership is valued for its ability to obtain commitment and maintain it over an extended period of time. An in-depth study we conducted of business executives supports this. The data used to make this assessment came from numerous feedback documents of the people who interacted with each executive the most. They rated specific behaviors that make up leadership style: delegating, decision making, communicating, and feedback. The executives were also rated on their proficiency in management practices: controlling, leading, organizing, and planning.

The study found that a major factor for the executives' success was their leadership style of behavior. The people these executives answered to made it clear that they preferred that the executives emphasize productivity, either Q1 or Q4 (above the horizontal line of the MODEL). However, when indicating the type of leader they found most effective, participants giving feedback chose the Q4 collaborative style of leadership overwhelmingly over the Q1 style.

Significantly, despite having a bias toward productivity, the majority of the executives in the study — all of whose careers had stalled due to subpar performance — practiced Q1 autocratic leadership behavior instead of Q4. This indicates that many people fail to understand that truly effective leadership depends on the ability to foster collaboration and to influence others to cooperate and participate.

Questions to Ponder

1. From a purely business viewpoint, there's no reason to be concerned about behavior unless it improves results. Considering what you are trying to achieve in business, what downside consequences do you see if leadership behavior is predominantly Q1? What about Q2 and Q3?
2. By contrast, how can Q4 leadership help you achieve better results?
3. Sometimes, we mask our behavior depending on the circumstances. In terms of leading effectively, can you think of circumstances where adopting a mask would be helpful and appropriate? In what situations could mask behavior work against your leadership efforts?