CheckPoint 360°™

Individual Feedback Report

Darcy Walker

CONFIDENTIAL

Survey Completed: 03.06.2020 Report Prepared: 06.16.2020

THIS REPORT INCLUDES RESPONSES FROM:
Self, 1 Boss, 4 Direct Reports, and 5 Peers

Boss – Witherspoon, Fraklin

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TH!NK, LLC
www.think-training.com
info@think-training.com
808-224-6694

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THE CHECKPOINT 360°™ SYSTEM

The purpose of the CheckPoint 360°™ System is to identify leadership as viewed by certain groups of individuals who know and have had the opportunity to observe the manager in the work setting. This is accomplished with the collection of ratings from different sets of observers: **Self** (you), **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, and **Peers**.

There are 70 leadership behaviors presented as survey items. These 70 items are grouped into 18 Skill Sets which further group into 8 Universal Management Competencies. Each rater reports their experience of observing the manager with a rating on each of the items.

In the 70 CheckPoint survey items the raters chose between six possible choices. Based on their observations they indicated the percentage of time they felt the manager displayed each behavior. The sixth choice was "No Opportunity," which was selected when the rater had no opportunity to observe the listed behavior and thus could not provide a meaningful response. These six possible responses were:

Rating	Description	Percentage of Time
1	Almost Never	0 - 10%
2	Seldom	11 - 39%
3	Sometimes	40 - 60%
4	Usually	61 - 89%
5	Almost Always	90 - 100%
N	No opportunity to observe this behavior	N/A

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There are 18 Skill Sets that are critical for success in most supervisory positions. They are grouped into 8 Universal Management Competencies. When a manager frequently displays certain behaviors which are a part of these Management Competencies, they are typically identified as effective and successful managers.

The 8 Universal Management Competencies and their 18 Skill Sets are listed below.

1. Communication

- Listens to Others
- Processes Information
- Communicates Effectively

2. Leadership

- Instills Trust
- Provides Direction
- Delegates Responsibility

3. Adaptability

- Adjusts to Circumstances
- Thinks Creatively

4. Relationships

- Builds Personal Relationships
- Facilitates Team Success

5. Task Management

- Works Efficiently
- Works Competently

6. Production

- Takes Action
- Achieves Results

7. Development of Others

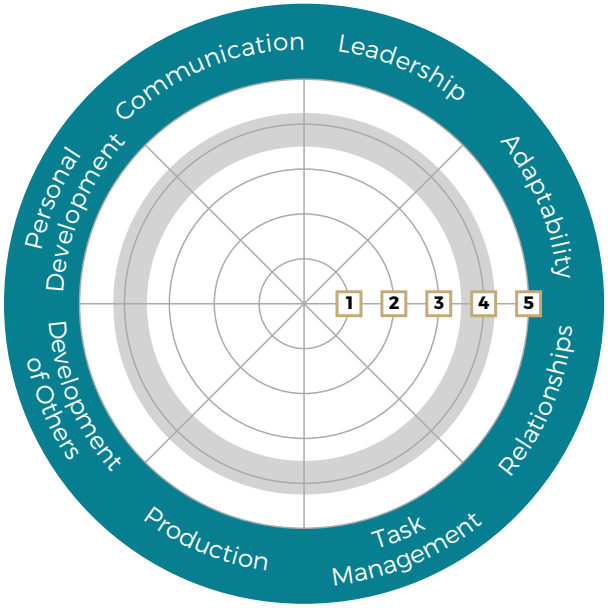
- Cultivates Individual Talents
- Motivates Successfully

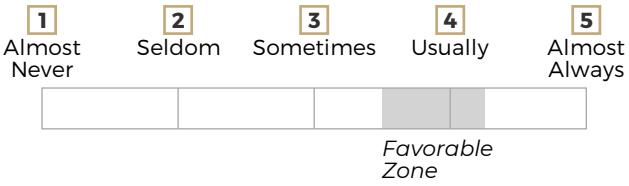
8. Personal Development

- Displays Commitment
- Seeks Improvement

Favorable Zone:

The Favorable Zone was identified by analysis of the data from a wide range of industries and organizations. This analysis showed that on the CheckPoint 360™ those managers who had been identified as "good managers" by their respective company typically achieved an average rating of 3.5 to 4.25 when rated by others who knew the manager's work behavior. This established the range of scores for the Favorable Zone on the CheckPoint 360™.





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INTRODUCTION TO THE INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK REPORT

This report summarizes the results of the CheckPoint surveys that you (**Self**) and the respondent groups (**Boss**, **Direct Reports**, and **Peers**) recently completed. The scores you received are presented in graphs and numeric scales on the pages that follow.

Feedback is reported in the following sections:

1. **Executive Competency Overview**: Results for the 8 Universal Management Competencies, comparing the average **Self** score with the average score of **All Observers** (includes **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, and **Peers**) and showing whether scores fall within, above, or below the Favorable Zone. Also shown is the Total CheckPoint Scores, including the score differential between **Self** and **All Observers**.
2. **Executive Skill Set Summary**: Overview of the 18 Skill Sets as rated by **All Observers**. The average ratings are displayed ranked from highest to lowest providing you an overview of your relative strengths or challenges in these Skill Sets.
3. **Critical Skills Alignment Summary**: Overview of the Skill Sets identified as critical by **Boss** and/or **Self**.
4. **Executive Summary**: Results for the 8 Universal Management Competencies, comparing the average scores of all respondent groups (includes **Self**, **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, **Peers**, and **All Observers**), providing Total CheckPoint Scores for each group, and pointing out group score averages that vary by 1 point or more.
5. **Skill Set Analysis**: Results for the 18 Skill Sets, comparing the average scores of all respondent groups (includes **Self**, **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, **Peers**, and **All Observers**), and pointing out group score averages that vary by 1.5 points or more, as well as analyzing Critical Skill Sets to establish Talents, areas needing Focus, and areas where a significant GAP exists between **Self** and **Boss** scores. (You and your Boss chose 6 Critical Skill Sets out of 18. These were considered critically important to your particular job requirements.)
6. **Respondent Group Comparison**: Results for the 18 Skill Sets and Total CheckPoint Scores, analyzing the average scores of each respondent group (includes **Self**, **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, and **Peers**).
7. **Survey Summary of the 70 items** : Results for all 70 survey items, displaying the average scores for **Self**, **Boss**, and **All Observers** (includes **Boss**, **Direct Reports**, and **Peers**) and highlighting the items that fall in a Critical Skill Set, as well as flagging items where responses lack consensus (varying by three or more points) within a respondent group.
8. **Development Summary Overview**: Describes your strengths and development needs for the 18 Skill Sets.
9. **Individual Development Guide**: Describes your strengths and development needs for your 3 most critical Skill Sets and provides guidelines and suggestions for your individual development plan.

As you review this material, keep in mind that most people exhibit a range of abilities. No one does everything equally well. Approached as a learning tool, this feedback can be a valuable first step toward increasing your effectiveness on the job.

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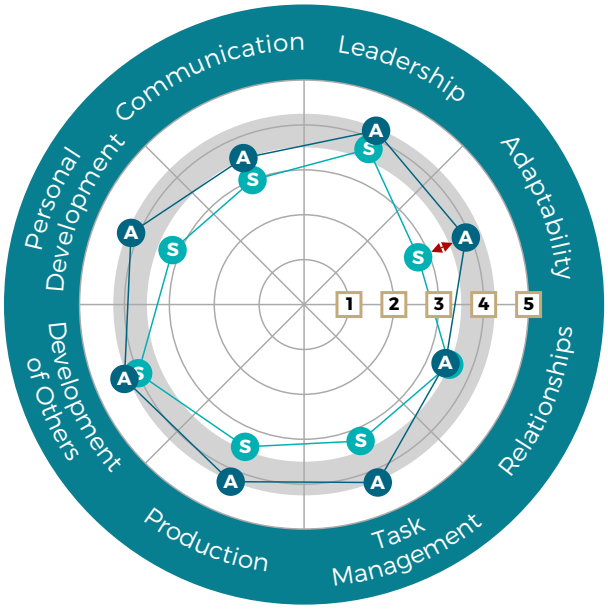
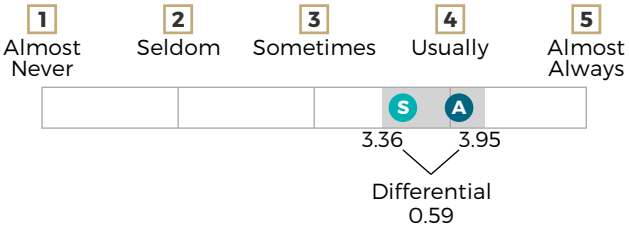
EXECUTIVE COMPETENCY OVERVIEW



Legend

- S Self
- A All Observers
- Gap
- Favorable Zone

Total CheckPoint Scores



This is an overview of **Self**'s rating compared to the average rating of **All Observers** (every rater except **Self**). As the **Self** (S) marker and the **All** (A) marker move away from the center of the circle, the scores are higher. Note particularly where there is a gap of 1 point or greater. This would suggest a significant difference between your perception and that of the other observers as to how often you display that management competency.

Total CheckPoint Scores reported on the smaller horizontal graph present the average score for all 8 Competencies for both you (**Self**) and **All Observers**. If the difference between these two averages is 1 point or more, your perception of your behavior varies a great deal from the other raters. This would suggest a need for a greater self-awareness.

