# *You Are a Born Leader*

LEADERSHIP STYLE

Are leaders born, or are they made? The answer is both. Have you ever considered that you are a "born leader?" That's right, God created you to lead. You may not feel much like a leader at the moment, but that is probably because your mental image of what a leader looks like is skewed by a non-Biblical definition of leadership. Your mental picture of leadership probably looks something like the graphic below:

Illustration 5-1: Leadership Image
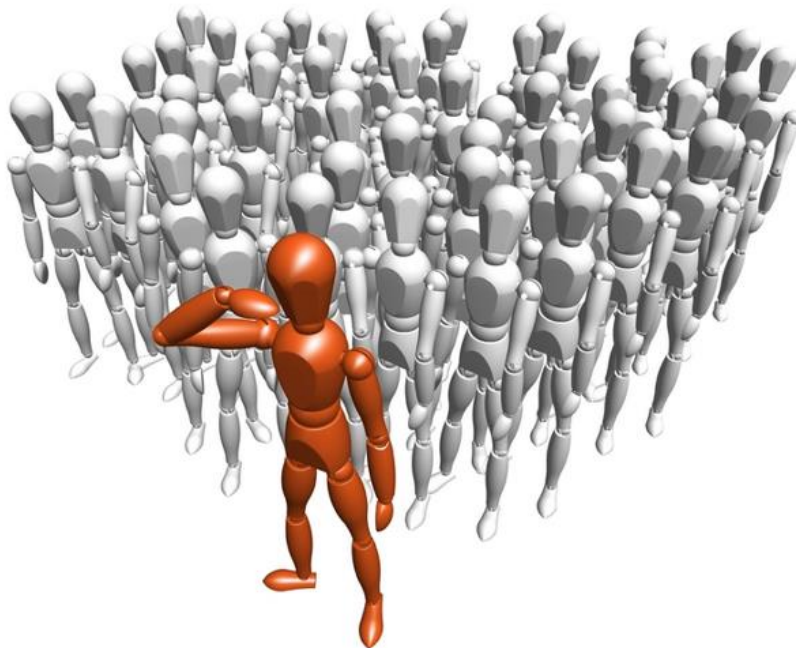
What is wrong with this image of leadership? The idea that one solitary person should stand out from among the crowd, scanning the horizon, and leading the crowd forward into the future may sound romantic, but it is not Biblical. This image of leadership projects all the responsibility for a mission, and all the glory for

accomplishing that mission, upon one person. The crowd in this graphic merely exists to follow and support the

leader.

Characteristics of Biblical Leadership

In contrast, Biblically informed leadership occurs when each Christ follower identifies their unique

functional role within the body of Christ and serves others in the context of that role. Through their ministry

service, each Christ follower positively impacts the people they serve. Jesus, the ultimate leader, demonstrated

how leaders should function when he washed his disciple's feet and commanded them to serve others in the

same manner (John 13:1-17). Through this object lesson, Jesus influenced not only his disciples, but also millions

upon millions of future leaders in generations to come.

This kind of leadership is clearly portrayed in *The Lord of the Rings, part 1, The Fellowship of the Ring*. I like

the scene in which the dominant leaders from the various kingdoms of Third Earth come together at a secret

counsel session to learn about the evil ring and the need for a leader to return the ring to the fires of Mount Doom

so that it can be destroyed. As these leaders argue with one another over the mission at hand, Froto, a meek and

gentle-spirited Hobbit, begins to yell above the fray: "I will take the ring! I will take the ring! ...but I do not know the

way." One by one, the other leaders vow to support Froto in his mission using their various strengths. For one

leader, his strength is his sword. For another leader, his strength is his bow. And still for another leader, his

strength is his ax. If you and I had been charged with the responsibility of selecting a leader for that mission, it is

unlikely that we would have selected Froto. From outward appearances, he was not powerful or highly-skilled...but

his heart was pure and he was willing to serve.

