



A Study of the “DNA” of Effective Leaders in the Central Ohio Information Technology Sector



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Executive Summary

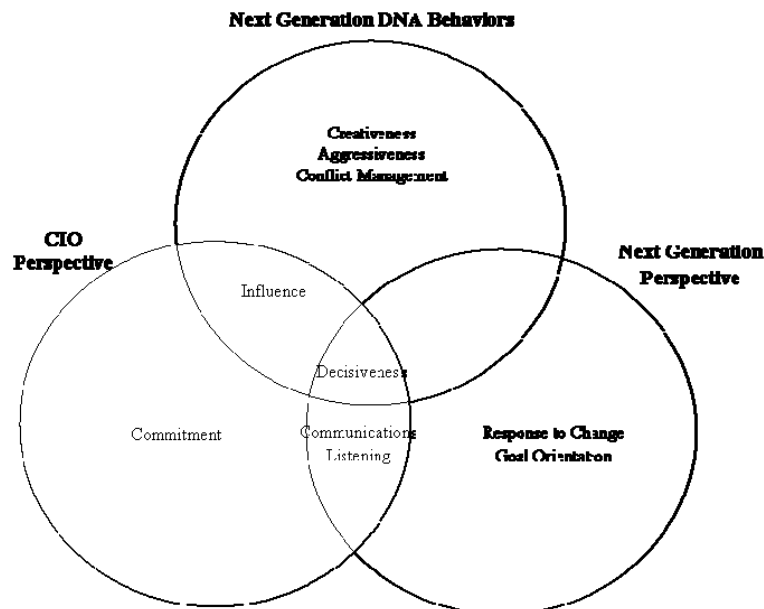
We live in a fast paced, shifting world where the premium for leadership continues to grow. It's widely cited that leadership talent is the greatest enabler/limiter of growth. A key element of leadership development is to define what behavioral characteristics are important to your organization and then execute development projects targeted at those behaviors.

This research project was designed to engage the Central Ohio CIO community and the "Next Gen" CIO community to explore:

1. What are the behavioral characteristics of up and coming (Next Gen) CIO's? (What is their DNA?)
2. What characteristics do CIO's see as important?
3. What characteristics do "Next Gen" CIO's see as important?

Working with the Central Ohio CIO forum we were able to identify 30 "Next Gen" CIO's. The "Next Gen" CIO's then took a behavioral assessment tool designed to determine what the behavioral DNA was. Both the CIO's and the "Next Gen" CIO's were then asked to pick from a list of 55 behaviors and identify the top 5 behaviors they believed were the most important to their success.

Following is a pictorial of the results:



In addition to the top 5 behaviors we also assessed the top five (5) competencies of IT leaders as:

- Adaptability
- Stress Tolerance
- Leadership Effectiveness
- Problem Solving
- Sales Effectiveness

Our hope is that these findings will be used to shape leadership development conversations. We plan on conducting this study on a yearly basis so we invite you to contact us with your thoughts and comments.

We'd like to recognize the study participants and thank the Central Ohio Forum CIO for their support.

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Introduction

Have you wondered what characteristics make an IT leader effective? Do we each have hard-wired characteristics that are genetically bound to us or can we be trained? Why types of characteristics are we seeing in the next generation IT leaders? How do these characteristics relate to the company's goal and objectives?

These questions and many more were assessed through the Central Ohio IT Leadership DNA study project conducted by Progressive Medical and Ray & Barney Group. Thirty (30) future IT leaders of premier technology companies in the Central Ohio sector completed a comprehensive "DNA" study. The study gathered behavioral statistics through the Devine Inventory® Assessment and compiled the most important characteristics in a future IT leader from a Central Ohio CIO Group.

The Devine Inventory® Assessment is an online assessment that targets thirty-three (33) behaviors and twelve (12) competencies. It has been used for over thirty (30) years to evaluate each candidate to the Success Profile™ which is specifically designed for the Leadership position within an organization. The first portion of the Success Profile™ ranks behaviors according to the importance to fulfill a leadership position within the culture of an organization. The second portion is designed to analyze the behavioral strength of the candidate.

Top Behavioral Threads

What is the collective “DNA” threads of the next generation IT leaders?