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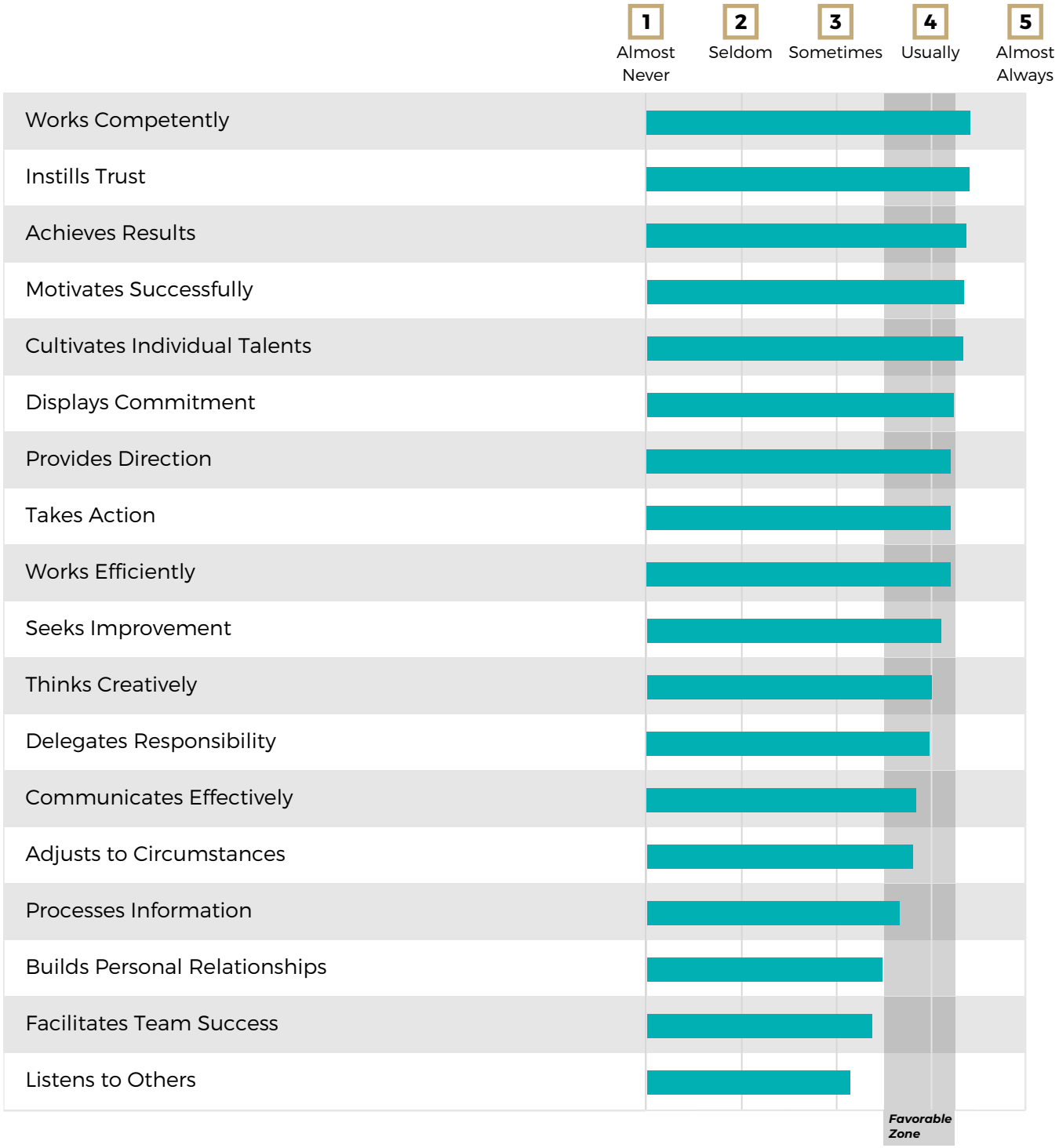
EXECUTIVE SKILL SET SUMMARY

The graph below shows the average ratings of **All Observers** (ratings from everybody except you) for each Skill Set. The average ratings are displayed ranked from highest to lowest providing you an overview of your relative strengths in these Skill Sets. While we suggest you focus on the most critical Skill Sets shown in the next section of this report, it is useful for you to have an overview of your ratings on all Skill Sets.



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CRITICAL SKILLS ALIGNMENT SUMMARY

Both you and your Boss identified the 6 Skill Sets that you each thought were most critical for success in your job. These Skill Sets are displayed below. Consider that the possible number of Skill Sets selected by both you and your Boss can range from 6 to 12. If you both select the same 6 Skill Sets you will have 100% alignment. When you did not agree on any of the Skill Sets as most critical, there is 0% alignment. As the alignment percentage decreases, it becomes even more important for you and your Boss to discuss and clarify the most important aspects of your work. Unless you have both identified the same behaviors as critical, there will be a real potential for disagreement on where you should focus your activities.

CRITICAL SKILLS ALIGNMENT: 33%

	B Boss	S Self
Listens to Others: Encourages others to share their ideas and concerns. Listens openly to all viewpoints without interrupting. Summarizes information and verifies understanding.	B	
Processes Information: Gets to the point. Evaluates the pros and cons, as well as the short and long-range consequences, of decisions. Develops logical, clear conclusions.	B	
Communicates Effectively: Expresses self clearly, both in writing and in speaking. Is thorough, yet concise, and is consistently straightforward. Readily shares information with others.	B	S
Provides Direction: Establishes clear expectations and a manageable workload. Plans the steps required to accomplish objectives, while keeping focus on overall vision.		S
Delegates Responsibility: Delegates appropriate jobs to appropriate people. Empowers others to work and solve problems on their own.		S
Adjusts to Circumstances: Can adjust to people's diverse work styles and to varying environments. Deals with setbacks constructively and anticipates change.	B	
Facilitates Team Success: Resolves conflicts fairly in a spirit of cooperation. Builds consensus and leads team in setting appropriate goals. Recruits effectively and uses talents of group wisely.	B	
Achieves Results: Overcomes obstacles to achieve results that set high standards for others and that positively impact the organization.	B	S
Cultivates Individual Talents: Is an effective coach and makes training available. Provides objective performance feedback on a timely basis.		S
Displays Commitment: Maintains a high level of energy, perseveres and remains positive.		S

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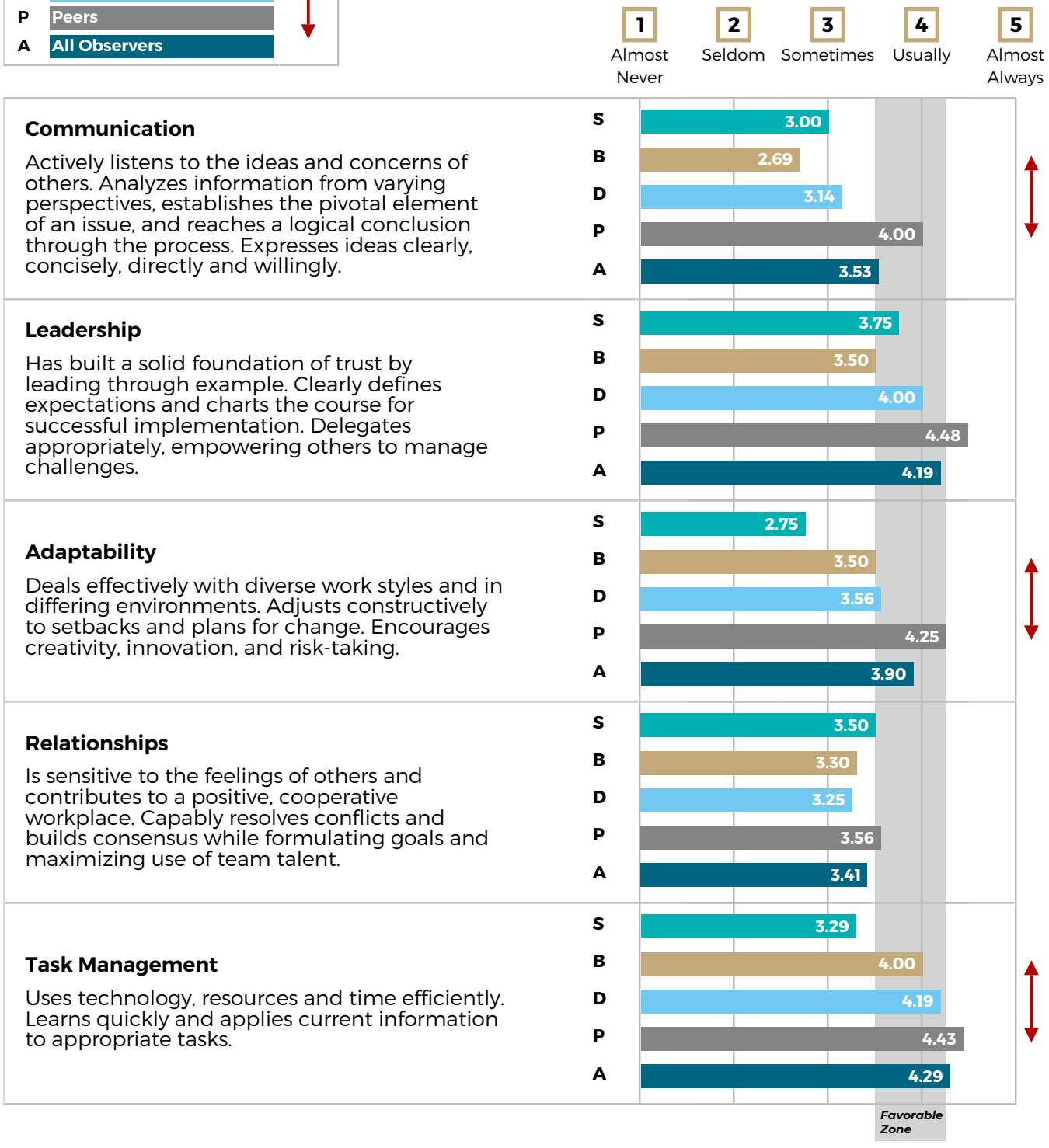
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The average rating for each respondent group for the 8 Management Competencies is presented in this section. The numbers shown for **Self** and **Boss** are the actual ratings. Note the differences between group ratings, especially where there is a gap indicated (a difference of 1 point or more between groups).

Legend

S Self
B Boss
D Direct Reports
P Peers
A All Observers

Gap



Communication

Actively listens to the ideas and concerns of others. Analyzes information from varying perspectives, establishes the pivotal element of an issue, and reaches a logical conclusion through the process. Expresses ideas clearly, concisely, directly and willingly.

S	3.00
B	2.69
D	3.14
P	4.00
A	3.53

Leadership

Has built a solid foundation of trust by leading through example. Clearly defines expectations and charts the course for successful implementation. Delegates appropriately, empowering others to manage challenges.

S	3.75
B	3.50
D	4.00
P	4.48
A	4.19

Adaptability

Deals effectively with diverse work styles and in differing environments. Adjusts constructively to setbacks and plans for change. Encourages creativity, innovation, and risk-taking.

S	2.75
B	3.50
D	3.56
P	4.25
A	3.90

Relationships

Is sensitive to the feelings of others and contributes to a positive, cooperative workplace. Capably resolves conflicts and builds consensus while formulating goals and maximizing use of team talent.

S	3.50
B	3.30
D	3.25
P	3.56
A	3.41

Task Management

Uses technology, resources and time efficiently. Learns quickly and applies current information to appropriate tasks.

