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A Company Limited

James Sample

OPQ32 / Motivation / Team & Leadership Styles

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Manager's Report

Confidential

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Introduction

This report is based upon James's responses to a self-report personality questionnaire, the Occupational Personality Questionnaire (OPQ32). The questionnaire invited him to describe his behaviour, preferences and attitudes, in relation to different aspects of his working life. It breaks personality down into three domains, relationships with people, thinking styles and feelings and emotions and in all describes 32 dimensions of styles of behaviour. It is particularly appropriate for use with professional or managerial groups.

James's responses have been compared with a large sample group of similar people to give a description of his preferred styles of behaviour. The accuracy of the report depends on how honest he was when answering the questions as well as on his self awareness. As a guide, the OPQ gives an indication of how consistent the candidate was when answering the questions, which often reflects the accuracy of the results.

James's approach to completing the questionnaire was as consistent as most in the comparator group, indicating that he was sufficiently motivated to complete it successfully and had no difficulty understanding the questions.

When considering the results of the personality questionnaire, it is important to recognise the responses given were James's own view, and represent the way he sees his own behaviour, rather than how his personality might be described by another person. The comments made here should therefore be seen as tentative rather than infallible. Nevertheless, this self-report can provide important indicators of James's style at work, and it is likely to enable us to predict a good deal about his behaviour in different situations. Note that the questionnaire describes James's preferred style of behaving rather than his competence or ability. The questionnaire gives a broad picture of his current style, and so the report is necessarily quite general. Greatest value can be gained by discussing the implications of this information against his current or future role. The shelf-life of the information contained in the report is considered to be 18-24 months, depending on James's work role and personal circumstances.

Synopsis

The overall impression from James's profile is of a relaxed and self confident professional who quite likes to do things his own way and he will be happy to say what he thinks or make disagreements clear if necessary. In fact he describes himself as very tough minded when it comes to being criticised or managing negative judgement himself and will hold his own when there is conflict and remain cool even if it gets personal. Similar to other managers and professionals in the way he relates to people and invests his energy, he will generally appear well balanced in many aspects of his work, positive in his attitude and easy to be around. Quite practical in the way that he likes to apply creativity and change at work, he will be unlikely to get too caught up in considering abstract concepts or hypothetical debate and will prefer to take a more down to earth approach so that any new ideas or innovations have a practical application. Probably acting as a 'shaper' in the team, he will feel able to spark life in to a team and encourage them to achieve their objectives by whatever means available. Single minded and a bit critical at times, he may elicit an aggressive response from other team members in response but he will usually accept it good naturedly.

Personality & Behaviour

James sees himself as able to influence people or situations by using his powers of persuasion as much as most managers but he is also likely to present hard data, facts and information to support his case. He will be happy to organise and take the lead or manage and direct but will be unlikely to assert control or dominate if others are in this role. Very open with his views, he will be happy to say exactly what he thinks and prepared to tell people if he thinks they are wrong. Willing to deal with contentious issues and able to stand his corner even in the face of strong opposition, he will not hold back from voicing criticisms when he feels the need but equally his outspoken style can make other less frank people feel uncomfortable or uneasy at times. Someone who prefers to do things his own way even if others disagree he is likely to follow his own approach rather than concede to the majority, particularly if he thinks he is right. Less likely to respond to authority, he may only be prepared to do things other people's way when he is convinced it is the best course of action.

In terms of his sociability, he will be lively and animated in some circumstances and less so in others and will balance the need to be with people and the need to spend time alone. He will interact fluently without being dominant and with a nicely balanced empathetic style; people will find him approachable, easy to relate to and appropriately concerned for their welfare. Confident about his strengths and achievements, he will be happy to talk about his personal successes and able to promote his own credentials when in company as well as boost the reputation of the organisation. Despite his preference to do things his own way, he will consult people as much as other managers when it comes to involving them in the decision making process.

James enjoys working with numbers and statistical information as much as other managers and whilst he would always wish to have facts and figures to inform his decision making can operate comfortably with less quantifiable information when necessary. He will feel able to critically evaluate information, plans or arguments and focus on errors or assumptions and will be unlikely to take the quality of work for granted. He appreciates the need to consider the more human side of issues in his thinking, but will not over emphasise this aspect of analysis.