Leadership that is God-honoring requires a humble heart attitude. The purpose of our life mission is not to

demonstrate what great leaders we are or the great works we can accomplish. Rather, our purpose should be to

lead others in a manner that demonstrates the greatness of our God and the superiority of his works. For this

reason, when the prophet Samuel was tasked with the responsibility to anoint the next king over Israel, God

instructed him saying: "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance,

but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:6-7 NIV). If you feel that you do not look, act, or sound like a leader...good! Then your heart-attitude is likely prepared for God's purposes.

Leadership is Influence

Leadership is commonly defined as "influence." To any extent that you or I have influence upon another person...for good or for bad...we function as a leader. God intends each Christ follower to have a significant influence upon others in this world, in the context of Christ's global kingdom mission. If this were not so, he would not have created you in the first place. You were born to lead! Yet that influence, if it is to be truly effective, must be applied with intentionality. In addition to understanding your mission, you must also identify your functional role within that mission. How I influence people will likely be different than how you influence, based upon our individual ministry temperaments. The unique manner in which each of us influences the lives of other people is known as our "Leadership Style."

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*"To any extent that you or I have influence upon another person...
for good or for bad...we function as a leader."*

Your Leadership Style is closely, but not exclusively, associated with the *Relational Style* quadrant of your personality profile. If you remember, the *Relational Style* quadrant assesses how an individual relates to others on a continuum that ranges from 100 percent "Independent" (task-focused) to 100 percent "Social" (people-focused). However, in the majority of cases, people are not purely "Independent" or "Social," but rather are various blends of both relational styles. Illustration 5-2 breaks down this relational continuum into three categories, each consisting of two distinct Leadership Styles.

Illustration 5-2: Relational Continuum

1 THE BUILDER	2 THE MANAGER	3 THE NURTURER
Leadership Styles: ***PIONEER & STRATEGIC*** Influence people by creating new systems and structures that empower other people to serve God effectively	**Leadership Styles:** ***ADMINISTRATIVE & TEAM*** Influence people to accomplish a noble mission by resourcing and motivationg them to serve God effectively	**Leadership Styles:** ***PASTORAL & ENCOURAGING*** Influence people through inter-personal relationships that encourages them to serve God effectively
• **Visionary** • **Task-Dominant** • **Strategic Plans** • **Entreprenurial**	• **Motivational** • **Mission-Dominant** • **Accomplishments** • **Managerial**	• **Relational** • **People-Dominant** • **Harmony** • **Pastoral**

PIONEER & STRATEGIC | ADMINISTRATIVE & TEAM LEADER | *PASTORAL & ENCOURAGING*

Independent ●————————————————————● **Social**

Relational Continuum

It is important, if you are to identify and effectively fulfill your God-ordained mission, that you understand your personal leadership style. However, it is also crucial that you understand and appreciate the leadership styles that differ from your own. God created all the various leadership styles in order to assist you in your personal life mission. You will need diversely gifted people in your life to assist you in your mission venture.

The Builder Category

People who identify with the Builder category are relational independents. They may have strong interpersonal skills, yet they think strategically and analytically. For the Builder, a noble mission can only be accomplished by creating organizations, programs, systems, and structures that help facilitate the goals of ministry.

The Builder category consists of two leadership profiles: ***Pioneering Leader*** and ***Strategic Planner.*** The Pioneering Leader is characterized by an *entrepreneurial* style...needing to build new organizations and programs,

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and the Strategic Planner is characterized by an *architectural* style...needing to design the systems for new programs and ministries.

The Pioneering Leader

The Pioneering Leader is an excellent church planter and new ministry developer. The Pioneer is 100 percent motivated by a noble vision. Individuals who score as purely dominant Pioneer profiles may be viewed by some as "match-lights" who light quickly, burn passionately for a short time, and then as boredom and routine settle in, lose interest. Pioneers are creative, entrepreneurial people. They must be allowed to create new ministry organizations, programs and systems. As long as their role allows them to create, they can be satisfied for extended periods lasting into many years. However, the Pioneer should never be tasked with ongoing administrative duties or interpersonal pastoral care. These responsibilities will ultimately burn out a Pioneer.