S	3.29
B	4.00
D	4.19
P	4.43
A	4.29

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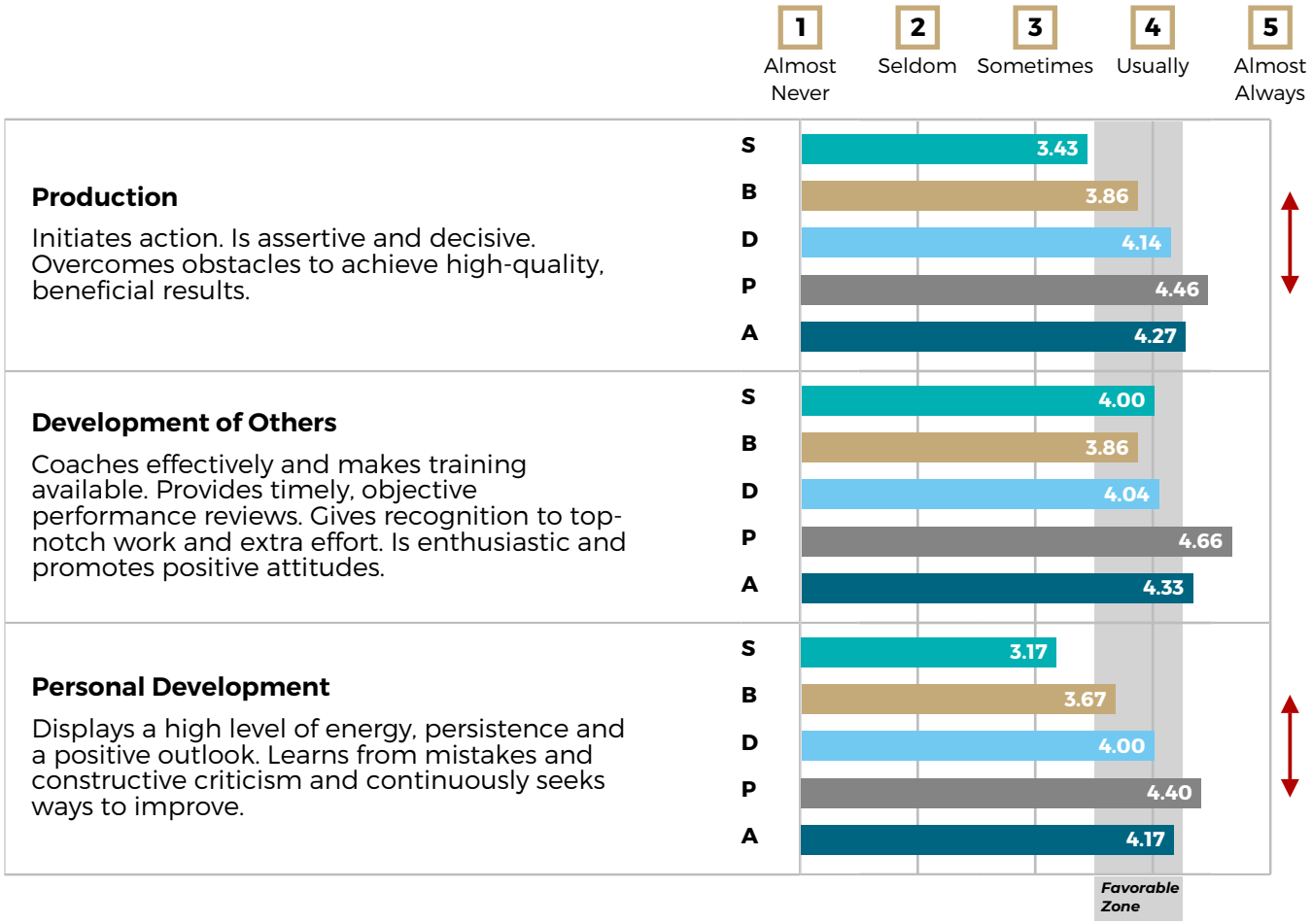

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SKILL SET ANALYSIS

Any differences between the Critical Skill Sets selected by **Boss** and **Self** are of particular interest. Such differences suggest important differences between the expectations of the **Boss** and the focus of the **Self**. They should be a subject of discussion between you and your Boss.

Notice the definitions for each Skill Set are provided along with the average score for each group of raters. These average scores for each group and the relationship of each score when compared to the others should be considered carefully. You may see a vertical arrow which will indicate the presence of a gap of 1.5 or more points between two respondent groups.

Any difference between respondent groups where averages vary by 1.5 points or more.

A Critical Skill Set, according to **Self** or **Boss**, and both **Self** and **Boss** score averages differ by 1.5 points or more.

S B Ratings for Self and Boss

S B Selected by Self, Boss, or Self & Boss as a Critical Skill Set

S Self
B Boss
D Direct Reports
P Peers
A All Observers

Talent — A Critical Skill Set, according to **Self** or **Boss**, and both **Self** and **Boss** score averages are equal to or higher than 3.5

Focus — A Critical Skill Set, according to **Self** or **Boss**, and both **Self** and **Boss** score averages below 3.5

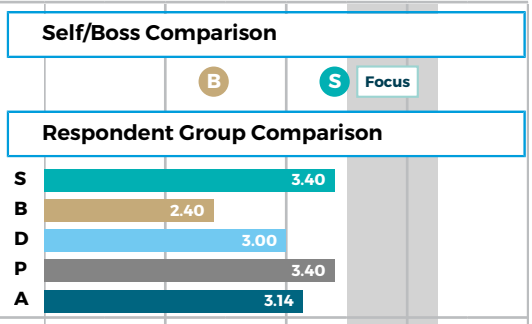
1 Almost Never
2 Seldom
3 Sometimes
4 Usually
5 Almost Always

Communication

Listens to Others

Encourages others to share their ideas and concerns. Listens openly to all viewpoints without interrupting. Summarizes information and verifies understanding.

B

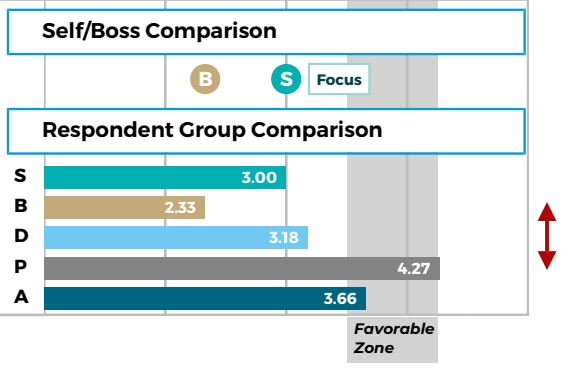


Communication

Processes Information

Gets to the point. Evaluates the pros and cons, as well as the short and long-range consequences, of decisions. Develops logical, clear conclusions.

B



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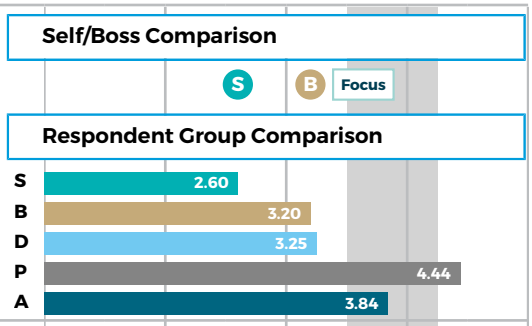
1 Almost Never | 2 Seldom | 3 Sometimes | 4 Usually | 5 Almost Always

Communication

Communicates Effectively

Expresses self clearly, both in writing and in speaking. Is thorough, yet concise, and is consistently straightforward. Readily shares information with others.

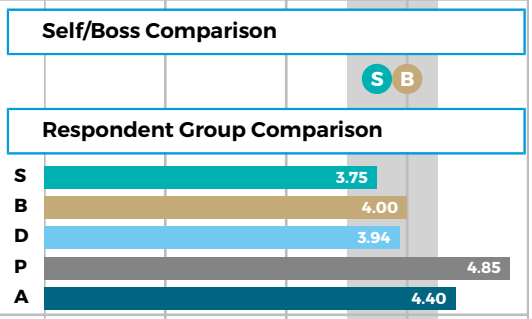
S B



Leadership

Instills Trust

Can be trusted to keep promises and confidences. Is honest and ethical.

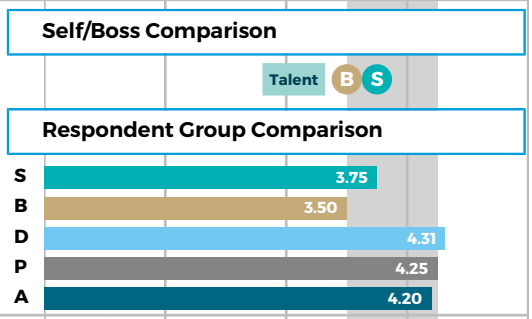


Leadership

Provides Direction

Establishes clear expectations and a manageable workload. Plans the steps required to accomplish objectives, while keeping focus on overall vision.

S

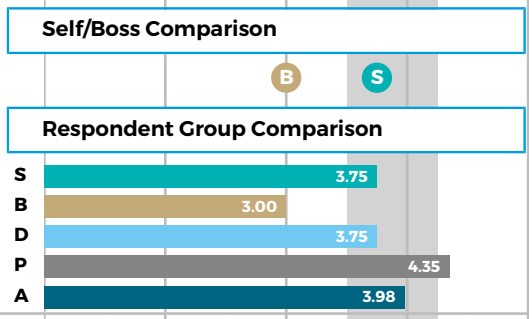


Leadership

Delegates Responsibility

Delegates appropriate jobs to appropriate people. Empowers others to work and solve problems on their own.

S

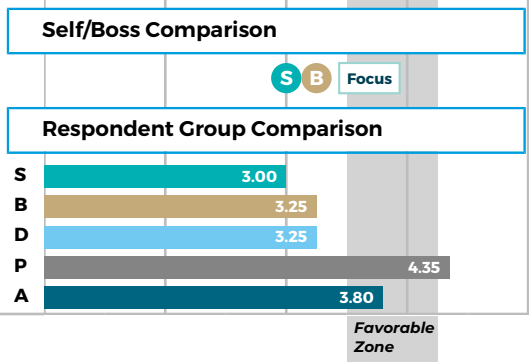


Adaptability

Adjusts to Circumstances

Can adjust to people's diverse work styles and to varying environments. Deals with setbacks constructively and anticipates change.

B



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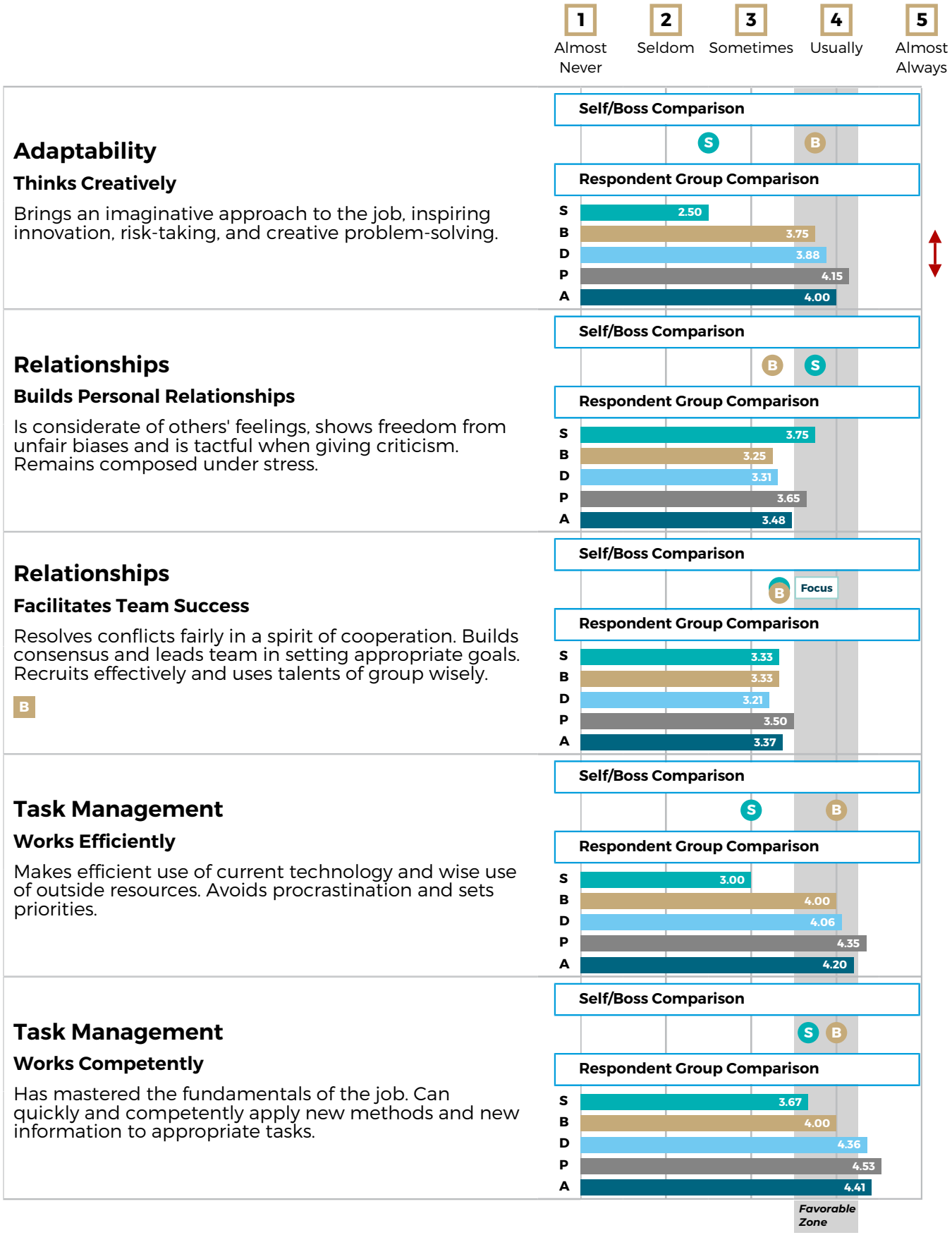

