

An Excerpt From

***Managing for People Who Hate Managing:  
Be a Success by Being Yourself***

by Devora Zack

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

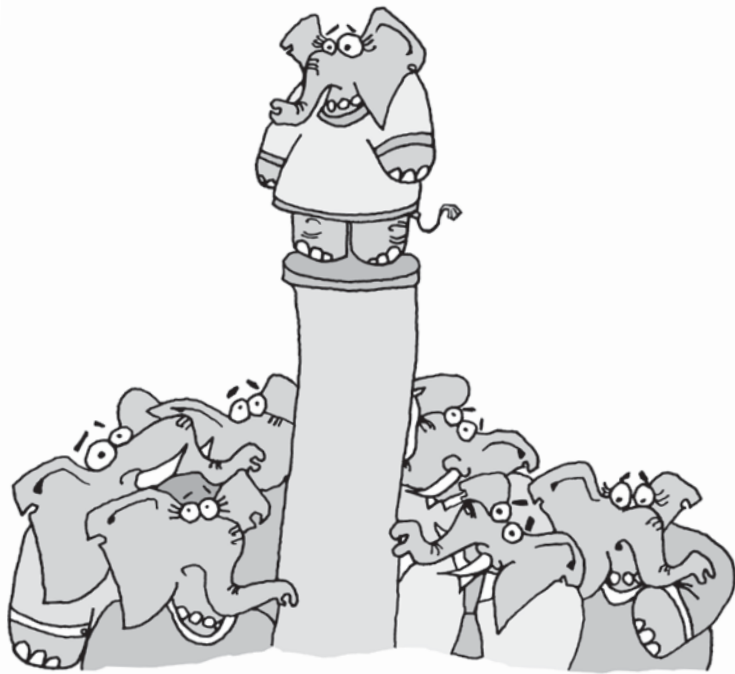
# Managing for People Who Hate Managing



BE A **SUCCESS**  
BY **BEING**  
**YOURSELF**

**Devora Zack**

*Author of **Networking for People  
Who Hate Networking***



*We're our own dragons as well as  
our own heroes, and we have to  
rescue ourselves from ourselves.*

—Tom Robbins,

*Still Life with Woodpecker*

**BY DEVORA ZACK**

# Managing for People Who Hate Managing:

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**BE A SUCCESS  
BY BEING YOURSELF**

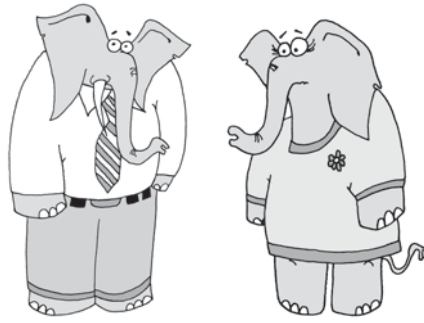
**ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
JEEVAN SIVASUBRAMANIAM**



Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.  
San Francisco  
*a BK Business book*



**For**  
**. . . you**



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INTRODUCTION

# Welcome to the Electrifying World of Management

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*The only way to do great work is to love what you do.*

—Steve Jobs



People crave success.

Success of all kinds. Particularly their own. Definitions of achievement vary madly, yet success in many, many professions comes with a caveat: As you rise upward in your field you also—more likely than not—become



Congratulations.

Now, get to it. There are performance evaluations to deliver, people to reprimand, forms to fill out, crowds to address, protocol to follow, feedback to provide, staff to hire, others to fire, meetings to run, communication to bungle, projects to lead, teams to inspire, direct reports to herd, expectations to fulfill, apologies to make, priorities to clash, programs to off-load, correspondence to correct, names to memorize, meetings to blow off, subordinates to appease, plus hours and hours and hours to work late.

And always have a smile on your face or people will talk. *Make sure it's authentic.*

Oh, and do your real job, too.

Did I mention your training will be minimal to none? And your every move will be scrutinized, judged, and dissected ad nauseam? Starting . . . now!

