



ORGANIZATIONAL COMPASSION

Research Summary

Amid continuous change and heightened demands, organizations are asking employees to do much more without the support structures needed to sustain performance and prevent burnout. Our research shows that organizational compassion builds healthy performance cultures where high levels of support match high expectations.

Takeaway: Compassion must be built into an organization's policies and processes to be equitable and effective. Leaders can demonstrate and apply compassion by setting a foundation of care, protecting employees' capacity and workload limits, and following organizational guidelines to make compassion equitable.

- Compassion is the proactive demonstration of care that powers sustainable performance.
- Organizational compassion embeds practices of care equitably into the company's policies, processes, and systems, empowering leaders to support their people and help them thrive.
- Organizational compassion is comprised of three primary pillars: a foundation of care, capacity protection, and guidelines and boundaries.
- When leaders adopt compassionate behaviors, organizations see improvements in trust and connection, belonging, and performance.

With organizational compassion, there are increased odds of:

19x

A high level of
trust in the
organization

33x

Employees feeling
their organization
cares about them
as a person

44x

Employees believing
they have access
to growth
opportunities

Leader behaviors around compassion directly impact
employee perceptions of trust, equity, and connection:

19x

When leaders build teams with care as a foundation, employees are
19x more likely to have confidence in leadership

19x

When leaders protect employee workload and capacity, employees
are 19x more likely to feel leaders support them in the process of
innovation

24x

When leaders apply compassion within the organization's guidelines
and boundaries, employees are 24x more likely to feel their leader
applies policies with fairness and empathy

17x

When a leader incorporates compassion into regular interactions at
work, the likelihood that employees will feel a connection to their
leader increases 17x



→ Get all the data and insights
on Organizational Compassion in the
Global Culture Report



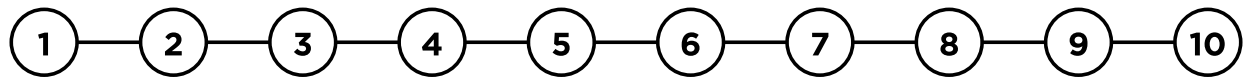
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Leadership Self-Assessment

On the next page, there are five pairs of statements describing contrasting leadership behaviors related to Organizational Compassion. Select the number within each range that best reflects how your employees would rank your day-to-day leadership behaviors.

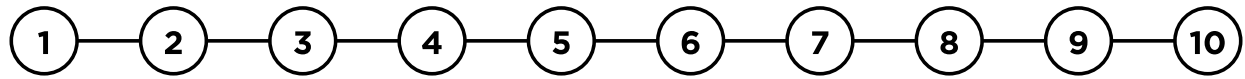
If your employees would strongly agree with the statement on the left, select a number closer to 1. If they would strongly agree with the statement on the right, select a number closer to 10. Select the number that best represents their overall perception of your day-to-day leadership behavior.

Organizational Compassion Leadership Self-Assessment



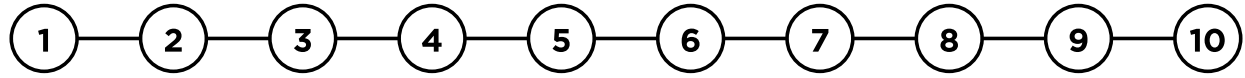
Expects employees to push through challenges regardless of workload or circumstances

Recognizes employee limits and adjusts expectations to sustain performance and wellbeing



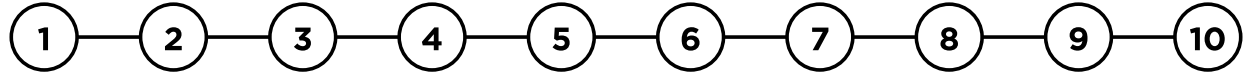
Makes decisions with little consideration of employee impact

Considers employee wellbeing alongside business outcomes when making decisions



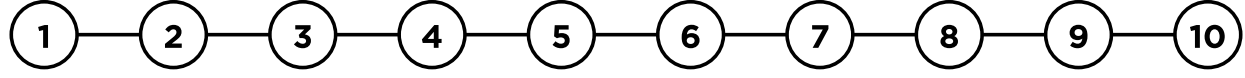
Responds to employee concerns only when problems become urgent

Proactively seeks to understand employee needs and takes meaningful action to help



Applies flexibility and support unevenly across team members

Applies support, flexibility, and care consistently and fairly across the team



Leaves employees to navigate challenges and find support resources on their own

Proactively connects employees with the resources and support they need to succeed

INTERPRETING YOUR RESULTS

After completing the assessment, add all five numbers to get your total score out of 50. Your score reflects how your direct reports are likely to experience your leadership behaviors.