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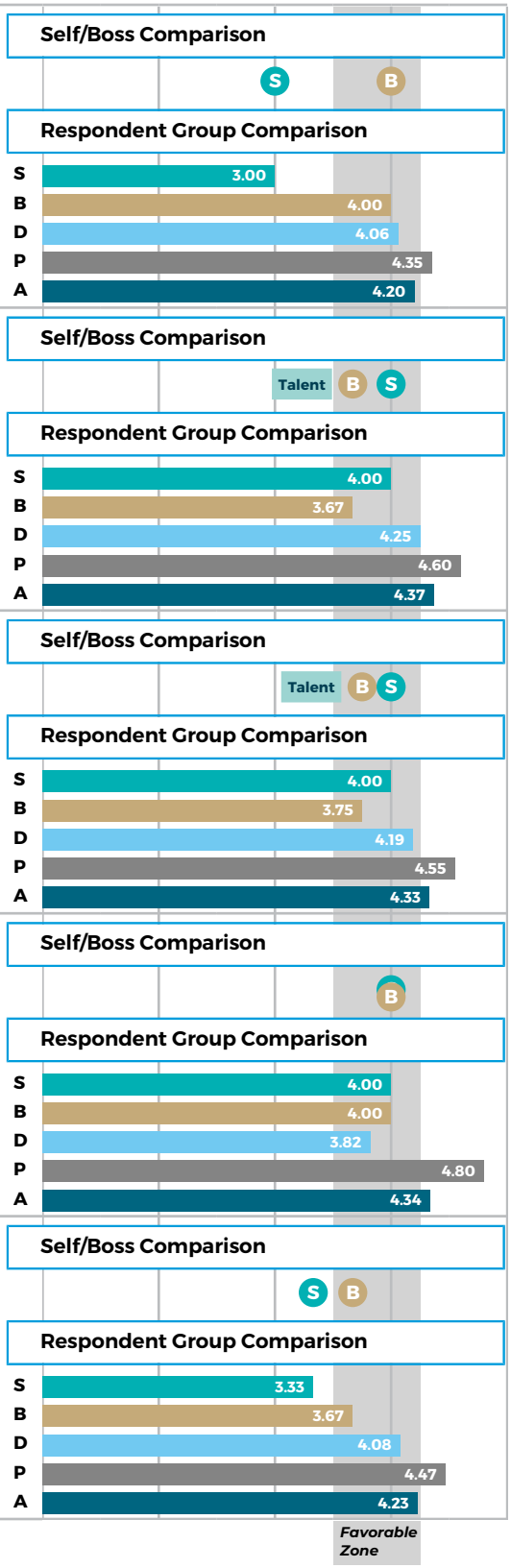
1 Almost Never | 2 Seldom | 3 Sometimes | 4 Usually | 5 Almost Always

Production

Takes Action

Knows when the time is right to initiate action. Handles problems with assertiveness and makes timely, firm decisions.



Production

Achieves Results

Overovercomes obstacles to achieve results that set high standards for others and that positively impact the organization.

S B

Development of Others

Cultivates Individual Talents

Is an effective coach and makes training available. Provides objective performance feedback on a timely basis.

S

Development of Others

Motivates Successfully

Gives recognition to people who produce excellent work and give extra effort. Has an enthusiastic attitude that positively affects others.

Personal Development

Displays Commitment

Maintains a high level of energy, perseveres and remains positive.

S

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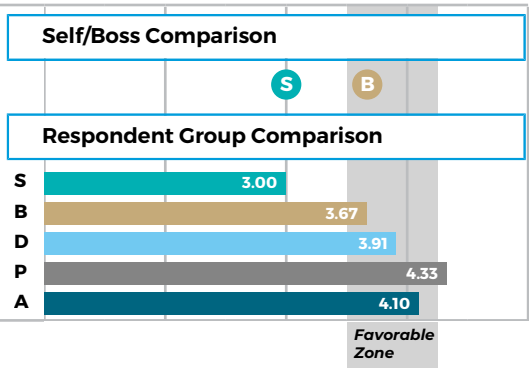
1 Almost Never | 2 Seldom | 3 Sometimes | 4 Usually | 5 Almost Always

Personal Development

Seeks Improvement

Learns positive lessons from mistakes and constructive criticism. Pursues resources to improve and develop professionally. Sets no limits on personal potential.



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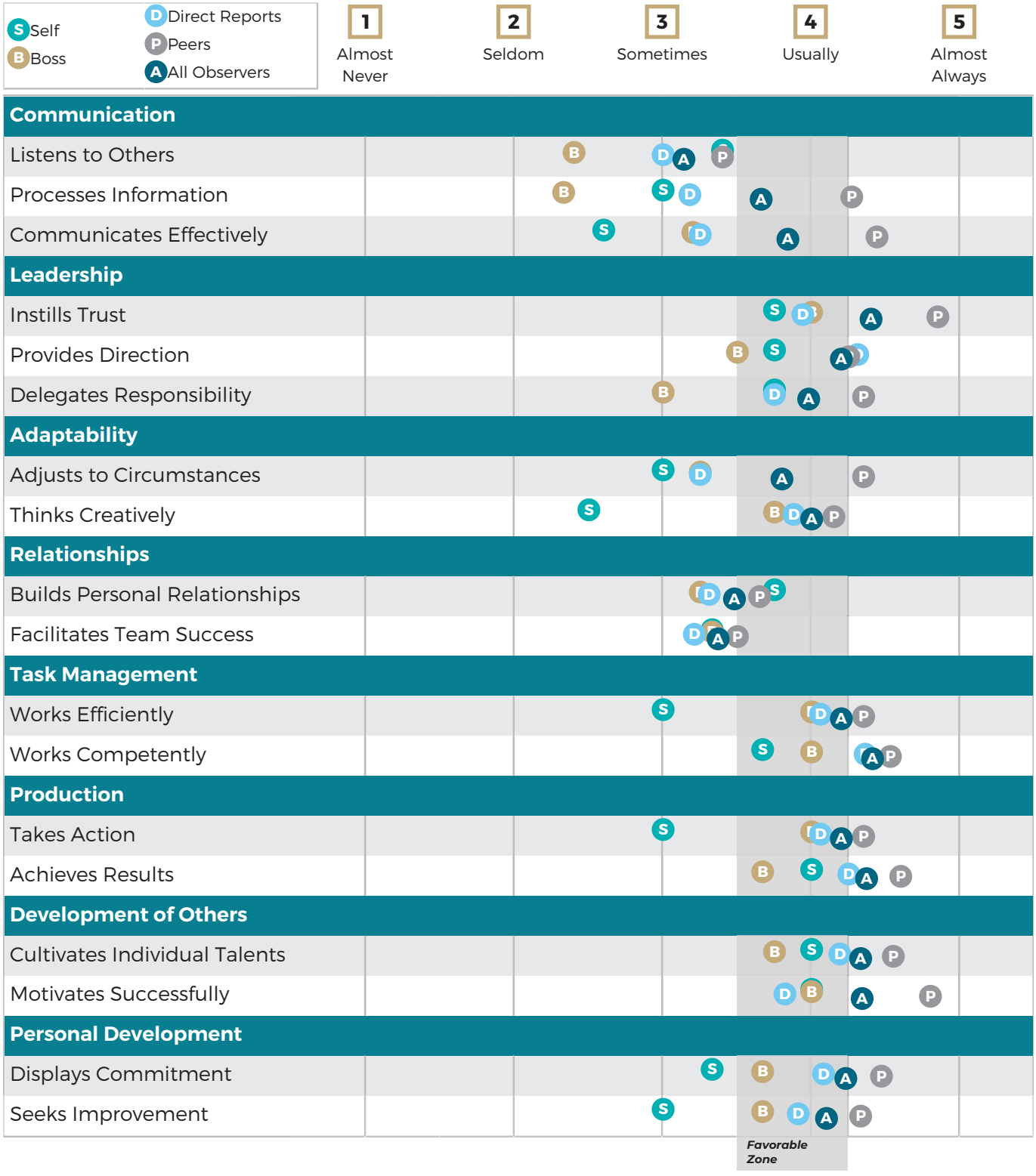
RESPONDENT GROUP COMPARISON

This page presents the relative placement of the average Skill Set score for each of the respondent groups. Each Skill Set is shown with its appropriate Universal Management Competency.



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SURVEY SUMMARY OF THE 70 ITEMS

The ratings for each individual question are shown for easy analysis. Should there be a variance of 3 or more points between groups on a question a flag will appear. Pay close attention to these questions because this wide variance may have had an impact on the average **All Observers** score for that Skill Set.

S B — Items that fall in a Critical Skill Set, as designated by Self and/or Boss

S B — Boss and/or Self did not rate item

D P A — Responses lack consensus within respondent group (responses vary by 3 or more points).