What are you standing around for? Get busy. Run. RUN!

Wait! Get back here. Take this book with you. You'll need it.



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CHAPTER ONE

# Why You Hate It, Why I Wrote This

---

*Find a job you like and you add five days to every week.*

—H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

*So much to do in every day  
Never wanted to manage anyway  
Just do your work and what I say  
So my last nerve doesn't fray.*

## Chapter Highlights

- Setting the stage
- Management challenges

Hey!

I'm so glad you stopped by. Our expedition navigating the crazy, stormy waters of *Managing People* will be well worth the time you devote. Plus, reading this book may count as professional development. You go!

On these pages you'll find heaps of useful, lifesaving management tips. Euros well spent, if you ask me. Consider this book a leadership life vest, only more flattering. Your being here makes the whole insane process of writing worthwhile. In fact, I wrote this book for you (see the dedication).

## You Have Questions, I Have Answers

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Before we delve in, a few pesky questions are pounding at the door, demanding our attention.

### WHY DOES THIS BOOK EXIST?

As a management consultant for more years than is really your business, I've seen plenty of fads come and go. I could list them here to make my point, except that would be criminally tedious. Plus, my up-and-coming readers will have no idea what I'm talking about. That's the point: Fads go. Splitsville. Ta-ta. Heartlessly leaving us panting in the very offices where they sought us out, promised the world . . . then promptly turned on their heels following the big gala thrown in their honor.

There are way beyond plenty of management books out there. Why didn't I choose to write about an underrepresented topic in

business literature? The impact of solar eclipses on manager tirade cycles, for example.

I'm focusing on this topic because it is so stinkin' essential. Learning techniques to reverse your secret hatred of managing can have a colossal impact on your work life—to infinity and beyond. We are teetering on the verge of a veritable management big bang.

Notice I said “reverse your secret hatred” not “how to deal with people even though you can't stand managing them.”

**Our aim is to discover a method of managing that you don't hate.**

**The reason you won't hate it is because it fits who you are.**

Managing isn't just something we do while walking purposefully in big buildings with lots of windows. Management is about communication, rapport, morale, and productivity. For starters.

#### WHAT IS MANAGING, ANYWAY?

Aah, the bazillion dollar question. I'll take an IOU.

Any half-baked MBA knows that we could argue all day about the truest, bestest definition of *manager*. Didactics bore me, however. So let's put our heads together and think about the brass tacks of what we expect in a quality manager (precluding, for now, the rest of your job, such as whittling widgets or multiplying money). What does managing boil down to?

**Managing is the high-wire act of balancing  
useful guidance and getting out of the way.**

If you got to handpick a person to manage you, wouldn't you tag someone with a variation of the above recipe?

Providing useful guidance presupposes that a manager has the requisite ability and credentials. Equally essential is having the wherewithal to know when to step aside to let others grow, excel, and mess

up. When in doubt, pour a higher proportion of letting-others-shine into your management protein shake. (Chapter 7 delves into this.)

#### WHY DO PEOPLE HATE MANAGING?

A startling percentage of us dislike, even (shh!) hate managing. What is the source of this international travesty? Much managerial angst springs from two causes.

1. You pursue a career of interest. You turn out to be halfway decent at it, earning a promotion. Suddenly, you find yourself in the alarming, distressing quandary of Managing People. You have less time to do what stimulates you and more responsibility for motivating, leading, and prodding others.
2. Let's not mince words. Managing others can be a real buzz kill. You gotta deal with all their . . . stuff. When did you wake up and suddenly become a therapist, mediator, and cruise director?

In a nutshell, we want to do what we consider our *real* work; managing gets in the way.