Pioneer profiles are rare. Within many churches, this leadership style is virtually absent. This is due, to a great extent, to the fact that many churches are reticent about starting new ministries and programs. The types of people who often serve in decision-making positions within many church organizations tend to possess conflict-avoidant and risk-avoidant leadership styles. Such leaders espouse "moving slowly" whenever change is considered. However, the Pioneer thrives on the synergy, passion, and momentum that a noble vision can produce. For the Pioneer, moving slowly is sure to be a frustrating and de-motivating exercise. As a result, Pioneers often have a difficult time finding their place within established ministries. This is why so many Pioneers step outside the confines of the local church to start new church and parachurch ministries.

Pioneers often possess significant faith. They revel in "risk." They know that God can do abundantly more than we can think or ask, and they often wonder why their church and its leadership don't "think bigger" and "ask for more" from the Lord. While the Pioneers can help stir a comfortable and mission-lazy church to action, if they do not feel validated by the church leadership, they can quickly become embittered and critical. Pioneers can also be perceived as "pushy," "insensitive," and "controlling." However, it is the force of their strong personalities that ultimately pulls people together to transform a vision into a mission.

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The Strategic Planner

The pure Strategic Planner functions much like an architect, who designs the blueprint but does not build the building. They may effectively assist Pioneers, but are not themselves entrepreneurial. Instead, they are able to translate a vision into a working plan that enables others to know how they can best support a mission. The Strategic Planner is all about planning the "details" involved in accomplishing the mission. However, they do not appreciate having to personally manage and address the details. For the Strategic Planner, the "plan" is a thing of beauty. In their mind, they can envision most every step, every issue, and every obstacle that will present itself if the vision is to become a ministry reality.

The Strategic Planner will become frustrated when other leaders cannot understand or value the plan. Similarly, they will become anxious when ministry leaders deviate from the plan without consulting them. The Strategic Planner views deviations from the plan as highly dangerous, potentially jeopardizing the success of the mission...and they are probably correct in their concerns. It is not that the Strategic Planner is trying to control everybody and everything. In reality, they can envision the consequences of an action with clarity that few other leadership types can appreciate. The plan is important to the Strategic Planner because he or she firmly believes that the plan will maximize the potential for mission success, minimize waste and ineffectiveness, and minimize harm to the ministry and to its people.

The Strategic Planner is the rarest of all leadership styles. Most ministries have no idea if they have a Strategic Planner within their congregation. Even if they do, most ministry leaders fail to utilize them effectively for one or more of the following reasons:

- Church leaders often think relationally rather than strategically, and so tend to devalue strategic plans.

- Many church leaders are quickly overwhelmed by the vast details of the plan devised by a Strategic Planner.

- In some cases, church leaders who are insecure about their personal leadership abilities may feel threatened by the Strategic Planner, fearing that he or she is "taking over" or trying to "control" the church.

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- Often, church leaders feel it is safer to copy ministry paradigms they deem to be successful in other churches, rather than develop and implement an entirely new and "untested" plan.

Leadership Style Blends

While pure Pioneering Leaders and pure Strategic Planners do exist, most often we find that people within the Builder category are a blend of both the Pioneering Leader and Strategic Planner profiles. Every blend has a dominant trait. For example, my dominant trait is Pioneering Leadership. However, I also possess considerable Strategic Planner abilities. God gave me this "Builder-Blend" to enable me to begin new ministry organizations, systems, and structures, while at the same time having the insight to develop long-term strategies for project success. Illustration 5-3 provides an example of my Leadership Style assessment report:

Illustration 5-3: Leadership Style Report
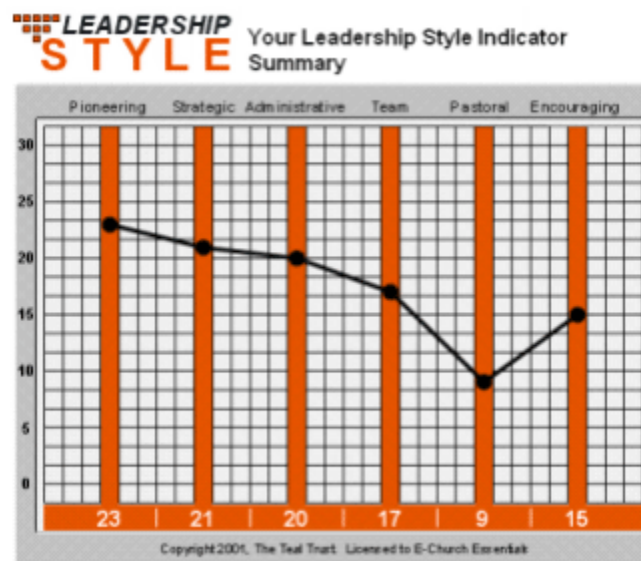
My Pioneering and Strategic scores are similar to one another. If you note this kind of close scoring between any two adjoining style-categories, then a blending of leadership styles likely exists. However, a blend cannot exist between non-adjoining categories. For instance, a high score on Pioneering Leadership and a high score on Pastoral Leadership is not a blend. These two leadership styles are in fact polar opposites of each other. Such a response would suggest that the person is either confused about who they really are, or they are working very hard to be something that they are not. Among people serving as pastors within local churches, it is common

to find that they are confused about their leadership style. Most often this occurs because they have been working so hard trying to please and appease the people around them, that they have lost their sense of self-identity.

When you take the Leadership Style assessment, look for a natural curve falling to the left or right of a dominant leadership style. A jagged curve within your report consisting of numerous peaks suggests internal stress and role confusion.

The Manager Category

The Manager category is characterized by a need for practical application. The Manager identifies all the real-world issues, problems, and obstacles associated with any mission. Builders can get frustrated with Managers because Builders tend to feel that the synergy and momentum of the mission will carry the team through these challenges; or they may feel that their master plan is sufficient to address the issues. However, Managers quickly see the many small details that a master plan cannot address. Managers hate to see "balls dropped." They become anxious when they feel the mission may be compromised because details are "falling through the cracks."

The Manager category contains two Leadership Styles: ***Administrative Leader*** and ***Team Leader***. The Administrative Leader prefers to address the many tasks associated with the mission, while the Team Leader prefers to motivate the many people associated with the mission.

The Administrative Leader

The Administrative Leader is an ideal "detail" person. Administrators will often create "to-do" lists of all the practical tasks that must be accomplished, and then work their way progressively through the lists. Most often, Administrators prefer to address tasks in order of perceived priority rather than multi-task. They gain great satisfaction from checking accomplishments off their "to-do" lists.

Administrative Leaders are among the most common leadership styles found within a church or ministry. Often, they serve as administrative assistants to the pastoral staff. They commonly serve as deacons or

treasurers. In larger ministries, they may serve as a leader or supportive leader within a major ministry program. The Administrator will make sure that everything is accomplished with excellence and professionalism. If they drop-the-ball, which is rare, they will likely punish themselves with shame and guilt for their failures. "Grace" is a difficult concept for Administrators to extend to themselves, although they may readily extend it to others. This is because they may at times confuse their self-worth with the tasks they must accomplish.

Administrative Leaders can struggle with several weaknesses that may obstruct the accomplishment of a mission.

1. Administrative Leaders may intertwine their self-perception and self-worth with their performance. If they fail in their performance, they may become immobilized with guilt and shame.

2. Administrative Leaders may become overwhelmed by the many tasks at hand and seek to slow the progress of the mission to allow for more time to manage and address the many details. This stalling practice is one reason why Administrators can gain a reputation for being obstructionists. Fear of failure…of dropping balls…may cause them to try to control their environment. The better path would be for Administrator to learn how to delegate duties to subordinates who also possess Administrator profiles. However, it is common for Administrators to feel: "If the job is going to be done right, they must do it themselves".