- Influence
- Creativeness
- Aggressiveness
- Conflict Management
- Decisiveness

How do these threads compare to what CIO’s are looking for in their future leaders?

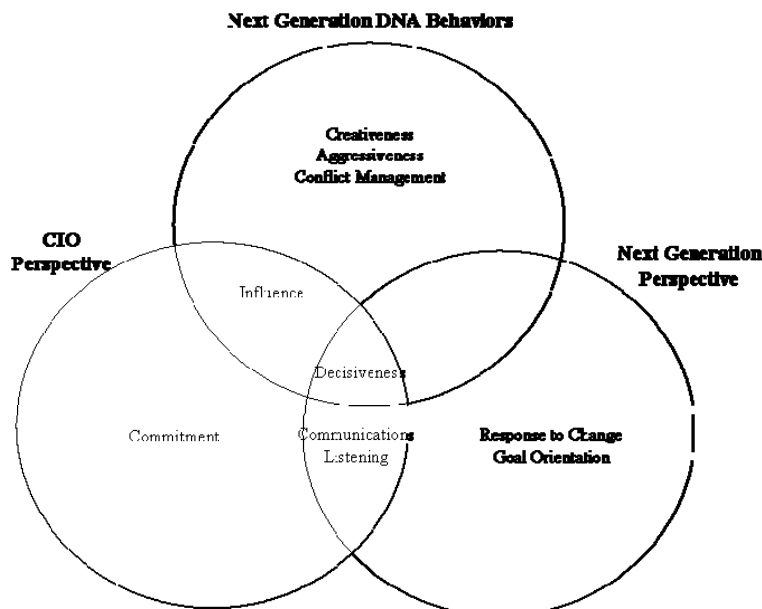
- Communications
- Listening
- Decisiveness
- Commitment
- Influence

How do these threads compare to what “Next Gen” CIO’s consider as important?

- Goal Orientation
- Response to Change
- Communications
- Listening
- Decisiveness

What threads are common in each of these perspectives?