**Management is not your passion; your real job is.**

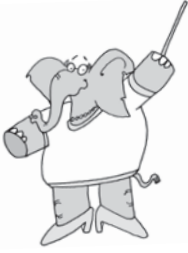
And that, my friends, is the elephant in the room. (You knew that was coming; may as well get it over with early on). A recent Berrett-Koehler study of 150 leaders from nearly as many industries revealed that only 43 percent are comfortable being managers, with a mere 32 percent saying they like being managers.

Translation, anyone? Too subtle a statistic? Allow me to spell things out.

Chances are less than one in three that your manager is amused to be managing you. Depending on your own little idiosyncrasies, the actual percentage could be even more skewed against you! Yet I'm certain that is not the case.

## On a Related Note

### Grains of Sand



*The Phantom Tollbooth* by Norton Juster is my favorite book. As soon as you finish stressing out with this one, unwind with that one.

One chapter features “the Terrible Trivium, demon of petty tasks and worthless jobs, ogre of wasted effort, and monster of habit.”<sup>1</sup>

He engages Milo, the young protagonist, in the task of moving an enormous mound of fine sand with a small pair of tweezers—one grain at a time. After hours of toil, Milo makes no observable progress. Milo is left with the distinct impression that his efforts are futile, despite working tirelessly.

I am distraught to confess how often this visceral image comes to mind as I go about tackling my own pile of tasks. My executive clients express a similar sensation.

Managers report, justifiably so, a sense of never coming close to completing their work. Even after going nonstop all day, every day, hardly a dent is made in the workload.

Is it happy hour yet?

Help is on the way. Legions of managers suffer needlessly from the misperception that to be a *real* manager they must somehow assume a plethora of traits that don’t come close to seeming natural. Plus, they believe real managers don’t eat quiche. This is untrue and smacks of prejudice against egg farmers.

I say, stop the madness!

The reverse is true. The only way to achieve success as a manager—and to garner the rewards and benefits of managing—is to lead from a place that is authentic to your core. Frittatas all around.

Because most normal people spend the majority of their waking hours preoccupied with vital matters other than personality functioning, knowing oneself can get shoved to the side. Unhelpfully, a startling number of business books direct you to look outside yourself for clues on how to manage the masses. This book, instead, crystalizes your understanding of hot-ticket items such as:

- What is your natural management style?
- How do you make decisions?
- What are your strongest traits?

- Do you lead from your head or your heart?
- How can you figure out what matters most to people on your team?
- What's the best way to reinforce positive behavior?
- How can you leverage your strengths to manage others?

... and the biggie ...

- How can you be both true to yourself and flexible in how you manage others?

The answers to these questions add up to the Uniquely You formula for brilliant management. No, it is not a hair coloring.



**WHY IS THIS BOOK ACTION-PACKED?**

Down with passivity! People learn through involvement. My favorite Chinese proverb puts it succinctly:

**“Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may remember.  
Involve me and I’ll understand.”**

Action is particularly important to book readers. Have you ever read a book and thought it quite good . . . then couldn’t recall a single tangible thread six months later? I am determined to fight this trend. The best way to reap sustainable benefits from a book is through your active involvement in the escapade.

Recall seeing a “Save the \_\_\_\_\_!” ad and thinking, “Wow! That’s a really important cause! I’m going to make a donation.” If you don’t do it on the spot, chances are zip to nil you ever will. Here are a couple of reasons why.

1. We forget within forty-eight hours half of what we hear and learn.
2. We are most likely to convert intention into reality by taking action close to the point of inspiration.

That's why merely providing instructions on, say, *How to Manage Better* yields low retention and weak results. You won't remember what you read . . . or the changes you were temporarily inspired to make. Relevant examples to demonstrate techniques help. Actively engaging readers while they are reading—through activities, assessments, and exercises—enables new skills to really take hold.

Because different styles capitalize on unique strengths, this book kicks things off with an easy-to-take, versatile assessment in chapter 2, “Who Are You?” Then you get to jump through a few hoops. You'll find segments throughout the book called “Jumpin' Thru Hoops.” These are your opportunity to apply ideas to your own journey. You don't get to just sit and read. You have to stay awake and alert, with a zillion opportunities (with a margin of error  $\pm 3$ ) to convert content into relevant action.