3. Administrative Leaders require continual affirmation from their superiors for their many positive accomplishments, particularly when they feel they have failed. Harsh and critical words of judgment or disappointment from a superior may cause them to shift into "performance overdrive." Administrators can become obsessed in their attempt to please their superiors and to atone for perceived failures, ultimately resulting in emotional and spiritual burn-out.

The Team Leader

Team Leaders are more relationally inclined than Administrative Leaders. While Administrators are consumed by tasks and details, the Team Leaders' dominant passion is to gather people around themselves and mobilize them for a mission. They understand and value the tasks associated with the mission. However, they do

not want to be encumbered by the responsibility of personally accomplishing the tasks. Team Leaders generally excel at delegating responsibilities to others. They feel an inner need to be out on the "front lines," getting their hands dirty, accomplishing real-world ministry. Nothing frustrates Team Leaders more than requiring them to sit in an office day after day, working on administrative responsibilities. Team Leaders thrive in atmospheres of "action" and typically excel at multi-tasking.

Every church needs Team Leaders. Without them, church ministries would likely have many meetings but accomplish very little. The Team Leader profile is unique. Only these leaders are able to have one foot planted in the "task-oriented" world and the other foot planted in the "relationally-oriented" world. As a result, they are able to care for people and inspire them to accomplish great mission objectives. This unique blending of care and motivation often nurtures intense feelings of loyalty between team members and the Team Leader. These feelings of loyalty can be healthy and appropriate if the Team Leader is spiritually mature, humble before God, and submissive to spiritual leadership. However, these same feelings of loyalty can be used by Satan to cause considerable damage to a ministry.

The Team Leader profile is the leadership style commonly associated with a church split. In such cases, the Team Leader can point to many mission successes that have earned him or her loyalty from a significant pool of team members. Praise and admiration from team members can lead the Team Leader to become prideful, like King Nebuchadnezzer who said: "Is not this the great [ministry] I have built as [my church], by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty" (Daniel 4:30 NIV)? Prideful Team Leaders may feel that they are personally responsible for the various ministry successes within the church, and that if only they could be unencumbered by the restrictions of their superiors, they could be unleashed to accomplish even greater things. Pride evolves into arrogance, and arrogance leads to a profound disrespect for the authorities over the Team Leader. The scenario commonly spins off in one of thee ways:

1. The prideful Team Leader is fired, and a group of his or her followers leaves the church to support the Team Leader to whom they are loyal. Bitterness and confusion is experienced by many people on both sides of the problem.

2. The prideful Team Leader mounts an attempt to take over the church and supplants the senior pastor. The senior pastor is removed, and a small number of people loyal to the senior pastor leave to start another church. Bitterness and confusion is experienced by many people on both sides of the problem.

3. The prideful Team Leader is deemed a threat to the church and its leadership, and is encouraged, with the "support" of the mother church, to start a church plant across town. A significant core of the church's lay leadership leaves to start the daughter church. If care is not taken, an atmosphere of competition can develop between the mother church and the church plant.

These scenarios do not need to be the ultimate path of a Team Leader. Wise church leadership will provide accountability-people in the lives of Team Leaders to help them continually check their heart attitudes for pride. If issues of pride can be addressed when they are small, it is unlikely that significant problems will arise in the future.

Leadership Style Blends

The Team Leader/Administrator blend combines the ability to mobilize people effectively for a ministry mission with the ability to address the administrative duties of the ministry mission. This dual role can be a recipe for ministry burn-out. People who possess the Team Leader/Administrator blend can for a time excel and may appear to be the ideal project leaders. However, without supportive people within their lives, people who possess this leadership blend can quickly become consumed with all their responsibilities. Workaholism is second nature to these individuals. They may be willing to sacrifice family relationships and their own personal physical health to pursue the mission and its many tasks.

