

CLD1-9-FCS



Facilitator's Guide

The Influence of Personal Characteristics

Personality, Culture, and Environment

This is not to suggest that it is easy to be a leader. There is no simple formula, no rigorous science, no cookbook that leads inexorably to successful leadership... But for those who are ready, most of the learning takes place during the experience itself.

—Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus

Rationale:

The foundation of leadership begins with the individual, in that our personal abilities to influence others are effected by our unique personality and the impact of environment and culture. To grow as an effective leader you must understand yourself as well as the differences of personal characteristics in others.

Goal:

Recognize the influence of personal characteristics in developing leadership potential.

Program Objectives:

- To differentiate the effect of individual personality characteristics on behavior styles
- To recognize the influence of personal environmental conditions on learning and development
- To compare the influences of different cultural beliefs and values on leadership growth and development

Pre-Program Preparation:

1. Read *Influence of Personal Characteristics* (CLD1-9) and additional background reference materials as needed to become familiar with personal development concepts.
2. Copy the CLD Influence of Personal Characteristics fact sheet for each participant.
3. Duplicate the Circle of Influence and My Personal History worksheets for each participant.
4. Secure laptop, internet access, and LCD projector to show PowerPoint presentation.

5. Purchase Keirsey Temperament Sorter II (NOTE: Make sure to order the Keirsey Temperament Sorter II, not I) for each participant at

Matrix Books

c/o Prometheus Nemesis Book Co.
 2186 Pinar Place
 Del Mar, CA 92014
www.matrixbooksinc.com

OR complete a group example of a behavioral analysis at <http://www.keirsey.com/sorter/instruments2.aspx?partid=0>.

Introduction:

One of the simple facts about leadership is that you can't be a leader by yourself. Although there are multiple definitions of leadership, all of them include the concept of interacting with other human beings. Fundamentally, leadership involves human interaction. Thus, understanding ourselves, our temperaments and why we tend to respond in certain ways is important in our development as leaders and in working with others to reach shared goals. The essence of who we are has been shaped by many factors, including our personality as well as the influence of our culture and personal environment. These factors are reflected in our skills, interests, and abilities, which ultimately help us to reach our leadership potential.

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Introductory Activity:

Distribute the Circle of Influence worksheet among participants. Ask the participants to draw a line from each descriptor to the correct area of influence on the worksheet of personality, environment and culture. To summarize, show the PowerPoint slides, which list the descriptors in the categories of personality, environment and culture. Share that the essence of who we are as leaders is reflected in skills, interests, and abilities that originate from our own unique personality, environment and cultural beliefs.

Objective 1. Differentiate the effect of individual personality characteristics on behavior styles.

Personality can be defined as the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual. Style is made up of many behaviors, and becoming aware of our personality style or temperament type can help us identify our strengths and weaknesses. This awareness will provide greater insights into why we respond in certain ways and, even more important, it will help us understand and appreciate the differences in others. Identifying your personal style is the beginning of developing your leadership core. It allows you to see your behavioral responses and also provides an opportunity to see how your responses differ from others. Behavioral responses are not good or bad; they are simply part of us.

Learning Activity 1:

Distribute the Keirsey Temperament Sorter II to each participant. Ask them to complete the assessment. Share the characteristics of the Myers-Briggs four preference scales of personality listed in the publication. Show the PowerPoint slide that categorizes the Keirsey Temperament sorter. Use the key to analyze their unique personality characteristics: artisan, guardian, rationalist and idealist.

Objective 2. Recognize the influence of personal environmental conditions on learning and development.

Personality is what we are born with and is stable over time. Our environment impacts our responses to situations. When combined they equal behavior. The environment is the sum of the conditions and factors under which we learn and develop. It consists of formal and non-formal education found in our schools, family settings and communities. The conditions in

which we grow and develop combine with our personalities to play a major role in the leader we become.

Learning Activity 2:

Distribute and ask each participant to complete a copy of My Personal History worksheet. Pair participants and ask them to share one or more of the personal factors they listed on their sheet. Ask the pairs to discuss how these environmental factors affected their behavior in different ways during their lifetime. Ask a volunteer pair to share with the group their observations of differences in their personal history settings and subsequent behaviors.

As you can see, behavior is influenced by genetics (the innate personality that we are born with) as well as our environment. Understanding personality does not mean you can predict behavior perfectly. Our environment, from childhood throughout adulthood, also heavily influences our behaviors—especially with leadership situations.

Objective 3. Compare the influences of different cultural beliefs and values on leadership growth and development.

Culture can be defined as the customary beliefs, social norms and material traits of a racial, religious or social group, the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time. Intellectually we understand that people are different and many of those differences are cultural. Yet, we find ourselves questioning *why* they are different. Our culture is a part of our everyday existence, and our decisions are based upon our customary beliefs, values, and goals. The culture in which we developed can help to make us good leaders, but it is important to remember that not everyone shares the same belief system. A good leader will incorporate cultural beliefs and customs into decision making.

Learning Activity 3:

Divide the large group into pairs or small groups. Ask participants to share their experiences related to these open-ended questions:

Have you ever lived in a different part of the country than you live today? What beliefs and/or traditions did you experience there that are different from our community? How do they reflect differences in culture?