What more could you want out of life? Real-life examples? You got it. “Sample Examples” are scattered like breadcrumbs marking your way through the forest. You also will come across boxes called “On a Related Note,” with tidbits related to the primary chapter themes.

Even if everything else around you collapses to bits, we'll always have fond memories of traipsing through this book together.

**WILL I EVER ACHIEVE MY LOFTY AMBITION  
OF A ONE-WORD BOOK TITLE?**

I saved the most critical question for last. Please arrange a write-in campaign to my editors. I need all the momentum I can get on this failed campaign.

## Two Tales

Tatiana was a marvelous, motivated manager at an international organization headquartered in Washington, DC. Upon her promotion to management, Tatiana inherited a handful of a team. Her direct



reports were impressively opinionated, outspoken, cynical, and authority adverse. True to form, the team was instantly skeptical of Tatiana as their new manager. I use the term *team* loosely, because this crew was more invested in coalitions and gossip than in team building. To heighten the situation, many had held the same position for over a decade while somehow dodging any meaningful feedback or real accountability.

Tatiana meant business. She was as eager to build productivity as she was to create rapport, with neither goal particularly prized by her dozen direct reports. Tatiana's office was a few floors above her team, in a sprawling office building, emphasizing her heightened role and presumed distance from the commoners. This rank-based arrangement made Tatiana uncomfortable, so she made a point of hand delivering the mail (which arrived first at her office) to her staff's desks three floors down. Standard operating procedure was for supervisors to e-mail staff and let them collect mail and other pertinent paperwork themselves. Tatiana intended to demonstrate camaraderie and respect by making the trek herself. This was typical of Tatiana's style; her actions and choices reflected her natural humility.

What did the team think about her mail delivery service? They were livid. Their new manager was intolerable! Evidently, she neither respected nor trusted them. And how did they arrive at this rock solid conclusion?

"She spies on us!" they proclaimed. "Instead of calling us into her office to get our mail, she brings it down here as an excuse to sneak up on us." That was all the data they required to prove their theory. Case closed.

Momentarily file away that story and follow me across the globe to the open bush of Australia.

Upon my arrival in Australia for a speaking tour, I was invited on an excursion around the area surrounding Queensland's lovely coastal

town of Maroochydore. Shortly into the bus ride, the driver, Paul, a dedicated local, pointed far into the bush where he spotted a roo (Aussie for kangaroo). I desperately wanted to see my first wild roo and strained to search the landscape. To my consternation, my unaccustomed eyes couldn't distinguish roo from bush.

Upon the tour's conclusion, Paul asked how I'd liked everything. I thanked him for his top-notch job introducing us to his beloved countryside yet admitted disappointment in missing the roo. An expert in catastrophic thinking, I was certain I'd bungled my one and only chance in this lifetime to view a real roo.

Paul reassured me, "I think we can arrange a viewing for you." He instructed me to stay on board while the others disembarked, and then we drove a short distance to the University of Southern Queensland, where seventy or eighty wild roos roamed free on the campus. Immediately upon our arrival we spotted two glorious specimens in plain view, basking in the sun rays. I was wild with excitement.

"Can I crawl out there and pet one?" I asked, ridiculously.

"Sure, mate," he replied in laid-back Aussie style.

On hands and knees, I crawled stealthily (at least that's how I like to recall it) into the bush. I strategically made a wide arc around the roos and, remaining unnoticed, positioned myself immediately behind them. Dizzy with success, I reached out a hand to touch the larger one on her back.

I somehow failed to notice that the smaller roo was apparently an offspring, whom the mother was obliged to protect. The plot thickens.

The mom roo had not expected me to suddenly appear behind her, and she was startled. She jumped up on her back legs, whirled to face me, assumed boxing position, and prepared for battle. Far off in the distance, I heard my guide say in his steady voice, "Now crawl away . . . quickly."