The Nurturer Category

The Nurturer category is highly focused on relationships. People that identify with the Nurturer category perceive that their mission is to socially interact with people and through those relationships, to personally serve people. They tend to devalue ministry organizations and programs. In fact, it is not uncommon for them to feel that

man-made structures and systems actually get in the way of ministry. They often wonder why other people cannot minister as they do...personally serving people's needs directly. The Nurturer category is characterized by people who are likable, tender-hearted, sensitive, compassionate, and good listeners.

The Nurturer category consists of two Leadership Styles: **Pastoral Leaders** and **Encouraging Leaders**. While both leadership types are highly relational, the Pastoral Leader's preoccupation is, "How are WE doing?" while the Encouraging Leader's preoccupation is, "How are YOU doing?"

The Pastoral Leader

Pastoral Leaders are generally very likable and amiable people. Their nature puts people at ease and helps them feel that at the moment, they are the most important person in the Pastor's life. This is a very attractive quality.

Pastors are naturally concerned about the welfare of the group, whether the congregation as a whole or a particular ministry team. This does not mean that they do not care about individuals, for they care deeply. However, Pastors appreciate the fact that people exist as the "body of Christ." Pastors seek the health of the body and so value and nurture interpersonal harmony and cooperation.

Pastors generally dislike administrative duties. For Pastors, "being in Christ" is far more important than "doing for Christ." They need to get out of the office and into people's lives. If they are not permitted significant periods of interpersonal interaction, they may become discouraged and depressed.

Pastors do not effectively cast vision or create strategic plans. At best, they may seek out a successful ministry paradigm in use by other ministries and attempt to transplant that program within their church context. Vision-casting and strategic planning are task-oriented skills that God never instilled within Pastors. It grieves my heart when a high-powered church board comprised of community and business leaders, demand of their Pastoral Pastor that he should cast vision and create strategic plans for the entire ministry. The Pastor might as well be expected to "jump over the moon." God never designed the Pastor for such tasks, and it is inappropriate for church boards to expect people who possess the Pastor profile to serve according to these unrealistic demands.

However, Pastors excel at visitation, encouragement, mentorship, spiritual nurture, small group shepherding, and counseling. They may also possess limited preaching and teaching abilities. Their instructional style will convey a greater passion for the people they serve than for the content itself...in short, most Pastors are not dynamic Biblical expositors. They will tend to apply Biblical truth as a guide to encourage people to love and care for one another.

Pastors value relational and spiritual harmony to such a great extent, that they may overlook divisional problems in the hope that given time, the problems will work themselves out. Pastors tend to be conflict-avoidant and risk-avoidant. When a problem arises within the congregation, they may be slow to address it. When a change to the ministry programming is suggested or required, they will likely be slow to implement the change. When a new ministry venture is suggested, they will look for proven models to implement. Their overriding concern is that people be protected from harm. However, sometimes when the Band-Aid is pulled off slowly, it only prolongs the suffering. This is a difficult lesson for many Pastors to learn.

Pastors should be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the team or congregation. However, they should not have oversight over the various task-intensive functions and ministries within the church, as these duties are best served by Team Leaders or Administrators. When Pastors are placed in positions of responsibility over mission teams, the teams will likely have many meetings and accomplish very little. Pastors tend to drop balls that others have to pick up. For this reason, Pastors will require the assistance of Administrators to help ensure that the details and tasks associated with their ministry responsibilities are accomplished.

Leadership Style Blends

A leadership style blend between Team Leader and Pastoral Leader is entirely possible. Within a church context, this blend of leadership styles may indeed be the ideal Senior Pastor. This profile balances the need for mission with the need to care for the spiritual and emotional needs of the people who help accomplish the mission. Vision casting, strategic planning, and administration will never be skills exhibited by the Team Leader/Pastor blend; however, if people who possess these skill sets can be included within the leadership core, the ministry organization will likely strike a healthy balance between mission and compassion.

