

Servant Leadership Survey

1.	I have made a deep commitment to listen intently to others so that I can identify and clarify the purpose and passion of the group.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	I normally assume the good intentions of others and I understand and empathize with them by accepting and recognizing their special and unique spirit.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	I search for wholeness and the potential to heal myself and others so that transformation and integration can take place.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	I have the capacity for introspection and the ability to recognize myself as an individual who is separate from the environment and other individuals (awareness).	5	4	3	2	1
5.	When making decisions I rely on persuasion to convince others in order to build consensus within the group, rather than relying upon my positional authority.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	I bring visions to reality by looking at a problem or the organization from a conceptualizing perspective (form an idea or picture), rather than just looking at the day-to-day operations.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	When solving complex problems I use my intuitive mind to understand lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision that affects the future.	5	4	3	2	1
8.	I hold the institution in trust for the greater good of society.	5	4	3	2	1
9.	I believe people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers, thus I'm deeply committed to the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of each individual within the organization	5	4	3	2	1
10.	I seek to identify a means for building community among those who work within the institution.	5	4	3	2	1

Interpreting Your Score

This self-assessment questionnaire is designed to measure your servant leadership attributes by assessing the Ten Principles of Servant Leadership.

By reflecting upon your scores for each of the principles, you can determine your stronger and weaker attributes. The maximum score you can receive for each dimension is 5, while the lowest you can receive is 1. Scores in the upper range indicates you have a strong servant leadership principle, while a score in the lower range indicates a weaker principle.

You should reflect upon the weaker scores, identify opportunities to improve them, and create an action plan that will help you implement your plan.

Reliability and Validity

Since this survey is a learning tool used in training programs such as leadership development, rather than a research tool, it has not been formally checked for reliability or validity. Unlike most of the other questionnaires on this site, this is a fairly new one and I have trialled it only a couple of times, thus I have received very little feedback about it. Please email me if you have suggestions to improve it.

http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/servant_leadership_survey.html

Servant Leadership Self- Assessment Questionnaire

This questionnaire contains statements about servant leadership. Next to each statement, circle the number that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

- Almost Always True — 5
- Mostly True — 4
- Occasionally True — 3
- Seldom True — 2
- Almost Never True — 1

Be honest about your choices as this will help you to reflect on your strengths and areas that need improvement. If you are not in a leadership position, try to relate each question to similar actions you have taken in the past.

The Ten Characteristics of Servant Leadership

In the two newest books, *Reflections on Leadership & Insights on Leadership*, the editor Larry Spears, included in the introduction to the collection of essays ten critical characteristics of the servant-leader. These characteristics were aggregated from Robert Greenleaf's collection of essays.

1. *Listening*: Leaders have traditionally been valued for their communication and decision-making skills. While these are also important skills for the servant-leader, they need to be reinforced by a deep commitment to listening intently to others. The servant-leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps clarify that will. He or she seeks to listen receptively to what is being said (and not said). Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's inner voice and seeking to understand what one's body, spirit, and mind are communicating. Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant-leader.
2. *Empathy*: The servant-leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits. One assumes that good intentions of coworkers and does not reject them as people, even while refusing to accept their behavior or performance. The most successful servant-leaders are those who have become skilled empathetic listeners. It is interesting to note that Robert Greenleaf developed a course in "receptive listening" in the 1950's for the Wainwright House in New York. This course continues to be offered to the present day.
3. *Healing*: Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of a servant-leadership is the potential for healing one's self and others. Many people have broken spirits and have suffered from a variety of emotional hurts. Although this is a part of being human, servant-leaders recognize that they have an opportunity to "help make whole" those with whom they come in contact. In *The Servant as Leader* Greenleaf writes: "There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant-leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share" (p. 27).
4. *Awareness*: General awareness, and especially self-awareness, strengthens the servant-leader. Making a commitment to foster awareness can be scary – you never know what you may discover!
Awareness also aids one in understanding issues involving ethics and values. It lends itself to being able to view most situations from a more integrated, holistic position. As Greenleaf observed: "Awareness is not a giver of solace – it is just the opposite. It is a disturber and an awakener. Able leaders are usually sharply awake and reasonably disturbed. They are not seekers after solace. They have their own inner serenity." (p. 20).
5. *Persuasion*: Another characteristic of servant-leaders is a reliance on persuasion, rather than using one's positional authority, in making decisions

within an organization. This particular element offers one of the clearest destinations between the traditional authoritarian model and that of servant-leadership. The servant-leader is effective at building consensus within groups. This emphasis on persuasion over coercion probably has its roots within the beliefs of The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the denomination with which Robert Greenleaf himself was most closely allied.

6. *Conceptualization*: Servant-leaders seek to nurture their abilities to “dream great dreams.” The ability to look at a problem (or an organization) from a conceptualizing perspective means that one must think beyond day-to-day realities. For many managers this is a characteristic that requires discipline and practice. The traditional manager who wishes to also be a servant-leader must stretch his or her thinking to encompass broader-based conceptual thinking. Within organizations, conceptualization is, by its very nature, the proper role of boards of trustees or directors. Unfortunately, boards can sometimes become involved in the day-to-day operations (something that should always be discouraged!) and fail to provide the visionary concept for an institution. Trustees need to be mostly conceptual in their orientation, staffs need to be operational in their perspective, and the most effective CEOs and managers probably need to develop both perspectives. Servant-leaders are called to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and a day-to-day focused approach.
7. *Foresight*: Closely related to conceptualization, the ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation is hard to define, but easy to identify. One knows it when one sees it. Foresight is a characteristic that enables the servant-leader to understand the lessons from the past, the realities of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision for the future. It is also deeply rooted within the intuitive mind. As such, one can conjecture that foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic with which one may be born. All other characteristics can be consciously developed. There hasn't been a great deal written on foresight. It remains a largely unexplored area in leadership studies, but one most deserving of careful attention.
8. *Stewardship*: Peter Block (author of *Stewardship* and *The Empowered Manager*) has defined stewardship as “holding something in trust for another”. Robert Greenleaf's view of all institutions was one in which CEOs, staff, and trustees all played significant roles in holding their institutions in trust for the greater good of society. Servant-leadership, like stewardship, assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.
9. *Commitment to the growth of people*: Servant-leaders believe that people have an intrinsic value beyond their tangible contributions as workers. As such, the servant-leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his or her institution. The servant-leader recognizes the tremendous responsibility to do everything within his or her power to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of employees. In practice, this can include (but is not limited to) concrete actions such as making available funds for personal and professional development, taking a personal interest in

the ideas and suggestions from everyone, encouraging worker involvement in decision making, and actively assisting laid-off workers to find other employment.

10. *Building community*: the servant-leader senses that much has been lost in recent human history as a result of the shift from local communities to large institutions as a the primary shaper of human lives. This awareness causes the servant-leader to seek to identify some means for building community among those who work within a given institution. Servant-leadership suggests that true community can be created among those who work in businesses and other institutions. Greenleaf said: "All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his own unlimited liability for a quite specific community-related group" (p. 30).

Servant Leader Test

Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?

Robert K. Greenleaf
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