In what ways has your willingness or confidence in taking a leadership role been influenced by your racial, religious or social group?

To spark discussion, you may share the following belief:

To be held in high esteem women in the south have certain expectations: to be gentle in action and speech. “Being nice” is very important; therefore assertiveness, a strong leadership trait, could be viewed negatively and not used effectively in a leadership situation. Ask participants how this particular cultural belief might influence KEHA members assuming leadership roles or effectively leading group discussions.

Summary:

Effective leaders share some common characteristics. Their personal abilities to influence others are a product of their unique personalities and the impact of environment and culture. Realizing what characteristics are associated with successful leaders is important for personal leadership development and helps give the individual a clear picture of who they are as a leader. Understanding ourselves, our temperaments and why we tend to respond in certain ways is important in our development as leaders and in working with others to reach shared goals. To grow as an effective leader you must understand yourself as well as the differences of personal characteristics in others.

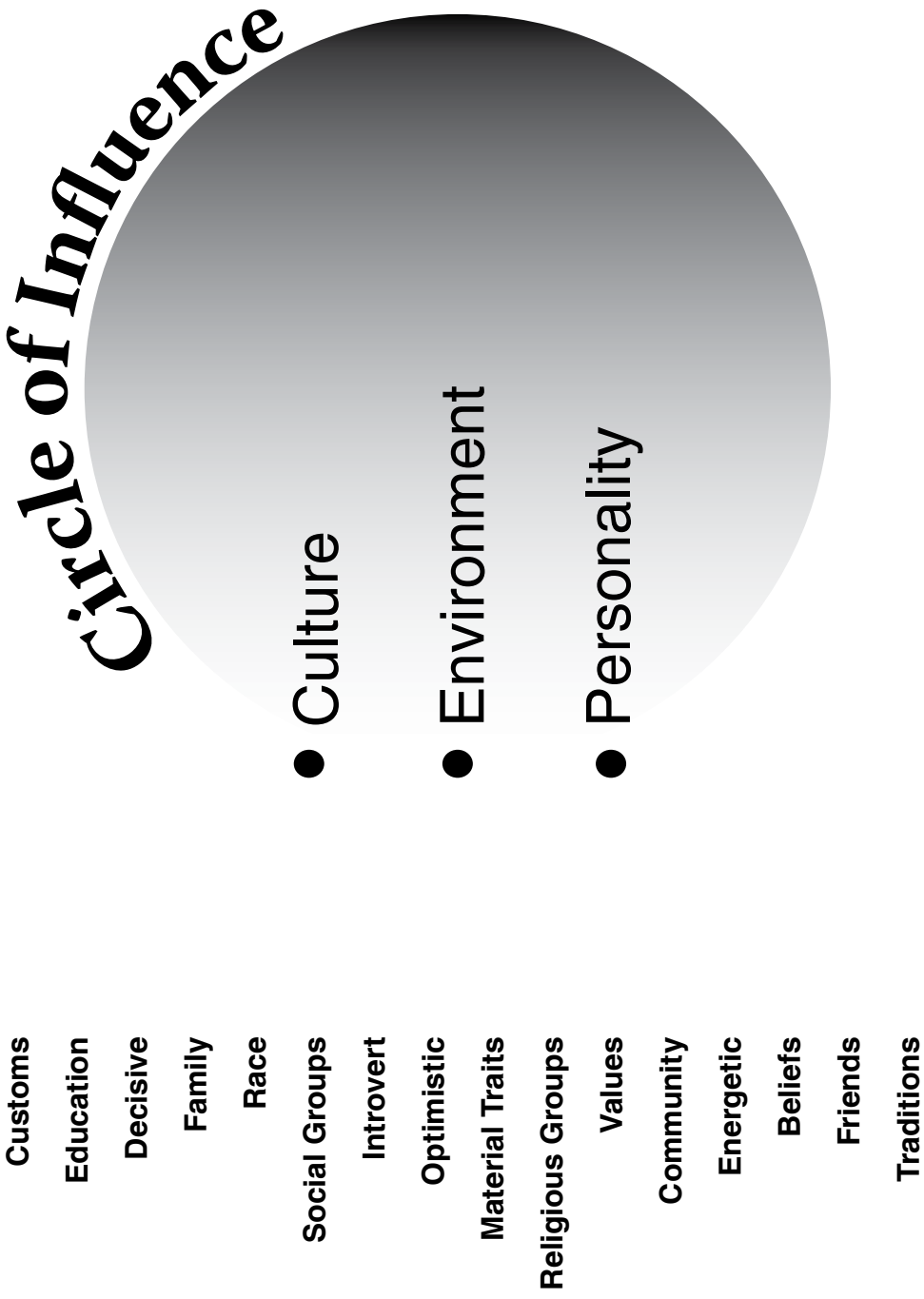
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Circle of Influence Activity

Draw a line from each descriptor to the area of influence of personal characteristics on leadership potential whether personality, environment, and culture.



My Personal History

Family

My family composition as a child was: _____

My family composition as an adult is: _____

Friends

My friends as a child were: _____

I enjoyed playing: _____

As an adult I enjoy these activities: _____

Community

I grew up at: _____

The people around me were: _____

I now live in: _____

The people around me are: _____

Education

I went to school at: _____

I enjoyed studying: _____

My school experiences were: _____