- Decisiveness
- Communications
- Listening

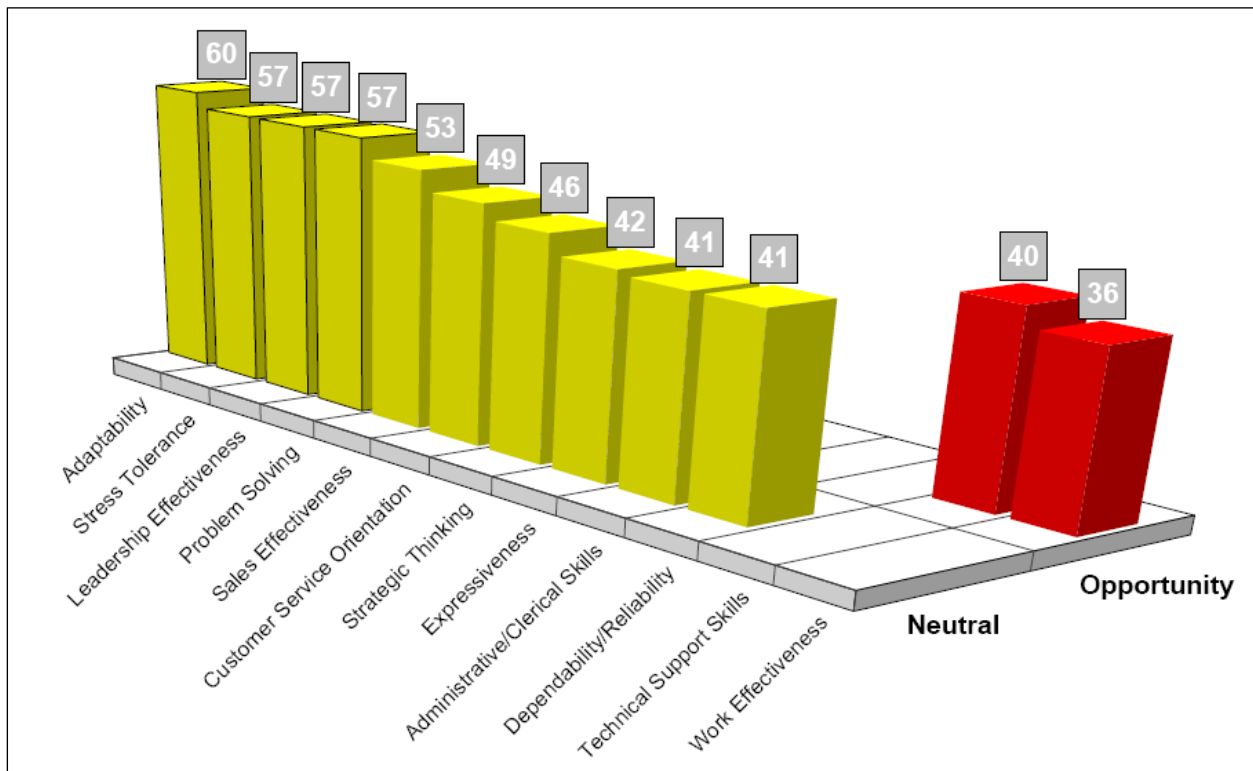


Top Competencies

The Devine Inventory® Assessment identified the **top five (5) competencies of IT leaders** as:

- Adaptability
- Stress Tolerance
- Leadership Effectiveness
- Problem Solving
- Sales Effectiveness

What competencies are you building in your leadership?

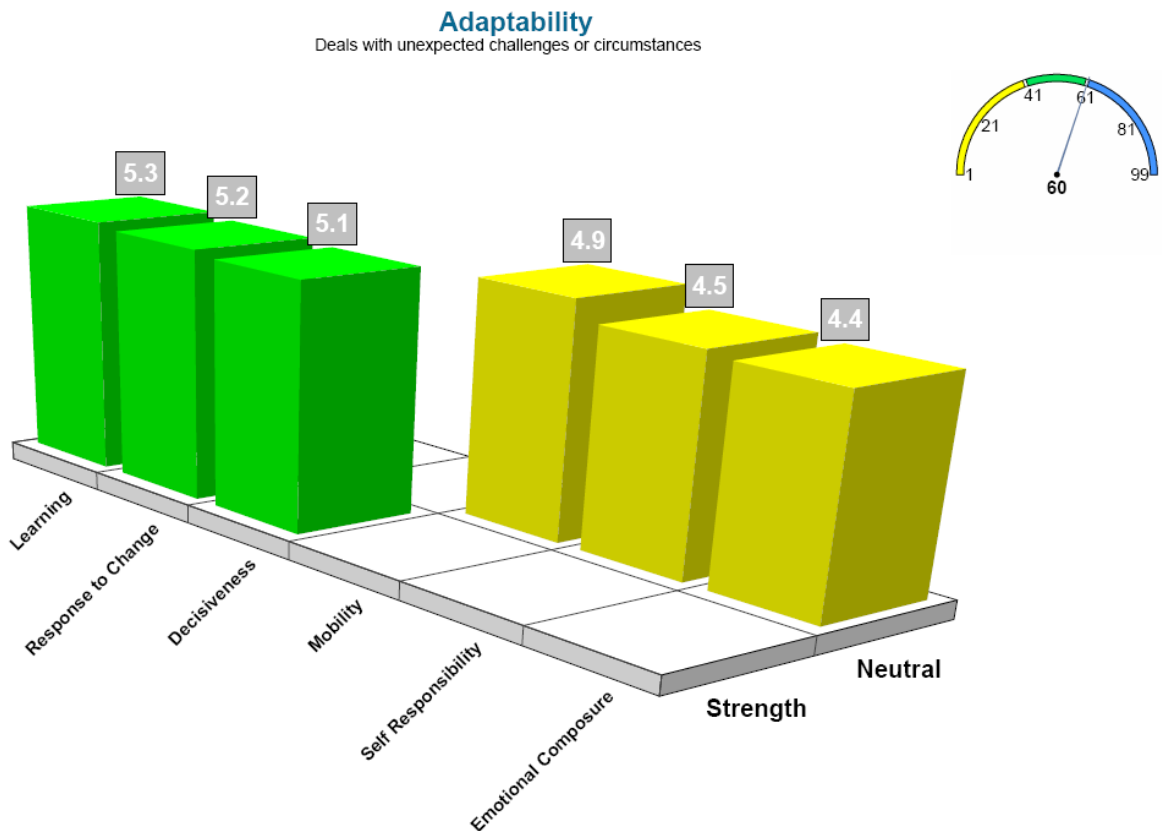


Detailed Breakdown of Top 5 Competencies

Adaptability – deals with unexpected challenges or circumstances

Adaptability consists of six (6) core competencies:

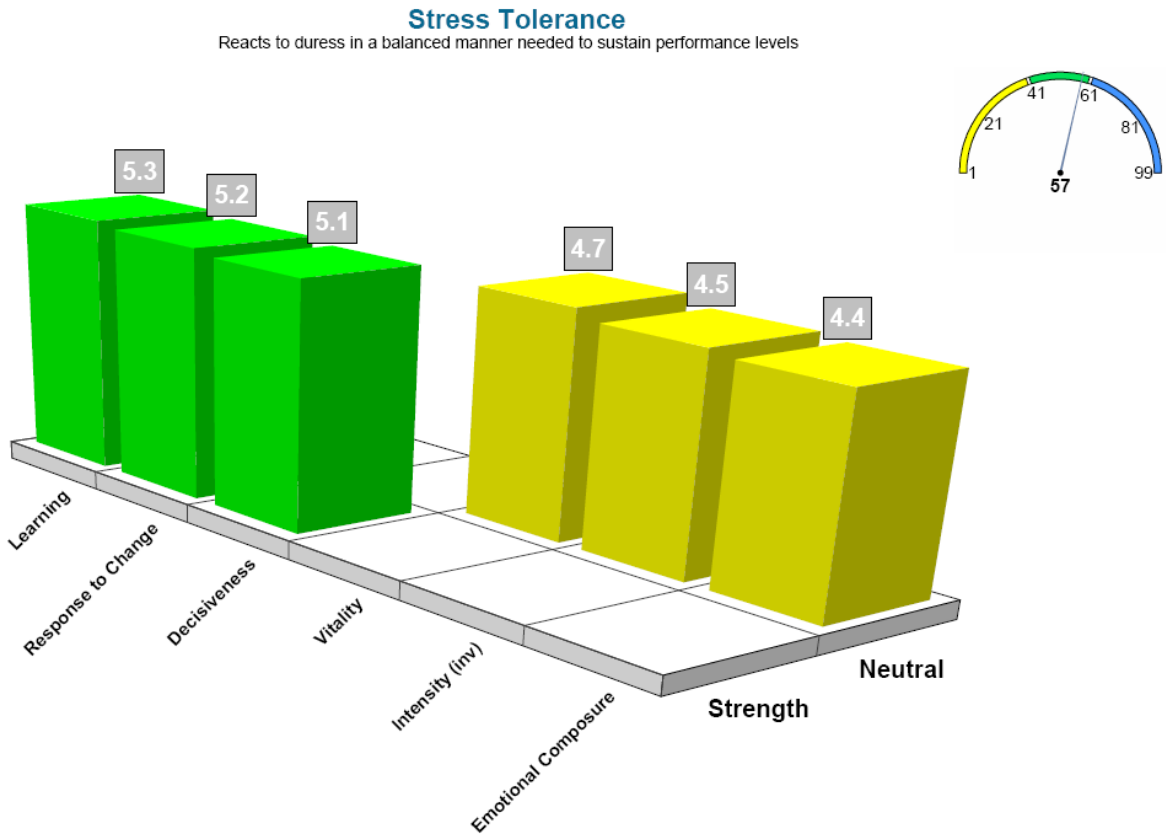
- Learning – Advancing knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Response to Change – Modifying work practices to accommodate new direction
- Decisiveness – Choosing a course of action with speed and ease
- Mobility – Accommodating to requirements for moving about and/or travel
- Self Responsibility – Taking personal accountability
- Emotional Composure – Maintaining professionalism and poise



Stress Tolerance – reacts to duress in a balanced manner needed to sustain performance levels

Stress Tolerance consists of six (6) core competencies:

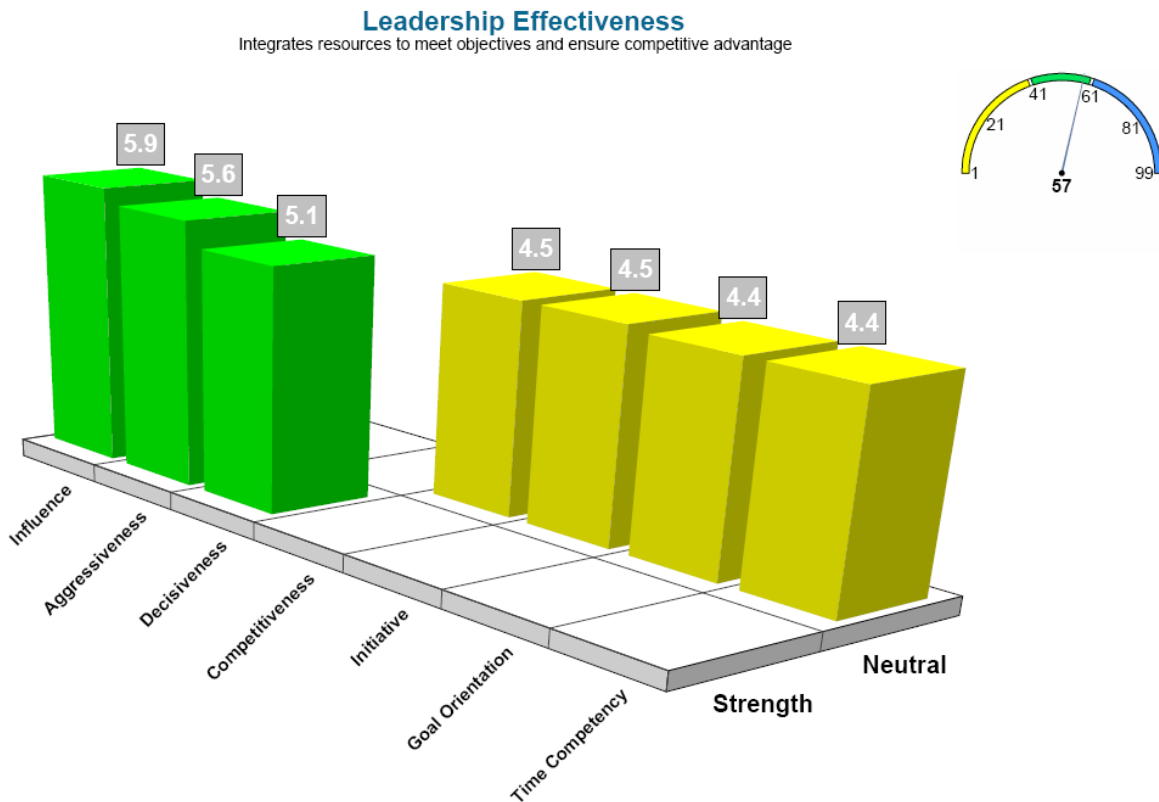
- Learning – Advancing knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Response to Change – Modifying work practices to accommodate new direction
- Decisiveness – Choosing a course of action with speed and ease
- Vitality – Maintaining energy and stamina
- Intensity – Effectively controlling stress
- Emotional Composure – Maintaining professionalism and poise



Leadership Effectiveness – integrates resources to meet objectives and ensure competitive advantage

Leadership Effectiveness consists of seven (7) core competencies:

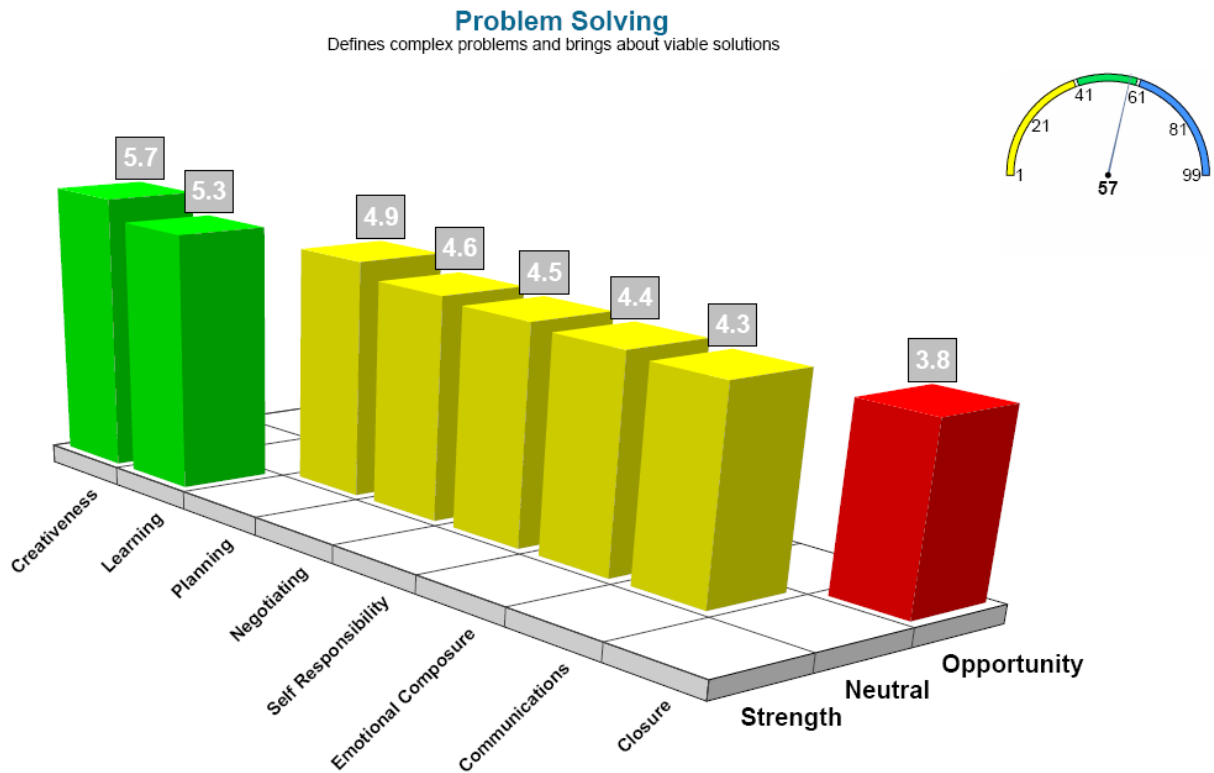
- Influence – Gaining acceptance of ideas
- Aggressiveness – Being assertive and taking charge
- Decisiveness – Choosing a course of action with speed and ease
- Competitiveness – Obtaining advantage through team or individual effort(s)
- Initiative – Taking action without being told
- Goal Orientation – Seeking challenges toward reaching objectives
- Time Competency – Managing time efficiently



Problem Solving – defines complex problems and brings about viable solutions

Problem Solving consists of eight (8) core competencies:

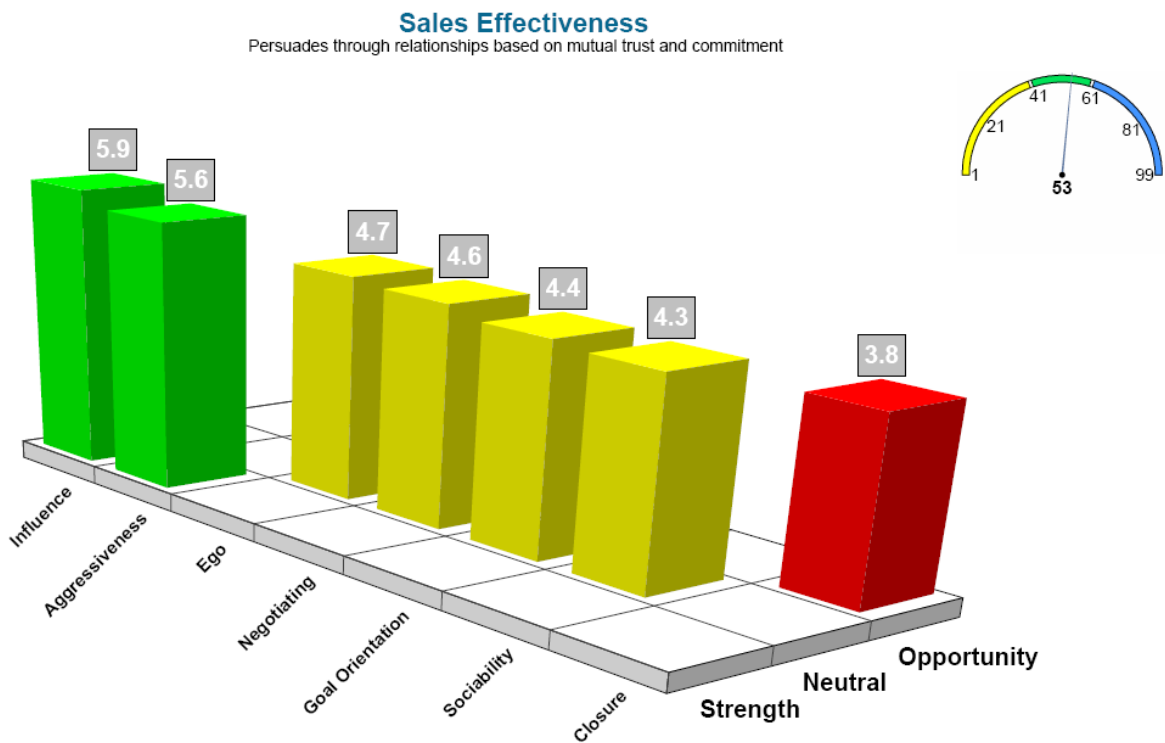
- Creativeness – Envisioning new options, either practical or theoretical
- Learning – Advancing knowledge, skills, and abilities
- Planning – Thinking and organizing strategies, for either near or long-term
- Negotiating – Bargaining effectively for a strongly held position
- Self Responsibility – Taking personal accountability
- Emotional Composure – Maintaining professionalism and poise
- Communications – Giving and receiving information
- Closure – Agreeing upon and completing courses of action with others