When looking at James's attitude towards creativity and change at work he describes himself as equally likely to consider both new and tried and tested methods when establishing a strategy or vision. He is however less interested than most in considering abstract concepts or hypothetical ideas when it comes to enforcing change and will prefer any innovations or changes to working methods to have a very practical application on the work front. This said, he will happily apply creative thinking to problem solving and will feel able to generate some innovative solutions as well as build on the ideas of others. He will generally be aware of the need to adapt his behaviour or approach to suit different people and changing circumstances and will like to take account of his audience in order to get the best from a situation.

In terms of the way James structures his work, he will be slightly less likely than his peers to take a long term view when developing strategy and will be inclined to focus more on the here and now. Moderately concerned with detail he will generally be organised and methodical and will see the importance of meeting deadlines and sticking to schedules but also recognise the need to shift his focus if priorities change. He will usually see the rules and regulations as an important way of maintaining standards and consistency but will be slightly less likely to apply them than other senior managers perhaps by considering more efficient, less bureaucratic or more cost effective routes when he can.

Looking at the way James manages his feelings and emotions he will be generally relaxed and free from tension on a day to day basis and will rarely feel the need to switch off from the pressures of work. As he is likely to be cool, calm and collected in his daily life as well, others could sometimes see his relaxed approach as a bit too laid back at times. He does however describe himself as someone who gets a bit anxious and keyed up before important occasions or big events and may worry about things going wrong but this is likely to be situational rather than endemic.

Relatively unconcerned with what other people think or say about him, he will not over react to criticism and insults will leave him fairly unruffled. Although he will remain cool even if things get personal sometimes his quite 'thick skinned' attitude could be seen as insensitivity or he may not always notice when a remark or criticism is directed at him.

Very positive in his outlook on life, he will always expect things to turn out well and tend to look on the bright side of things rather than see them negatively. Cheerful and buoyant even when there are set backs, he will keep his spirits up and won't become easily downcast if things go wrong. Others may see him as unrealistically positive at times but his unrealistic optimism may help him to overcome difficult situations which other people wouldn't be prepared to tackle. He will like to see the best in people and generally view them as honest, trustworthy and reliable but will not be naïve in his judgement of them. Overall he will usually appear balanced and mature in his expression of emotions at work and will be reasonably open with his feelings.

James likes to be as busy as most other managers and will dislike either feeling over worked or having long periods of inactivity. He will enjoy some element of competitive behaviour but is unlikely to seek to compete with colleagues at work. He describes himself as likely as other managers to commit to achieving challenging goals and objectives and will place equal importance on achieving a healthy work life balance with career progress. In terms of his decision making style, he will tend to make his mind up quite quickly and make fairly rapid decisions without too much deliberation.

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Motivation

The OPQ32 describes James's likely behaviour at work and the Motivation questionnaire should give some insight into why he behaves that way and which job attributes are likely to impact on his behaviour. Motivation will fluctuate in response to changing circumstances and at the current moment James describes himself as generally well motivated in several areas of his work.

His energy levels as applied to the work situation appear to be higher than most in the comparator group. He invests energy very readily, likes to be on the go and will push to get things done. He enjoys having his abilities challenged, perhaps by working towards difficult targets or having complex demands made on him. Work where there is nothing to strive for or little to achieve will result in a withdrawal of energy. Similarly, he is someone who is positive about taking on new responsibilities and will thrive when he is in a situation that allows him to exercise authority, direct things and negotiate, particularly when he can influence outcomes and have some input to important decisions.

Competitive situations appear to have little impact on his motivation either way.

Faced with the prospect of failure, he is likely to raise his game considerably compared with most and will invest a great deal of extra energy in order to avoid criticism. When he feels he is in danger of failing, or of not living up to others expectations of him, he is likely to work much harder as if he believes he is succeeding, or ahead of the game, that is the best way to avoid failure and maintain his self esteem.