S Self
B Boss
A All Observers

	1 Almost Never	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Usually	5 Almost Always
Communication Listens to Others	B				
1. Solicits ideas, suggestions and opinions from others	S B A 3.30				
2. Creates a comfortable climate for airing concerns	S B A 2.90				
3. Listens to all points of view with an open mind	A S B A 3.00				
4. Listens carefully without interrupting	A S B A 3.50				
5. Summarizes input, then checks for understanding	S B A 3.00				
Communication Processes Information	B				
6. Identifies the core element of an issue	A S B A 3.50				
7. Considers the pros and cons, as well as short and long-term consequences, of decisions	S B A 4.00				
8. Arrives at logical, clear conclusions	A S B A 3.50				
					Favorable Zone

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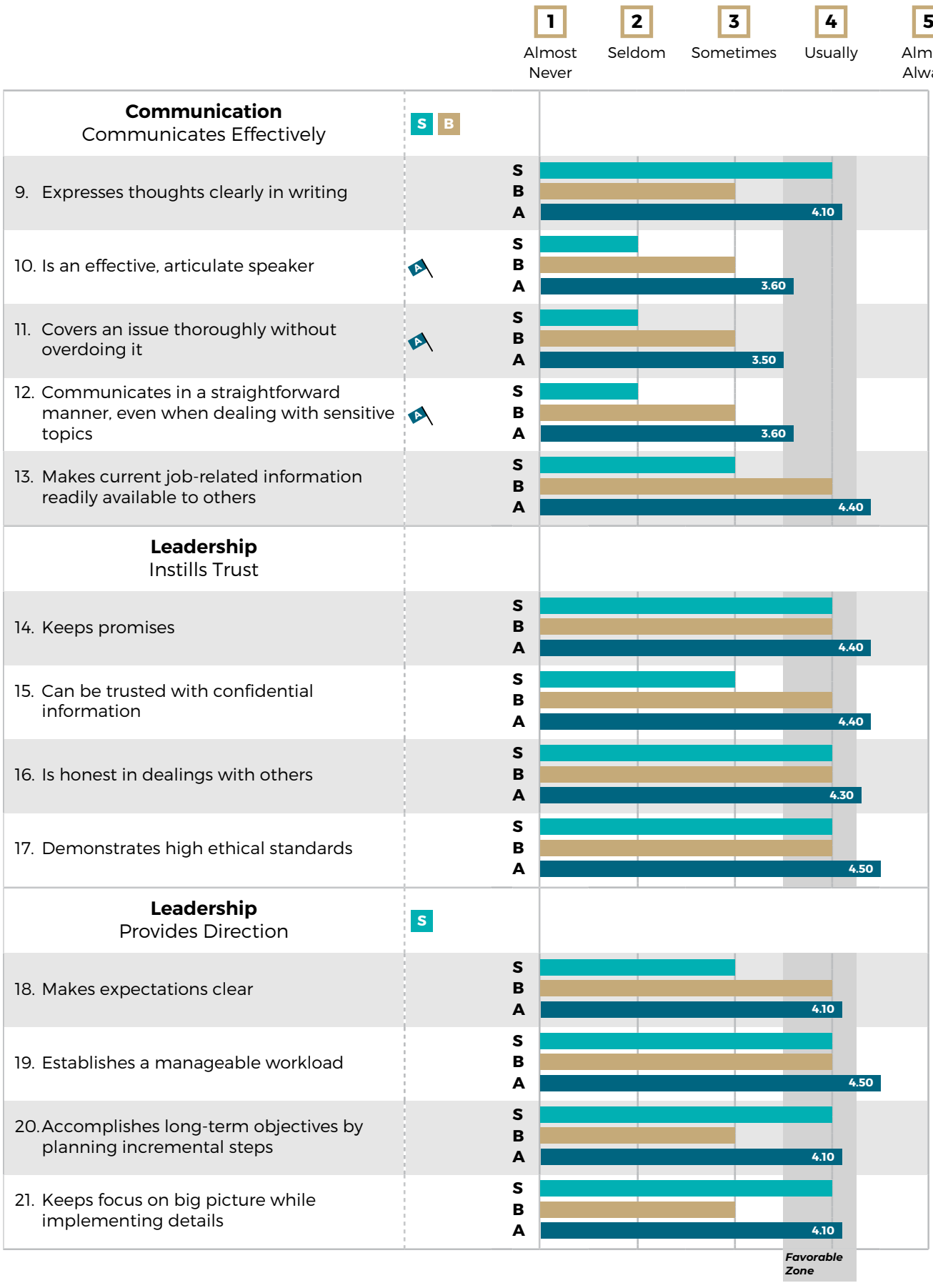

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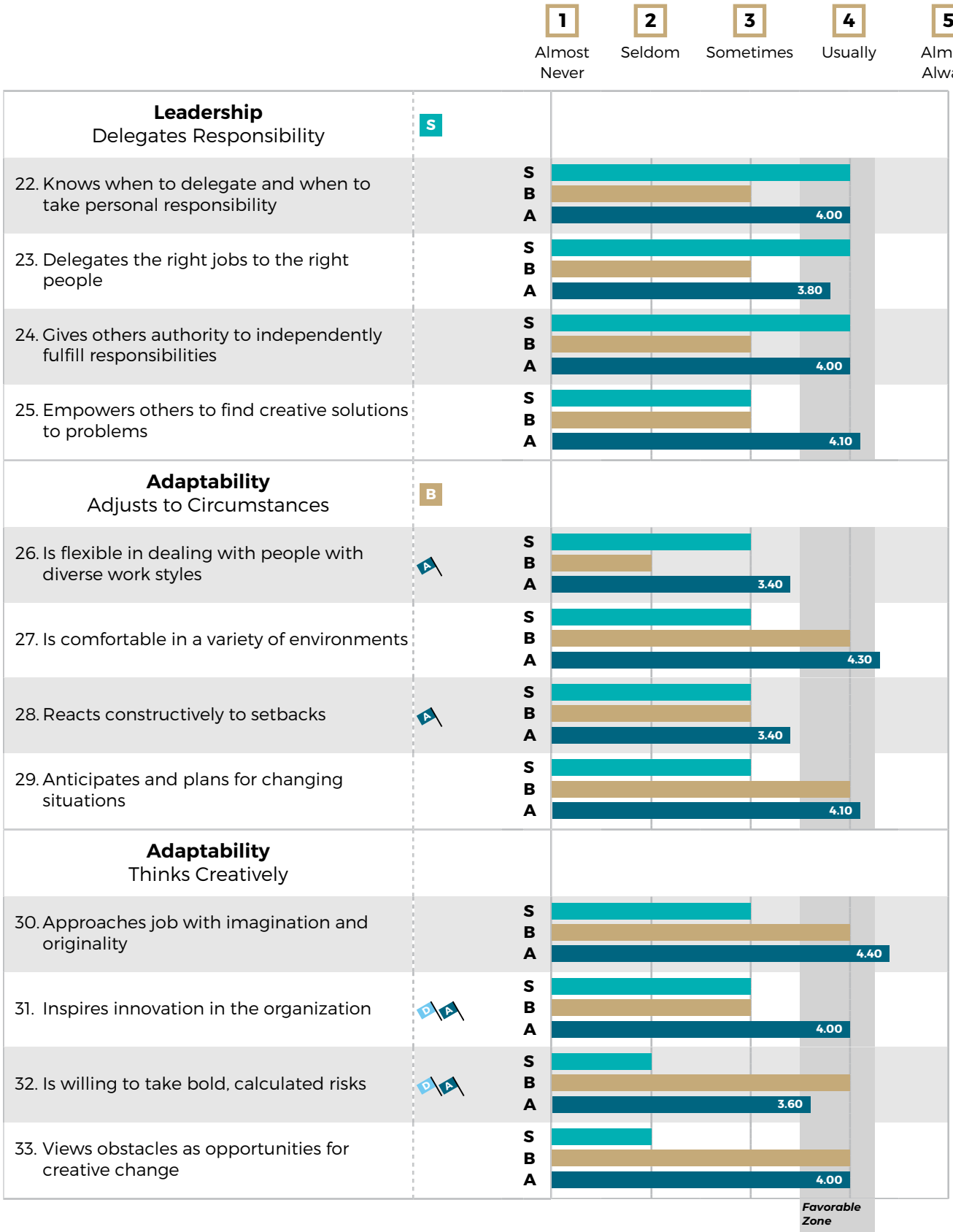

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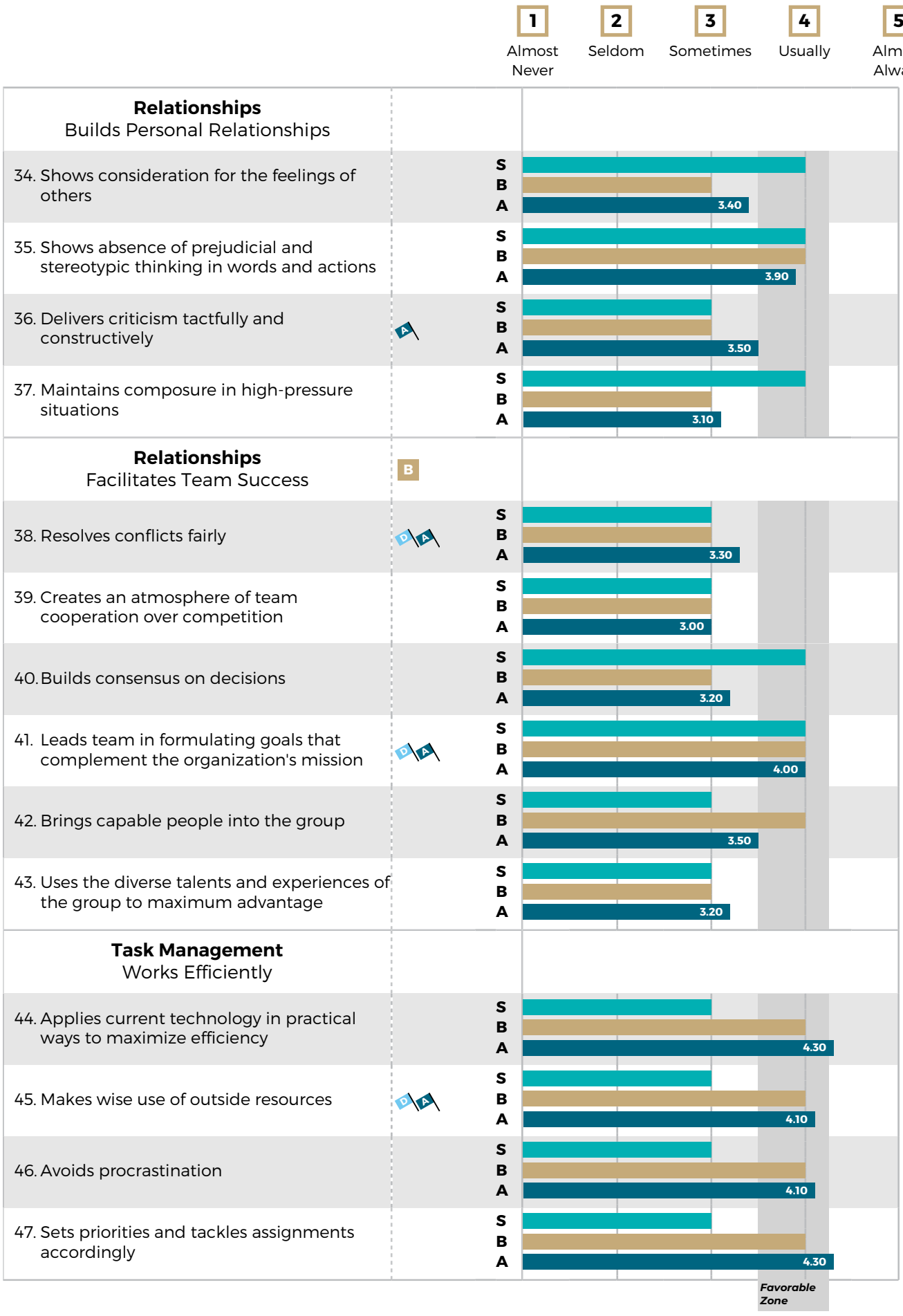