I managed to emerge unscathed. I did nothing, however, toward advancing my relationship with roos.

Naturally, this brings us to the question of why so many managers harbor a strong dislike for managing. Tatiana and the roos intersect to illustrate the mysterious Big Mess commonly referenced as Managing.

The following comparisons are provided for your consideration.

<b>Scenario</b>	<b>Deliver the Mail</b>	<b>Pet the Roo</b>
<b>Intentions of Tatiana and me</b>	To form a positive bond	To form a positive bond
<b>Behaviors of Tatiana and me</b>	Humble, active gesture to demonstrate respect for the team	Quiet, low, soft approach to demonstrate peaceful intention
<b>Desires of team and roo</b>	To be left alone	To be left alone
<b>Interpretation by team and roo</b>	DANGER! Space violation	DANGER! Space violation
<b>Inner reaction of team and roo</b>	Threatening situation!	Threatening situation!
<b>Outer reaction of team and roo</b>	Prepare for battle	Prepare for battle

How are complete disconnects between intentions and interpretations possible? Are these the only two examples of this kind or—more alarmingly—are they everywhere, permeating the very fabric of our existence?

I'd prefer to not answer that question. Yet I will, out of sheer commitment to your professional success. Typical interplay between intention and interpretation:



Yes, gentle reader. These disconnects permeate the very fabric of our existence. There. I said it. Best to get things out in the open at the start of

a relationship, don't you think? So you know what you're getting yourself into. For those of you who want to exit the book now, I understand. Just remember, you can run but you can't hide. Nice meeting you.

For those of you who stuck around, I'm glad you don't succumb to panic easily.

## Let's Get It Started

A journey of a thousand steps (not so bad, given inflation these days) starts with understanding your own sweet self. Luckily, I've done the heavy lifting for you. All you need to do is grab a latte, relax at a swank café, and hold up this book for onlookers to jot down the title.

Reading an e-book? Curses! Foiled again.

To recap: People hate managing because it's draining and interferes with addressing substantial other demands on their time. Plus there's



### On a Related Note

#### The [yawn] Leadership–Management–Supervision Debate

In some circles, *manager* is a bad word. “Managers manage and leaders lead” is proclaimed definitively—sand in the face of people who naively use the inferior term *manager*. Then there are supervisors. What a mess! With so many of these leaders, managers, and supervisors wandering around, how can anyone get any work done? It's all so overwhelming.

Presumably leaders have vision. (I don't. I've worn glasses since the age of seven.) Supervisors, on the other hand, oversee, say, a factory assembly line. And managers hit a snag midway through their careers, caught in the tumbleweeds of telling others what to do on a daily basis. Heated, theoretical arguments take place over the jostling stature accompanying each title.

This is a bunch of baloney. In the real world, where staff meetings are held and paychecks are distributed every other week, terminology is irrelevant. What matters is how people are treated. They don't care if you supervise, lead, or manage them. They care whether you've got their back, whether you are invested in their success, and whether you treat them as assets, liabilities, or competition.

I defer to other authors in moving along this riveting debate.

a misconception that you have to smash your personality into a pre-defined mold to be a good manager (and land that coveted VIP parking space).

This book helps you discover a leadership style perfectly suited to you, capitalizing on your natural strengths. As a result, managing becomes easier and more enjoyable.

You'll learn how to be a top-notch manager, being true to yourself while adapting to honor the preferences of others. By the way, having an adaptive style doesn't mean letting people off the hook. It means understanding how others perceive reality and working within that construct for mutual success. The first step is clarifying your own style. Interested?

Join me at the next chapter.



