

PRAESTA

Knowing Your Default

Successful leaders know when to flex their style to suit different situations, and how to respond to the different personalities they are dealing with. First, they need to be aware of the default style that others most often see in them, and where that comes from.

Do you recognise any of these descriptors as part of your default leadership approach?

- High expectations of yourself and others, driven to get results
- Excited by new ideas and innovative thinking, bored by process and structure
- Keen to make a decision and move on to the next challenge
- Methodical and evidence-based in your approach
- Naturally inclined to consensus-building and harmony
- Believe you best protect your people by being on top of everything

If some of these descriptors apply to you, they may feel like strengths but they may not always land well with others. In some circumstances it may be that your team members:

- Are so anxious about meeting your standards that they don't give of their best
- Can be overwhelmed by all your ideas and not know what to prioritise
- Notice you miss important input by closing an issue down too early
- Feel worn down by the rigour applied to process and data, or think they will never produce enough data to get a decision made
- Wish you would sometimes be more directive
- Feel that your protectiveness is stifling their development and would rather be confident that you have their back when they make mistakes.

Every style has its strengths, and its admirers. Yours will already have brought you success in your work. The trick is to know when your strengths and preferences don't match the situation or may be overplayed. The impact you intend to make may not always be the impact that is felt – and different people will experience you differently according to their own personalities and drivers. Hence the value of seeking honest feedback from a range of different people and then being deliberate in flexing your approach.