Sales Effectiveness – persuades through relationships based on mutual trust and commitment

Sales Effectiveness consists of seven (7) core competencies:

- Influence – Gaining acceptance of ideas
- Aggressiveness – Being assertive and taking charge
- Ego – Gaining respect and demonstrating confidence
- Negotiating – Bargaining effectively for a strongly held position
- Goal Orientation – Seeking challenges toward reaching objectives
- Sociability – Building a network of relationships
- Closure – Agreeing upon and completing courses of action with others



Analysis and Interpretation:

Many people wonder whether leaders are made or born. The true leader disregards such arguments and instead concentrates on how to become better. In this study, we found that five competencies separated the great leaders from the average. If you are able to increase your skill in these five traits, you will make it easier for people to want to follow you. The less time you have to spend on getting people to follow you, the more time you have to spend refining exactly where you want to go and how to get there.

Again, the five leadership competencies are:

- **Adaptability**
- Stress Tolerance
- Leadership Effectiveness
- Problem Solving
- **Sales Effectiveness**

While 3 of the 5 competencies may not surprise you; Leadership Effectiveness, Problem Solving, Stress Tolerance, 2 of them might!

Adaptability; The individuals who can positively deal with unexpected challenges or circumstances. The individuals who love learning. Leaders who make decisions with speed and ease. It is rare to find individuals who are wired to accept and welcome change. Our IT Leaders of the future embrace and exhibit all of these behaviors

Sales Effectiveness; You might be thinking, a Technology leader needs to be good at sales? Absolutely! The ever critical skill of persuading others through relationships based on mutual trust and commitment is unique. If you have the ability to be assertive, take charge and gain acceptance of ideas, you have positioned yourself as an individual of influence, this is an enormous competitive advantage.

In the world of recruiting, leadership is the defining ingredient that separates the mediocre from the superstars. It's the act of persuasion. It's getting people to see new perspectives and do things they normally wouldn't do. It's about setting your ego aside and having the passion and charisma to get people to follow you.

Questions to consider:

1. Are these the behaviors/competencies your organization is seeking in future IT leaders?
2. If "DNA" is hard wired, are we training future IT leaders on behaviors that they likely will not obtain?
3. What "DNA" threads do you have in your organization today?
4. What are the implications of the findings to your organization?

Demographics

The assessment was conducted on thirty (30) next generation IT leaders. The average years of experience from the candidates is 10 – 20 years with forty percent (40%) working for IT teams of fifty (50) to two-hundred (200) employees, a medium size business. Sixty-two percent (62%) reported working in an organizational culture that is progressive and fast-paced. Ninety percent (90%) make more than \$76,000 a year and 31% have obtained a Master's Degree.