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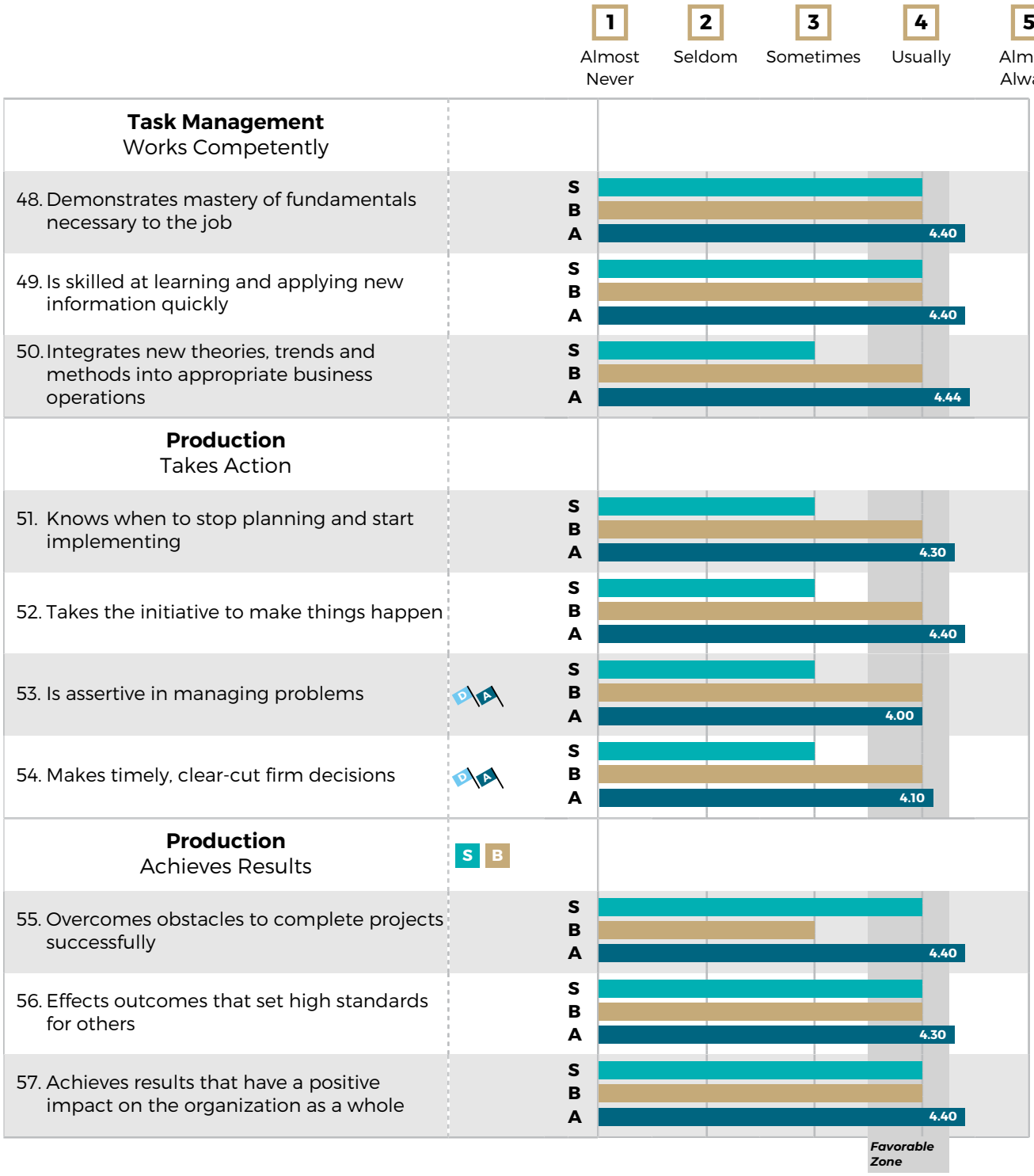

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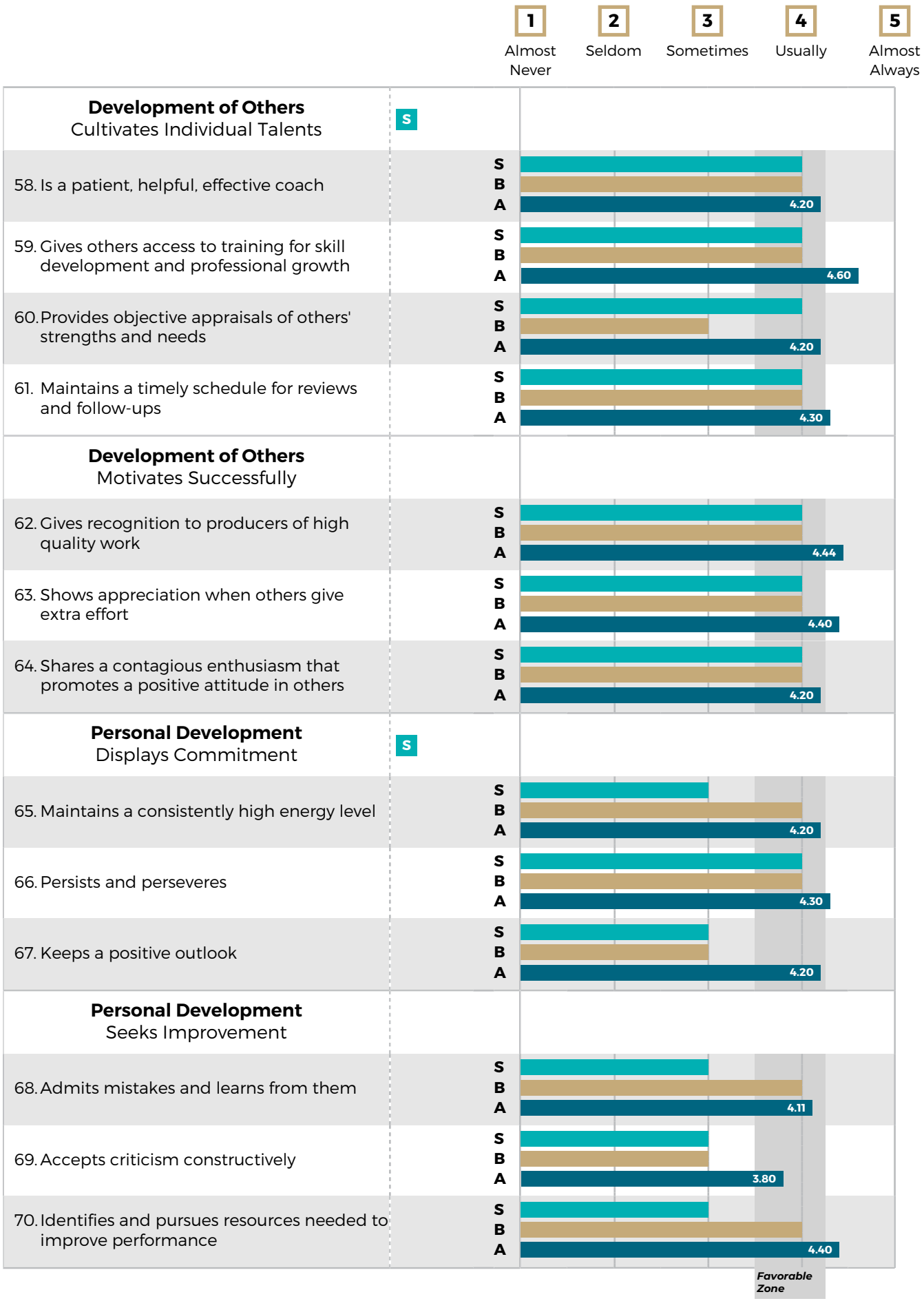

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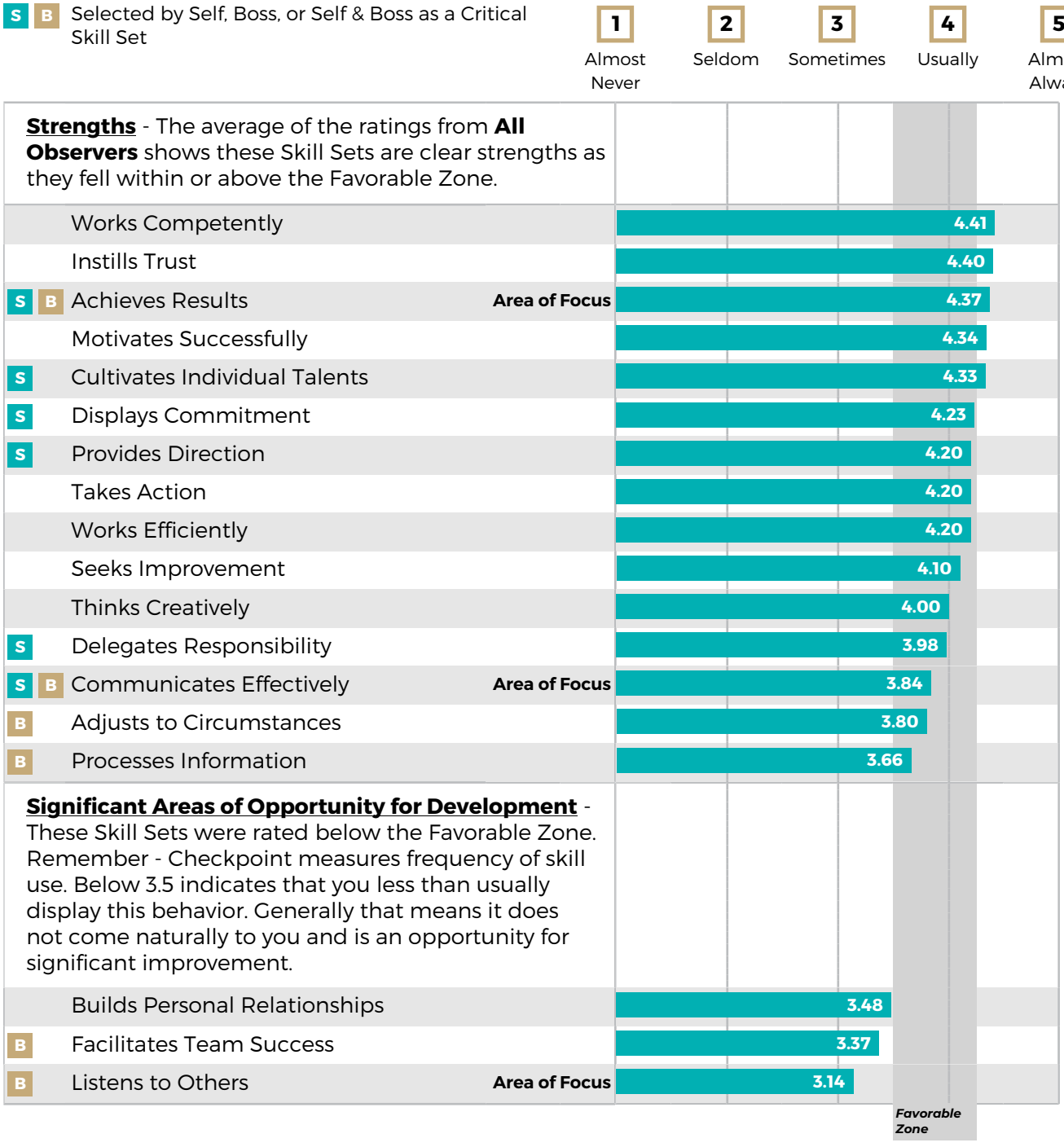
DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY OVERVIEW

It is good to know how your observers rated your behaviors on all Skill Sets. Here you will see all 18 Skill Sets with the average of the ratings from **All Observers**. Note also the skill sets your Boss and/or you identified as critical to your success; particularly when a Critical Skill Set is identified as an Area of Focus.