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CHAPTER TWO

## Who Are You?

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*But enough about me, let's talk about you . . . What do you think of me?*

—C. C. Bloom (Bette Midler's character in *Beaches*,  
screenplay by Mary Agnes Donoghue)

*There once was a manager named You  
Who had no idea what to do  
Until You took this here quiz  
Took control of your biz  
Into a leadership star You grew.*

## Chapter Highlights

- Take an enlightening self-assessment
- Recognize and appreciate your true style

Why don't managers just read a well-respected tome on Management (there are several options available with that very title!), do as instructed, and move on with their lives?

Because there is not one correct way to do things. There are endless variables that factor into how to manage most effectively, and they differ with every single person on your team.

If that isn't an exhausting thought, I don't know what is.

People come equipped with this pesky item commonly referred to as a Personality. Personalities are infuriating. Particularly when yours differs from mine. Once we get to know each other, yours can be intolerable even when it is quite similar to mine, just to keep things jumping. In fact, I can hardly stand my own half the time.

When are those robot people predicted back in the 1970s going to emerge?

As an MBA, I am trained to resort to Useful Charts and Numbers to make a point. Here's mine:

**Me (manager) + You (staffer) =  Ka-Boom!**

Part of the confusion and general chaos lurking just a millimeter behind the surface of any basic, seemingly well-functioning organization is due to cataclysmic clashes of personality.

There are many aspects to personality. Thinker-Feeler is one of four dimensions highlighted in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and

is linked to how we make decisions, communicate, and manage. To satisfy the curiosity of the academics out there, MBTI has roots in the teachings of Carl Jung. Think of Jung as the grandfather of personality theory. Maybe great-grandfather by now.

*Managing for People Who Hate Managing* (MFPWHM. Such a catchy acronym . . . so memorable!) will guide you through the Thinker–Feeler continuum, a sublime cavern of our inner worlds. You will learn versatile techniques to be a stellar manager by being yourself. You on board?

The good news keeps on coming. The techniques introduced are transferable to virtually all management situations. I don't even know why I said "virtually." I can't think of any exceptions. With all those lawyers out there, you can't be too careful. If you discover an exception, e-mail my people. I will claim it didn't make it to my desk.

Let's start with the basic premise everybody thinks and everybody feels. Well, nearly everyone, but that's an issue we'll deal with later. For our current purposes, this premise works.

Managers are in the position to make gobs of decisions daily. Quickly. How you make decisions is a key aspect of how you manage. Notice I didn't say *what* decisions you make. We're a layer deeper than that here . . . digging down into the *way* you make decisions.

Although thinkers are (for the most part) capable of actual feelings, and feelers (despite misconceptions) really do think.

**Thinkers lead with their heads; feelers lead with their hearts.**

From this page forward, when we say "thinker" (or just T), that is shorthand for "people who primarily think to make decisions." And when we say "feeler" (or just F), what we're really saying is "people who primarily feel to make decisions."



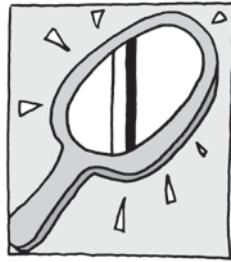
This chapter also discusses the continuum of thinkers and feelers, because there are gradations, levels, degrees, if you will.

## The Royal Rule

It's insane to assert there are hard-and-fast rules for being the best of all managers. A real sickness. Okay, so there is *one* rule. And *I* get to set it. Cue fanfare!

The only indisputable, irrefutable, inarguable, brilliant, life-changing rule, doctrine, law, MANDATORY realize-it-or-regret-it foundation of being the best possible manager ever is:

... be you.



Piece of cake, no? Perhaps a complex, homemade, multistep, carefully executed, and years-to-develop cake recipe. Maybe that.

There are a startling number of steps and skills involved in being yourself. Sigh. Is *nothing* easy in this world? My sentiments precisely.

Luckily, I've thrown away years of a potentially lighthearted, care-free life to benefit you.

While you were doing . . . whatever . . . I've had my nose to the grindstone, focused almost exclusively on the nuances of personality. Sure, I come up for air and regular feedings, but that's about it. And now, with minimal exertion on your part, I am handing my findings over for your consumption and daily use. Start thinking about a meaningful holiday gift now; it's never too early.

