



Developmental Insights and
Suggestions for:

“PLEASERS”

as Measured by the
CDR Leadership Risk Assessment

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Developmental Insights for PLEASERS

The meek shall inherit the earth. . . if you don't mind.
Graffito

PLEASER

This scale describes one who depend on others for feedback and approval, are eager to please the boss, avoid making decisions alone, are unwilling to challenge the status quo, refuse to rock the boat, and may help others while letting their own accountabilities flounder. Pleasers in leadership roles may fail to deliver results, may lack courage, and may create a dysfunctional work environment by failure to support or go to bat for others.

DEVELOPMENTAL SUGGESTIONS:

Pleasers ultimately hurt themselves and their own career aspirations most. They are often viewed as rather cowardly or too compliant as they may hold back with ideas or solutions in fear of making the boss or others unhappy. Also, they can be so kind that co-workers or their bosses do not know what they really think. Last, their lack of assertiveness can cause them to be passed over for promotions because they are viewed as not courageous enough. They often do not speak up when they should or will not argue as point of view.

Developmental Tactics or Suggestions:

1. Make a T-chart of the last 7-10 times you failed to speak up and note on the other side of the chart what the consequence was. For example:
 - a. "I was quiet with the new schedule I was assigned." Consequence: "I had to change my child's daycare and get up 45 minutes earlier to accommodate and this daycare costs \$50 more per week."
 - b. Then, after the list is made – rank your top 3 worst offense that hurt you or your performance the most.

- c. Next, brainstorm and plan how you can change your reaction or behavior in the moment to better deal with those top 3 Pleaser incidents. (If this is too tall a task, start at the lowest impact offenses.)
2. Practice being assertive. Practice in the mirror. Practice on audio and video tape. Practice at home. Set up real scenarios and practice.
3. Ask questions to the person rather than just being agreeable.
4. Partner with a co-worker who can nudge you to speak up or have them start and you jump in.
5. Hire a coach or mentor to help you role play being more assertive.
6. Find different ways to speak up in the moment – whether it is some phrases that help you start...
 - a. While I appreciate your suggestion, I wanted to be clear that...
 - b. Help me to understand exactly what you are asking... On one hand I have ___ and now you are changing to ___ Please help me understand the key priority...
 - c. Since I am most familiar with AB&C, I would like to offer some suggestions (or concerns...)
 - d. Seek ways to increase your batting average on being more assertive to speak up for yourself and others. People will respect you more and appreciate your candor.

Important Career Development Advice for Pleasers:

Do *not* work for an Egotist or a manager who has low Interpersonal Sensitivity or who is lacking Emotional Intelligence if at all possible. Egotists are known for taking advantage of those who report to them who they tend to dominate and control. They seek out vulnerabilities. This can become quite dysfunctional and often takes a great toll on the Pleaser. As a Pleaser, you need a compassionate, thoughtful manager who will mentor and support you and will help with your career and performance growth. If you currently work for the Egotist or non-sensitive type, you may need to work on your next career move.

RESOURCES for PLEASERS

Books:

Breitman, Patti and Hatch, Connie, (2000), How to Say No Without Feeling Guilty: And Say Yes to More Time, and What Matters Most to You, Broadway Books

"This book is the bible on how to say no and still be seen as a nice person. It can change your life forever."

--Jack Canfield, coauthor of the Chicken Soup for the Soul® series

"How to Say No Without Feeling Guilty enables us to rid ourselves of needless guilt so we can live a richer, more fulfilling life."