The synergy between his job, the culture of the organisation and the people within also has an impact on James's motivation to invest more energy. (*although less so than most managers in the comparator group*) This has to do with factors which are extrinsic to the job itself but intrinsic to the organisation culture, such as team work, mutually supportive interactions with others, opportunity for development and the acquisition of new skills.

Although the OPQ results imply that James is as affiliative as other managers, the existence or not of social interaction or harmonious team work does not seem to affect his motivation either way. When people appreciate his achievements and recognise when he has worked hard to make a difference, he will feel valued and it will impact on his motivation to work harder.

He will need to feel that the work he is doing is of sufficient quality and sound in its nature and reflects his own values and principles. Suspecting that things are not quite as they should be or working for an organisation whose ideals are not in line with his own may be de-motivating for him.

He will find it motivating when his job provides him with regular opportunities for learning new skills and where it is varied and interesting however these aspects are not prime motivators for him.

Most people tend to be motivated to some extent by the extrinsic factors that affect our working lives such as the level of material reward, career opportunities and the status that goes with promotion however James is less driven than other managers by promotion prospects or extrinsic status symbols, he is however more motivated when material reward is linked to effort and expertise.

Team Types

James's dominant team type is likely to be 'Shaper' or 'Resource Investigator' – but he may adopt any of the team types depending on the circumstances and situation with the exception of 'Completer'.

Shapers are highly motivated with a high degree of nervous energy and a great need for achievement. They can lead the team but they are extremely goal oriented endeavouring to reach objectives by whatever means available. Single minded, critical and with a tendency to be aggressive extroverts they may elicit an aggressive response from other team members, - which they will usually accept good naturedly! Shapers are excellent when it comes to sparking life into a team.

Resource investigators come into their own when it comes to picking up ideas and making them work, being adept at finding out what is available and what can be done. Extrovert and friendly they will get a good reception in and beyond the team, facilitating communication and collecting information. Quick thinking and adaptable they will always be looking for ways to do things and may often save the day. However, their enthusiasm for any one project will be short lived if they do not receive stimulation from others

Leadership Style

James's dominant leadership styles are 'Delegative' or 'Consultative' but he may adopt any of the styles depending on the circumstances.

Delegative leaders give their staff a relatively free hand. They tend not to plan the work or provide clearly defined instructions and may not even discuss the way in which the work should be approached – they simply hand the work over, possibly with a few suggestions but nothing more. Ineffective delegative leaders are not likely to have great insight into human nature and are not particularly sympathetic or understanding of others needs. They are likely to be free from anxiety and are generally good humoured and relatively unconcerned about how colleagues are coping. Although the characteristics of the delegative leader are often perceived as negative, the approach is ideal when working with staff whose natural style is to be independent.

Consultative leaders will involve all group members in the decision making process but are likely to make the final decision themselves. After giving staff every chance to contribute their views the Consultative leader will come up with a decision based on their own final analysis. Although not ignoring the opinions of their staff they may well come to a decision which is in contrast to it.

Friendly in their approach to their team they can nevertheless be quite directive when they feel that organisation from the front is required. They are not slow to challenge arguments presented to them but will be sensitive and unlikely to aim criticism at a personal level.

Reporting Style

James's preferred styles of reporting are 'Self Reliant' or 'Reciprocating', but he may adopt any of the styles (with the exception of 'Receptive') depending on the leadership style of his manager.

The self reliant report works well to the delegative leader. They are typically independent; disliking the constraints of methods imposed by others and therefore would be difficult to manage by a leader who is not happy to give a free hand.

Self reliant staff are likely to be both creative and oriented towards getting results and thus their innovations tend to be practical and designed to fulfil specific requirements. They tend to be quite open emotionally.

Reciprocating reports tend to be quite individualistic in approach and are not intimidated by the status of others. Happy to speak out they will prefer to be persuaded rather than directed and although at times stubborn, will be very task orientated.

Suggested Questions

Your profile indicates that you are quite open with your views, can you think of a time when this might have made a situation a bit difficult ? If so how did you deal with it ?

Can you think of a time at work when you have been asked to do something you strongly disagreed with ? How did you deal with the situation ?

How do you feel when other people criticise you personally? And how do you think other people feel when you criticise them?