"Areas of Focus" are those behaviors that represent opportunities for enhancing your effectiveness. Some Areas of Focus may be listed as strengths because often honing your strengths is an excellent way to begin improving your skills. Others could fall below the Favorable Zone and thus present possible limitations observed in your behavior.

S B Selected by Self, Boss, or Self & Boss as a Critical Skill Set



Strengths - The average of the ratings from **All Observers** shows these Skill Sets are clear strengths as they fell within or above the Favorable Zone.

	Works Competently		4.41
	Instills Trust		4.40
S B	Achieves Results	Area of Focus	4.37
	Motivates Successfully		4.34
S	Cultivates Individual Talents		4.33
S	Displays Commitment		4.23
S	Provides Direction		4.20
	Takes Action		4.20
	Works Efficiently		4.20
	Seeks Improvement		4.10
	Thinks Creatively		4.00
S	Delegates Responsibility		3.98
S B	Communicates Effectively	Area of Focus	3.84
B	Adjusts to Circumstances		3.80
B	Processes Information		3.66

Significant Areas of Opportunity for Development - These Skill Sets were rated below the Favorable Zone. Remember - Checkpoint measures frequency of skill use. Below 3.5 indicates that you less than usually display this behavior. Generally that means it does not come naturally to you and is an opportunity for significant improvement.

	Builds Personal Relationships		3.48
B	Facilitates Team Success		3.37
B	Listens to Others	Area of Focus	3.14

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Individual Development Guide

Areas of Focus for Darcy Walker

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ABC Company
20141 Main St.
Anytown, TX 12345
555-555-5555

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AREAS OF FOCUS

You cannot risk leaving your personal development to chance; planning is essential. How many times have you stated to yourself or others your intentions to act but fall back into old habits? Leaders follow through on development plans when the leadership need is directly linked to a business challenge or pain point. Think of your Individual Development Plan (IDP) as you would any other project or business plan, and design it to be realistic, to consist of actions you can take every day on the job, and to tie directly to organizational priorities.

DEVELOPING YOUR INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

People tend to play to their strengths. So, too, do leaders - choosing to utilize one skill over another due to their personal proficiencies. They have the knowledge and experience to use certain skills in almost any situation. If, as a leader, you don't favor or simply lack proficiency with a skill that is deemed important to your organization, there are two steps you can take immediately to get started in your development. First, if you know what to do differently to improve a skill or behavior, do it! Second, create an Individual Development Plan. Your Development Plan need not be complex. Most often, your best course of action for personal and professional growth and development is obvious and easy to recognize. The most significant development opportunities take place on the job and are totally under your control. To begin this process of growth, you need to use the **K-S-S** Method:

- **K** actions you should KEEP doing, which are things you already do well. KEEP doing them!
- **S** actions you should STOP doing. As you analyzed your Feedback Report, you recognized behaviors that bring negative results - this is an indication of something you should STOP doing.
- **S** actions you should START doing. You have learned things you could be doing to enhance your effectiveness. START doing them at the earliest opportunity. As you add to your knowledge base and acquire ideas for better leadership performance, form the habit of doing them. Make START doing a regular part of your development process.

You can get started on your Individual Development Plan with this simple process:

1. Consider your ratings on the survey behaviors in your Areas of Focus and identify the leadership skills and supporting behaviors that you are going to work on.
2. Review the lists of Job Tips and Challenging Activities for the supporting behaviors in your Areas of Focus, which are included on the following pages.
3. Then, using the **K-S-S** Model, identify those actions appropriate to **K**eep doing, actions to **S**top doing, or actions to **S**tart doing.

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AREA OF FOCUS: LISTENING TO OTHERS

SOLICITING IDEAS, SUGGESTIONS, AND OPINIONS

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Pay attention to the speaker and try to benefit from each exchange, even if the topic or information is not interesting.
- Wait until others are completely finished presenting their point before forming your opinion and response. Avoid judging the speaker, and focus on the message itself.
- Show your attentiveness by using body language such as eye contact, nodding, and smiling while others are speaking.
- Listen patiently without interrupting others, and avoid becoming distracted while they are speaking.
- Ask questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" response when seeking others' input. Doing so could yield valuable information beyond a superficial answer.
- Encourage others to share their opinions, listen to all ideas, and consider everyone's point of view to gain the maximum benefit of others' contributions.
- Promote an environment that is free of judgment to encourage others to share their ideas.
- Allow time in meetings for items not on the agenda to be discussed.

Challenging Activities

- Thinking about issues or problems according to a set of guidelines can improve the listening skills of the entire team. Make a list of issues, problems, or tasks that require input from your team. Identify ideas and suggestions your direct reports could produce for these issues. Listen attentively. Ask questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" response, allowing them to elaborate on their ideas and suggestions. Let them do most of the talking. Follow through by implementing the suitable suggestions as soon as possible.
- After a direct report has offered ideas, suggestions, or opinions about a work-related issue, check yourself against the following criteria to see how well you think you listened:
    - Did not tune out boring information; did not fake attention; was not distracted
    - Listened carefully to the main ideas and supporting points
    - Did not interrupt. Waited for the person to finish before forming opinions and responding. Evaluated the message itself rather than the person speaking
    - Smiled, nodded, or otherwise encouraged the direct report as they spoke
    - Ensured your correct interpretation of what they meant by summarizing their points
    - Asked questions requiring more than a "yes" or "no" answer
    - Listened patiently

CREATING A COMFORTABLE CLIMATE FOR AIRING CONCERNS

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Make it clear through both your words and formal policy that all concerns are treated positively – that there is no retaliation for feedback on sensitive topics.
- Remember that you won't always have the best ideas or perspectives – be prepared to accept that your team may sometimes have better ideas and perspectives than yours.

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- Foster a personal attitude that all improvement is a positive thing – regardless of how it comes about or who initiates it.
- Recognize that it often takes courage to raise concerns – and be prepared to appreciate this courage in your team members.
- See team members who bring you less than positive feedback as productivity partners, working with you positively to continually improve the way things are done.
- When you're wrong, say so, as loudly and as early as you can.
- Note when you automatically defend an established position – could you be more open?
- Foster an environment where new ideas are welcomed and it is acceptable to question the way things are traditionally done.

Challenging Activities

- Publish a process for providing formal feedback on key topics.
- Let your team know that you welcome feedback on concerns about anything affecting the organization and its performance. Reinforce this message repeatedly.
- When someone raises a concern, thank them for taking the trouble to do so and assure them of your intention to investigate their input.
- Research all concerns raised and be seen to follow up by explaining any outcomes or resolutions to those raising concerns. Be the role model for the accountability you want to develop in your team.
- Be available to speak privately if a team member is concerned about public discussion on sensitive matters.
- Work hard to see the perspective of those raising concerns, and be aware of your own biases, especially when repeated complaints are raised. Your team will stop bringing concerns to you if you seem disinterested or pass judgment without investigation.
- Coach your team on how to raise concerns in a constructive, positive, and non-judgmental manner, and encourage them to bring you their positive thoughts on how to address the concerns they raise.

LISTENING TO ALL POINTS OF VIEW WITH AN OPEN MIND

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Encourage others to share their opinions, including those that differ from yours.
- Avoid being defensive when you receive criticism. Perceive criticism as constructive toward future improvement, rather than personally destructive to your character.
- Try to understand others' positions on an issue. Take time to consider the information from their perspective.
- Listen in this order: hear, understand, interpret, then respond. Do not jump from "hear" to "respond."
- Make every effort to understand others' points of view on issues, and take time to consider their stake in the issue, their perspective, and possible motives for seeing things the way they do.

Challenging Activities

- In a hotel lobby, airport, restaurant, etc., listen and observe people for ten minutes. Note what you have heard and observed. Did you interpret your observations differently because you had no prior opinions or attitudes on the topics they spoke about? You probably listened closely and with an open mind. When your direct reports are speaking, consider sometimes imagining that you are hearing what they are saying for the very first time. You may adopt a new perspective to what they are saying, leading to an innovative solution or a fresh interpretation of long-standing issues or problems.

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- Brainstorming sessions provide good experience for listening to all viewpoints with an open mind. Brainstorm with your direct reports as often as possible about work-related problems and issues. The benefits will be two-fold; you will practice listening and you will gain input from your work unit on solving problems.

LISTENING CAREFULLY WITHOUT INTERRUPTING

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Avoid interrupting, as it can become a habit, and could waste valuable time. Have you ever been irritated when someone has interrupted you with an assumption?
- Avoid considering your response before others finish speaking. Concentrate on what they are saying. Allow others to make their point before responding with your own.
- Do not allow constant disturbances during exchanges of information. Commit yourself and your direct reports to focus on listening to each other and to concentrate on the benefits of everyone's input toward a common goal.
- When you realize that you have interrupted someone, apologize by saying, "I'm sorry. Please continue." Politely admitting a mistake demonstrates your integrity and can build your credibility.

Challenging Activities

- Sometimes good listening can include taking notes. Consider keeping a pen and note pad readily accessible at all times. Write down as few words as possible to avoid distracting the speaker with excessive note taking. You can elaborate on your notes later.
- It is almost impossible to listen well and talk at the same time. Consider recording a few of your phone calls and listening to your portion of the conversation. Is there an appropriate amount of silence on the recording for the topic you discussed, indicating the time you spent listening? Recording yourself and considering how much you listen to others could remind you to avoid monopolizing the conversations in the future.

SUMMARIZING INPUT AND THEN CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Decide that you are going to maximize the information and value you receive every time you converse with one of your team members.
- Recognize that we all tend to filter what we hear through our preconceptions and biases and that it is easy to misunderstand the core messages of others – and plan to be more open.
- Realize that everyone has the potential to enrich your understanding and deserves to be heard and understood.
- Adopt an attitude that the person you are listening to is the most important person in your life at that moment in time – give them your full attention.
- Make a specific decision to note any time you become judgmental of what you're hearing – and revert to openly listening to understand what the other person is saying.
- Note when others summarize well in listening to you – what can you learn from them?