The path toward *being* you is *knowing* you. The upcoming assessment pinpoints a key aspect of your personality, helping you harness the best you have to offer as a manager.

The Thinker–Feeler continuum (we will also reference it as T/F) is a prime indicator of how one manages in a work environment. This preference affects both behavior and internal processing of experiences.

You’ll learn about different personality types—not just your own but also others, because you are undoubtedly managing plenty of lunatics from “the other side” (that is, whichever side is not your own). Understanding people’s behavior at work will reduce your frustration and increase your efficiency. This frees up your time and energy.

In case you are wondering, personality temperaments are innate. That means your preference, your essence, your natural style, is part of your core. This does not limit you in any way. You are in charge of your abilities—and can teach yourself whatever skills you deem important. Plenty of people become so adept at modeling behaviors from an opposite temperament that the casual observer would believe it’s their natural style. This is not being artificial; it is being *flexible*. Lots more on this ahead.

Now, tighten that safety belt across your lap—we’re about to reveal the *Real You* beneath that suave exterior. It’s high time.



#### SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Each numbered item offers two options to complete a sentence. Assign three points between these two options based on your natural preferences and point of view. Point distributions are 3 and 0, or 2 and 1, no half points. If you agree entirely with A and not at all with B, assign A = 3 and B = 0. If you relate somewhat with A yet more with B, assign A = 1 and B = 2. Respond

based on your natural temperament, not learned behavior or what you think is “right.”

<b>1.</b>	<b>A top manager displays:</b>	
	A. Strength and analysis	_____
	B. Empathy and concern	_____
<b>2.</b>	<b>It is more important to:</b>	
	A. Learn and use people's names	_____
	B. Promote logically and consistently	_____
<b>3.</b>	<b>Teams work best when:</b>	
	A. Participants feel safe and respected	_____
	B. Participants have clearly defined roles	_____
<b>4.</b>	<b>Before hiring someone, I:</b>	
	A. Check references and education	_____
	B. Must feel a rapport and connection	_____
<b>5.</b>	<b>When giving feedback, I:</b>	
	A. Want the other person to feel heard	_____
	B. Focus on what needs to change	_____
<b>6.</b>	<b>If laying off an employee, my primary concern would be:</b>	
	A. Ensuring my documentation is in hand	_____
	B. His or her personal, emotional reaction	_____
<b>7.</b>	<b>Employees work hardest when they believe:</b>	
	A. They are making a meaningful contribution	_____
	B. The company is solvent and well structured	_____
<b>8.</b>	<b>To motivate others, I:</b>	
	A. Provide regular positive reinforcement	_____
	B. Provide performance improvement strategies	_____
<b>9.</b>	<b>I assess my management skills by whether I:</b>	
	A. Strengthen and develop technical skills	_____
	B. Strengthen and develop confidence and relationships	_____
<b>10.</b>	<b>A key to good leadership is:</b>	
	A. Authority	_____
	B. Empathy	_____

<b>11.</b>	<b>If I am reasonably certain my path will not cross someone else's again:</b>	
	A. I still care about having a positive interchange	_____
	B. I don't much care whether they like me or not	_____
<b>12.</b>	<b>I am more pleased with a day that:</b>	
	A. I am super efficient	_____
	B. I make someone's day with a kind act	_____

## Self-Assessment Scorecard

(Be alert! Columns include a mix of A and B!)

1.	A =	B =
2.	B =	A =
3.	B =	A =
4.	A =	B =
5.	B =	A =
6.	A =	B =
7.	B =	A =
8.	B =	A =
9.	A =	B =
10.	A =	B =
11.	B =	A =
12.	A =	B =
Totals (36)	Thinker =	Feeler =

32–36: Strong preference

28–31: Clear preference

22–27: Moderate preference

19–21: Slight preference

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