--Dave Pelzer, author of *A Child Called "It"*, *The Lost Boy*, and *A Man Named Dave*

Kemp, Jana, (2005), *No! How One Simple Word Can Transform Your Life*, Amacom

"This book benefits those who face exhaustion from overwork, stress and overuse of the word 'yes' - and that includes almost everyone. No matter what level of employment or management you are in, where you work or what your responsibilities are, most people have a natural propensity to say 'yes' far too often. Jana Kemp's book will help if you sometimes say 'yes' when you don't want to, or even when you are not fully capable of committing to and delivering on the promise you are making. She offers tools and advice for timely, sound decision-making. Even though the book's self-assessment mechanisms, introspective exercises and checklists can get a bit repetitive, reinforcement is the best way to change your automatic responses." (*Source: Amazon.com; review by Rolf Dobelli*)

The Art of Followership: How Great Followers Create Great Leaders and Organizations, edited by: Ronald E. Riggio, Ira Chaleff, Jean Lipman-Blumen, (2008), Jossey Bass

Leadership is a topic that has been well-examined by scholars, consultants, and the media. By contrast, the study of followers has been largely ignored. As this book reveals, the leader-follower dynamic is far more complex than has been previously imagined.

The Art of Followership puts leader-follower interaction at the forefront of discussion. It examines the multiple roles followers play and their often complex relationship to leaders. With contributions from leading scholars and practitioners from the burgeoning field of leadership/followership studies, this groundbreaking book outlines how followers contribute to effective leadership and to organizations overall.

Drawing from various disciplines—from philosophy, to psychology and management, to education—the book defines followership and its myriad meanings. The Art of Followership explores the practice and research that promote positive followership and reveals the part that followers play in setting the standards and formulating the culture and policies of the group. The contributors include new models of followership and explore fresh perspectives on the contributions that followers make to groups, organizations, societies, and leaders. The book also explores the most current research on followership and includes insights and perspectives on the future of leader-follower relationships. (*Excerpted from the front cover.*)

Paterson, Randy, J., (2000), *The Assertiveness Workbook: How to Express Your Ideas and Stand Up for Yourself at Work and in Relationships*, New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

This self-directed program teaches readers to speak up and say what they mean at work and at home. Written supportively, it uses proven cognitive behavioral techniques to help individuals build self-confidence, set boundaries, and determine appropriate responses. (Amazon)

Loyd, Sam R., (2000), *Developing Positive Assertiveness, Third Edition: Practical Techniques for Personal Success (Fifty-Minute Series.)*, Crisp Publications

Make positive assertiveness a productive force in your life. This course will help you examine your posture, language, and attitude while learning to deal openly with others. Find your natural style of communication. Use assertive words appropriately. Take charge of your life. (Amazon)

McFarlin, Dean, (2002), [Where Egos Dare: The Untold Truth about Narcissistic Leaders - And How to Survive Them.](#) Kogan Page

While this book is about narcissistic leaders, it can help the individual with Pleaser tendencies to cope more effectively with such a self absorbed leader. In the least, it can help the Pleaser identify and steer clear of working directly for the ardent Egotist leader.

Webinar: CDR Assessment Group:

Why Pleaser's Finish Last — And What To Do About It!

Pleaser Webinar Session Description:

Many highly capable leaders, when faced with conflict, react by trying to please others, especially senior management.

Do you find yourself jumping through hoops to help, resolve issues, and do extra work just to keep the peace? ☐

Do you have a hard time saying no or negotiating on equal terms with your boss? ☐

Have you ever had your plate completely full, yet still couldn't stop taking on more when asked? ☐ Are you one of those leaders who has never debated in public with your boss about an issue? ☐ If you answered yes to three or more questions above, this Webinar is a must attend for you.

What you will learn: ☐

- Exactly what is a “Pleaser” and how does this impact leadership effectiveness ☐
- How it is possible to have strong leadership capability yet undermine your performance by pleaser behaviors and reactions ☐
- What are the triggers for your “Pleaser” behaviors
- Tactics to prevent pleaser behaviors from derailing your success ☐
- How to build trusting and mutually benefiting relationships by neutralizing your tendencies as a Pleaser ☐

To find out about scheduling or registration for CDR Risk Webinars, contact: cdrinfo@cdrassessmentgroup.com or call 281-207-5470

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

Search for Assertiveness Training resources and workshops in your area or online.