Challenging Activities

- Every time you have a conversation, make it a point to summarize and restate continually. Summarize anything they say that addresses your initial question – and note any interesting new perspectives they raise for further discussion. Don't simply parrot their words – restate the words *and* the emotions you detected: *"...it sounds like you're frustrated by this situation..."* or *"...that must be exciting..."* Make it clear that you understood what they said to you and how they *feel* about what they said.
- When you ask good open ended questions, you'll tend to get long responses. Don't be afraid to let your speaker go off topic a little – this will often help uncover other useful aspects of what they have to say.

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- Probe. If in doubt – ask, don't assume. Continually ask clarification questions – not only does demonstrating your interest in what the speaker has to say make you engaging, but it demonstrates your growing understanding of their key points.
- Ask challenging questions to encourage your speaker to expand their ideas and opinions and be seen to note down their key points.

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AREA OF FOCUS: COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

EXPRESSING THOUGHTS CLEARLY IN WRITING

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Ask yourself before writing a memo or letter, "What is the purpose of this communication?" View it from the reader's perspective. "What does the reader need to know? What do they already know? What can you tell them?"
- Outline the important information you wish to convey. Organize information in a logical, easy to follow manner. Omit unnecessary details and get to the point.
- To communicate clearly and effectively, use simple and concise language. Author written communication by writing as if you were speaking with recipients.
- Explain in written communication the actions and follow-up required of others. Do not use indeterminate language such as 'sort of,' 'rather,' 'somewhat,' etc.
- Email is a quick, informal means of communication, but the usual rules of grammar, punctuation, and style still apply. Email is every bit as important as other communications in establishing credibility. Even email with a peer could be distributed to others in the company.

Challenging Activities

- Volunteer for a writing assignment, such as a company newsletter. Ask a talented writer to edit your writing, and to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- Email is becoming more common as a communication tool. Learn to write powerful introductions and subject lines. State your message clearly and concisely, and keep supporting information relevant to the topic.

BEING AN EFFECTIVE, ARTICULATE SPEAKER

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Strive for conversational, dynamic delivery. Avoid stiff, formal presentations. Become animated, when appropriate. Use gestures and body language to emphasize your communication efforts.
- Always thoroughly prepare and practice before each presentation.
- Know your audience and their stake in the information you present to them. Consider what the audience needs to know, what they want to know, and why they need to know it. One technique is to ask participants what they hope to learn from your presentation.
- Be direct and assertive when presenting your opinions. Avoid phrases that can lessen the impact of what you say, such as 'It seems to be,' 'It is likely,' or 'It depends.'
- Use practical examples to support key points, if appropriate. Audiences are often eager to hear interesting stories.
- Ask others for feedback to check if the content, delivery, and tone of your presentation was appropriate and well-received.

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Challenging Activities

- Consider joining organizations that offer the opportunity for you to speak in front of others. Active participation in local clubs can help polish your speaking skills.
- The audience can become visually overwhelmed with too many bullet points and sub-points. Limit visuals to no more than ten per topic. Review recent presentations and note the ten visuals that present the most important points. Add variety by presenting further information on flipcharts or handouts. Visuals should focus attention, reinforce key messages, stimulate interest, and illustrate points that are difficult to visualize.

COVERING ISSUES THOROUGHLY WITHOUT OVERDOING IT

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Never tell your audience more than they need to hear. Analyzing your audience in advance will help establish how much information is required. Do not become so enthusiastic about the topic that you tell them everything you know about it.
- Be succinct. You can lose your audience's attention with too much data and too many stories. Apply the "Rule of Three:" identify three important points you want to convey and support each point with three pieces of evidence. Consider introducing the topic with a strong delivery, and closing the presentation with a call to action.
- Limit your response to a question to a minute or less. If a participant asks an unrelated question, assure them you will address the issue later. Return quickly to the subject and follow your outline. If you stray off-topic, apologize, and return back to the important topic as soon as possible.

Challenging Activities

- George Bernard Shaw said, "If you teach a person everything, they will not learn." Before sharing information, ask yourself, "What do I need to share with this person? If I could only share one piece of information about this topic, what would it be?" Repeat this for all topics in the presentation. This could produce a succinct and successful presentation.
- Before meeting with a group to discuss an issue, conduct a thorough analysis of your audience. Answer the questions below before preparing your presentation.
    - Who will be present? How does this issue affect them?
    - What do they need to know?
    - How much do they already know about this subject?
    - What types of examples, stories, or illustrations could interest them or offend them?
    - How can I present information most efficiently?

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COMMUNICATING IN A STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER - EVEN WHEN DEALING WITH SENSITIVE SUBJECTS

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Communicating in sensitive situations can be difficult if you do not already regularly communicate with your direct reports.
- When asked questions in challenging and sensitive situations, give honest and complete answers. Answering evasively damages your credibility and perceptions of your integrity. If you are unable to answer a question fully, state your reasons, and talk about the areas of concern that you can address.
- Do not procrastinate or be evasive when you must communicate negative information. Remain sensitive, yet direct.
- Recognize that your ability to receive feedback is as important as your ability to give feedback.
- Have the professionalism and courage to say what you need to say. However, be compassionate and speak sincerely. In sensitive situations, act the way you would want others to act with you.

Challenging Activities

After dealing with a sensitive matter, rate yourself on the following:

- Introduced the sensitive topic in a caring, but direct manner
- Listened compassionately while the other person stated an opinion
- Accepted the other person's perceptions as valid
- Used good questioning skills to sort through the person's perceptions about the situation
- Exhibited patience while the other person spoke, then worked through the situation
- Took time to think before responding too quickly
- Defused any tension surrounding the situation
- Upheld your credibility, integrity, and trustworthiness

MAKING CURRENT JOB-RELATED INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO OTHERS

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Believe the research: informed employees are motivated employees; motivated employees are engaged and productive employees.
- Recognize the difference between the attitudes ‘information is power - hoard it' versus ‘information empowers – share it around as widely as possible.' Be forthcoming with information that can make others more effective.
- Realize that what you and your management colleagues take for common knowledge, e.g. how things are going, what challenges are down the road or what new products are coming may not be known to your team. Inform them as soon as it is appropriate to do so.
- Provide continual feedback on how the organization and department are doing – and what part every team member can play in helping you to do even better.
- Make sure every single team member knows these four basics: (1) Your business focus: what you're in business to achieve, (2) Your target market: your ideal customer, (3) What performance is expected of them, (4) How their performance will be measured.
- Share good news – positivity and optimism is infectious.
- Share bad news quickly and explain how you're managing negative situations. Rumors are always worse than reality.

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Challenging Activities

- Create a weekly blog post from every department head outlining the key news and information for the week.
- Use social media to send daily or weekly updates — short, concise reminders of what employees need to focus to reach the organization's goals.
- Schedule a regular team meeting that includes formal sharing of all relevant company news, updates and information.
- Share useful articles and blog posts on anything related to the organization or your industry.
- Create update alerts for all key aspects of your business and industry and share the results of these alerts with your team.
- Create a schedule of one-on-one meetings for each member of your team and use those meetings to share updates and solicit news and updates from their perspective.

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AREA OF FOCUS: ACHIEVING RESULTS

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES TO COMPLETE PROJECTS SUCCESSFULLY

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Remember that obstacles can be opportunities to help build your leadership skills.
- When you see a need or problem that you wish someone would address, ask yourself if you could be doing something about it.
- Identify the obstacles that are impeding your progress on a project and develop plans for action to overcome them.
- Consider that when something is not working, you may need to develop another approach. Determine who can help you look at the issue objectively and brainstorm possible solutions.
- Pull your work unit together as a group to solve problems. Use your direct reports as sounding boards in areas where they have expertise. Avoid premature judgment of others' ideas.
- Identifying risk areas in the initial stages of planning is one way you can anticipate and prepare for potential problems. Prevent problems by analyzing their cause.
- Look for new technology that can increase your work unit's efficiency.
- Use humor to keep difficulties in perspective.

Challenging Activities

When an obstacle hinders the successful completion of a project, gather your team together, obtain their input, consider the possible causes for the obstacle, and weigh all possible solutions. Create a table with the following columns to help you arrive at a solution:

- Obstacle
- List the probable causes for this obstacle and rate them for probability (A - Z with A being high probability).
- List five suggestions for a solution. Rate these suggestions (1 - 5 with 1 being most probable solution).
- What are the steps for implementing the solution?

Obstacle	Probable Causes	Probability	Suggestions For Solutions	Solution Rating	Steps To Solution
	.		.		
			.		
	.		.		
			.		
	.		.		
			.		

EFFECTING OUTCOMES THAT SET HIGH STANDARDS FOR OTHERS

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Set high standards for performance in every aspect of the business.
- Work to exceed customer expectations.
- Involve everyone in the commitment to quality. Make sure they understand that excellence is good business.

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- Constantly evaluate the quality of work produced. Report on both your successes and failures with equal candor.
- Solicit suggestions from your direct reports, manager and peers.
- No matter how well things are going, realize that improvements are always possible. Invite your direct reports to challenge established boundaries. Help them identify "stretch" objectives to achieve organizational goals.
- Follow issues to completion. Persisting at problem-solving sends a strong message that you want issues resolved as quickly as possible and that you are willing to do what is necessary to bring problems to closure.

Challenging Activities

- Determine if your organization uses an effective performance review process that links feedback and coaching to specific business goals. If not, create an active performance review process to reinforce high performance standards specific to your work unit.
- Ask your direct reports to evaluate the standards of the team in these areas (1 = low; 5 = high): Clarity of purpose, communication, problem-solving, decision-making, change, customer focus, quality of work, conflict resolution, work processes, and feedback. For those ratings that are below 3, determine actions that will improve standards in those areas.

ACHIEVING RESULTS THAT HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE ORGANIZATION

Skills, Behaviors, and Attitudes to Adapt and Practice

- Concentrate your efforts toward achievements that contribute to the team goals and to the mission of the company. Don't get sidetracked with unimportant activities. Lead with a sense of purpose and make sure everyone is aware of the vision.
- If you tend to push your decision-making responsibilities toward your manager, consider also offering recommendations and solutions in support of the decision to be made.
- Ensure that everyone who is responsible for meeting the stated financial goals understands what these goals are and what they are expected to deliver.
- Look for customer needs that you could be meeting but currently are not. Develop a plan for meeting these needs with additional or expanded products and services.
- Accept that you may sometimes need to work across departments to achieve goals. Build positive relationships outside your department that will enhance cooperation.
- Become more cost-conscious. Ask others to justify expenditures and look for ways to cut costs.
- Develop a company-wide definition of quality and manage to that definition.

Challenging Activities

- Teach your direct reports how to effectively speak for and represent your work unit in company-wide meetings. Giving them the opportunity to talk about their work and to consider input from others outside the department is an excellent way for them to see how their work fits into the overall picture.
- Review your own and your direct reports' individual development plans and performance appraisal criteria to ensure that they are consistent with the organization's top priorities.
- Know the business of your organization by investigating the following. You will need internal resources to gain this information.
    - The history of your organization, its strengths and weaknesses
    - The organization's key success factors
    - The organization's vision and mission statements
    - The organization's annual report

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- Knowledge of the organization's financial system
- The organization's competition
- What does the organization do to maintain morale? Rewards? Recognition?
- The organization's written code of ethics, if available

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