45—50 | Role Model

You consistently demonstrate behaviors that help employees grow, feel valued, trust leadership, and contribute ideas. Your challenge is to sustain your strengths and help others develop similar capabilities.

25—34 | Opportunity for Growth

Employees may experience mixed signals. Your intentions may be positive, but your day-to-day actions may not consistently reinforce the desired behavior. Focused attention in this area can significantly improve the employee experience.

35—44 | Strong Foundation

Employees likely experience you positively in this area most of the time. However, certain situations, competing priorities, or inconsistencies may prevent these behaviors from becoming a defining leadership strength.

< 25 | Immediate Development Priority

Employees may frequently experience behaviors that limit engagement, trust, innovation, or development. Improving in this area is likely to have a meaningful impact on team performance, wellbeing, and culture.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Which of my scores most closely reflect the leader I aspire to be?

Which specific behaviors contribute to those strengths?

Which area received my lowest score? Which daily leadership behaviors might explain that result?

Which leadership behavior would my team most want me to improve?

What makes that behavior important to them?

What is one behavior I could stop, start, or strengthen over the next 30 days that would have the greatest positive impact on my team's sense of compassion?



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Exercise 1: Start/Stop/Strengthen

What might you **START** doing to increase levels of compassion on your team? What should you **STOP** doing so you can truly amplify your team's potential? How might you **STRENGTHEN** areas where there is opportunity to be even more effective? Think through each of these and make a plan for how you will take action this month, this quarter, and this year.

START: Applying compassion within your organization's established systems and frameworks. Familiarize yourself with resources, leave and flexible work options, and other benefits. Understand the guidelines, boundaries, and policies in place so you can practice compassion appropriately.

START: Embedding sustainable practices that respect capacity limitations. Regularly communicate with employees about their personal expectations around workload and compassion. Listen to feedback and make adjustments. Use recognition to show you care about both employee performance and their wellbeing.

STOP: Confusing compassion with empathy or kindness. Compassion is more than a feeling; it must include supportive action. Show active care by connecting them with resources, removing obstacles, and reprioritizing work so their needs can be met.

STOP: Setting high expectations without support or accounting for employee capacity. Performance needs to be sustainable, or you risk burn out. Set boundaries around workloads and empower employees to voice concerns when their capacity is being reached.

STRENGTHEN: Boundaries around compassion. You cannot apply unlimited compassion to all your employees at the same time. Set boundaries with clarity and respect and hold yourself accountable for giving compassion equitably and fairly.

STRENGTHEN: Employee recognition to show care. Recognition makes compassion visible, especially if you show appreciation for efforts in addition to results. Publicly highlight the uniqueness of each employee, the great work they do, and how important they are to your organization.



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Exercise 2: Guided Reflection

**What is your role in strengthening compassion at your organization?
Set aside a few minutes to think through the following questions:**

1. A foundation of care

How will the decisions I make affect people's ability to do their work well and sustainably? How can I show care for my people?

2. Capacity protection

Do I listen to employee needs and concerns? Do I take the necessary steps to alleviate excessive workload pressure?

3. Guidelines and boundaries

Do I apply compassion equitably and fairly on my team?

Do I understand the organization's guidelines around compassion and the resources that are available to my employees?



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Exercise 3: Put It Into Practice

Review this scenario during your next team meeting. As you work through the discussion questions, make sure your team knows that you welcome their thoughts. Take notes so you can reflect on their feedback, make a plan, and then follow up. This demonstrates trust and accountability. After the meeting, set aside some time to work through the Leader Self-Reflection questions on your own.

Caroline is a manager overseeing a team of line workers on the company's manufacturing floor. The team is under pressure as customer demand has surged, and senior leadership is pushing for quicker turnaround and greater output. After several weeks of increased workload, one of Caroline's team members, Mark, requests a one-to-one meeting. He expresses his concern that the high performance expectations and lack of support are taking a toll on team wellbeing and morale. Everyone is operating at full capacity, yet they always feel like they are behind schedule. Mark also shares how the hard work they are putting in feels like it's going unnoticed. Without changes in support or appreciation, he's worried that the team is going to start burning out.

TEAM DISCUSSION

What does compassionate leadership look like in a high-demand, performance-driven environment?

What actions can Caroline take to demonstrate compassion and balance accountability?

How can Caroline encourage Mark's efforts in a way that lets him know that he is heard and valued?

LEADER SELF-REFLECTION

**When was the last time you recognized effort, not just outcomes?
What did that experience look like?**

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**How can you encourage effort more often on your teams, while still
expressing care for individual needs?**

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**Write down four things you can do to demonstrate compassion during
a period of increased workload and stress.**

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