The Encouraging Leader

Encouraging Leaders are generally likable yet quiet and introspective people. Their nature is similar to the Pastor in that they seek to put people at ease and desire to help people feel that at the moment, they are the most important person in the Encourager's life. Encouragers often play the role of counselor or mentor as they relate to and serve others. Encouragers are not at all task-oriented, and may distance themselves from serving within the local church programming. Encouragers tend to devalue programs, and would rather be involved with people directly through interpersonal relationships.

In one respect, there exists a parallel trait between Pioneers and Encouragers. Pioneers seek to analyze systems and structures for ministry, whereas Encouragers often seek to analyze people, in order to minister to them more effectively. In a discipleship context, Encouragers generally excel as one-on-one personal mentors. They may also enjoy ministering through counseling centers that deal with various issues such as abuse, marriage, and child rearing. They often serve effectively within recovery ministries that address issues of addiction and spiritual bondage.

Encouragers firmly believe that "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4 NIV). They resonate with Paul's command to "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2 NIV). However, one challenge Encouragers struggle with is that they may inappropriately take upon themselves the burdens that other people bear. It is possible for Encouragers to care so deeply about the people they minister to, and desire so intensely to "fix" their problems, that they begin to have difficulty disassociating themselves from the problems of others. When Encouragers begin to demonstrate anxiety or undue worry over the life-decisions of other people, they may be progressing down an unhealthy path that could ultimately result in excessive stress and eventual ministry burn-out.

Encouragers should never assume positions of leadership over teams or programs. Such task-oriented leadership roles are an antithesis to the core make-up of Encouragers. They resist administrative duties. For Encouragers, the mission is meeting with and helping people directly; any other task-oriented obligations will be likely viewed as a serious distraction from their mission focus.

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Leadership Style Blends

It is entirely possible that an individual may be a blend of the Pastoral Leader and Encouraging Leader profiles. In such cases, the leader will likely exhibit a passion for the welfare of the group, as well as taking a personal interest in the welfare of each individual in the group. This blended leadership style is best suited for small groups of people requiring ongoing pastoral care.

The Pioneer/Team Leader Blend

There is one unique leadership style blend that is not comprised of adjoining styles: the Team Leader/Pioneer blend. This blend consists of a dominant Team Leader style score and a secondary Pioneer style score. However, this is not a natural blend. This blend may occur when Team Leaders have an opportunity to serve along-side of Pioneers, supporting them in the accomplishment of an entrepreneurial venture. On such occasions, Team Leaders learn that they share a key value with Pioneers…the primacy of "mission." This shared value may inspire Team Leaders to identify closely with Pioneers and to respect their leadership abilities.

However, Team Leaders are dissimilar to Pioneers in that they do not typically have the vision or the independence to begin an entrepreneurial venture on their own. Team Leaders prefer to assemble and mobilize teams of people for the accomplishment of a mission. For this reason, on the rare occasion that they take the lead in an entrepreneurial venture, they will require a network of encouraging people to support them.

The Flat-Line Leadership Style

A Flat-Line Leadership Style is one in which no leadership style clearly dominates, and all styles score approximately +/-5 points from each other. Individuals who receive Flat-Line reports typically meet one of two conditions; either they do not know themselves very well or, more commonly, they are seeking to conform to the perceived expectations of others around them. The habitual repetition of this conformist behavior can lead to confusion regarding their true leadership identity. This identity crisis often occurs with people who have served in ministry for extensive periods. The unique interpersonal demands associated with ministry may influence people

to repress their natural leadership style in an effort to "please and appease" the demands and expectations of the people they serve. However, no person was ever designed by God to be "all things to all people."

The Flat-Line profile represents an unfortunate and painful state and is evidence of internal anxiety and a deep desire for acceptance. Only through a personal interview process, and possibly through counseling, can people caught in a "please and appease" lifestyle re-discover who God truly intended them to be. It is crucial that they gain freedom in Christ so that they can serve their Lord according to their true created order.