

Brief Summary of
The Ideal Team Player
How to recognize and cultivate the three essential virtues
A Leadership Fable by Patrick Lencioni

- “The right people” are the ones who have three virtues in common – humility, hunger and people smarts.

Humility

- Great team players lack excessive ego or concerns about status.
- They are quick to point out the contributions of others and slow to seek attention for their own
- They share credit, emphasize team over self, and define success collectively rather than individually
- There are two types of people who lack humility:
 - a. The overtly arrogant people who make everything about them, the classical ego driven type which diminishes team work
 - b. The others are those who lack self-confidence who discount their own talents and contributions, so others mistakenly see them as humble.
- “Humility isn’t thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less” - C S Lewis

Hungry

- Hungry people are always looking for more – more things to do, more to learn, more responsibility to take on.
- They never have to be pushed by a manager to work harder as they are self-motivated and diligent.
- They are constantly thinking about the next step and the next opportunity.
- Hunger, here refers to one of a healthy kind – a manageable and sustainable commitment in doing a job well and going above and beyond when it is truly required

Smart

- Smarts refers to a person’s common sense about people.
- Smart people tend to know what is happening in a group situation and how to deal with others in a most effective way.
- They ask good questions, listen to what others are saying and stay engaged in conversations intently.
- Smart people have good judgement and intuition around the subtleties of group dynamics and the impact of their words or action.
- What makes humble, hungry and smart powerful and unique is not the individual attributes themselves, but the required combination of all three. If anyone is missing

Humble and Hungry, but not Smart – The Accidental Mess maker

- a. They genuinely want to serve the team and are not interested in getting a disproportionate amount of credit and attention.
- b. However, their lack of understanding of how their words and actions are received by others in the team will lead to interpersonal problems.
- c. While colleagues will respect their work ethic and sincere desire to be helpful, those colleagues can get tired of having to clean up the emotional and interpersonal problems that this group often leaves behind.
- d. Accidental Mess Makers have no bad intentions and can usually take corrective feedback in good humor

Humble and Smart, but not Hungry – The Lovable Slacker

- a. They aren't looking for undeserved attention, and they are adept at working with and caring about colleagues
- b. Unfortunately, they tend to do only as much as they are asked and rarely seek to take on more work or volunteer for extra assignments
- c. They have limited passion for the work the team is doing
- d. Lovable slackers need significant motivation and oversight, making them a drag on the team's performance, more so than accidental mess makers.

Hungry and smart, but not Humble – The Skillful Politician

- a. These people are cleverly ambitious and willing to work extremely hard, but only in as much as it will benefit them personally.
- b. Because they are smart, skillful politicians, they are adept in portraying themselves as being humble, making it hard for leaders to identify them and address their destructive behaviors.
- c. By the time the leader sees what's going on, the politician may have created a trail of destruction among their more humble colleagues.

Humble, Hungry and Smart - The Ideal Team Player

- a. Ideal team players possess adequate measures of humility, hunger and people smarts.
- b. They have little ego when it comes to needing attention or credit for their contributions, and they are comfortable sharing their accolades.
- c. Ideal team players work with a sense of energy, passion and personal responsibility, taking on whatever they possibly can for the good of the team.
- d. They do and say the right things to help team mates feel appreciated, understood and included even when difficult situations arise that require tough love.

2. Assessing current employees

- Another important application of the ideal team player is the evaluation of current employees
- There are three outcomes of this evaluation
 - a. Confirming that the employee is an ideal team player
 - b. Helping the employee improve and become one
 - c. Deciding to move the employee out
- There will be situations where a leader is struggling with an employee, and the assessment can be used to identify the source of the struggle – a lack of humility, hunger or smarts
- There are a number of questions managers can ask themselves about a given employee to determine whether he or she is humble, hungry or smart

Humble

- Does he genuinely compliment or praise team mates without hesitation?
- Does she easily admit when she makes a mistake?
- Is he willing to take on lower level work for the good of the team
- Does she gladly share credit for team accomplishments?
- Does he readily acknowledge his weakness?
- Does she offer or receive apologies graciously?

Hungry

- Does he have to do more than what is required in his own job?
- Does she have passion for the “mission” of the team?
- Does he feel a sense of personal responsibility for the overall success of the team?
- Is she willing to contribute to and think about work outside of office hours?
- Is he willing and eager to take on tedious and challenging tasks when necessary?
- Does she look for opportunities to contribute outside of her areas of responsibility

Smart

- Does he seem to know what his team mates are feeling during meetings and interactions?
- Does he show empathy to others on the team?
- Does he demonstrate an interest in the lives of team mates?
- Is she an attentive listener?
- Is he aware of how his words and actions impact others on the team?
- Is she good at adjusting her behavior and style to fit the nature of a conversation or relationship?

Employee Self-Assessment – the most effective way to assess employees is often to ask them to evaluate themselves

- The best way to allow employees to do self-assessments is to give them explicit questions to consider, and phrase those questions in ways that encourage honesty.
- A good team player must not only have the right attitude, but must demonstrate the right behaviors in a way that others see and understand.

3. Developing Employees who are lacking in one of more of these virtues

- Employees who lack people smarts have no desire to create interpersonal problems with their team mates.
- A person who has trouble being smart with people can be likened to a pet. Like a puppy being trained, he needs to be quickly and lovingly rapped when he does something non-smart.
- If we want to create a culture of humility, hunger and smarts, the best way to do it is to constantly be catching people exhibiting those virtues and publicly holding them up as examples.

4. Embedding the model into an organization's culture

- If we want to create a culture of humility, hunger and smarts, the best way to do it is to constantly be catching people exhibiting those virtues and publicly holding them up as examples.
- Similarly, whenever you see a behavior that violates one of the values, take the time to let the violator know that his behavior is out of line.
- The key is that leaders and team mates don't squander opportunities for constructive learning.
- Great cultures tend to be appropriately intolerant of certain behaviors and great teams should be quick and tactful in addressing any lack of humility, hunger of people smarts.

Appendix Employee Self-Assessment

Instructions: Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to your actions on the team. Respond as honestly as possible as this will allow you to most accurately identify any ideas of development that you may have

Scale: 3 – Usually, 2 – Sometimes, 1 – Rarely

Humble

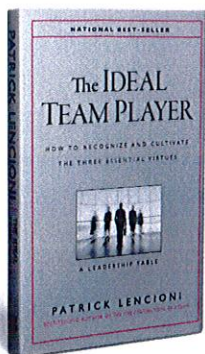
My team mates would say

- I compliment or praise them without hesitation
- I easily admit to mistakes
- I am willing to take on lower level work for the good of the team
- I gladly share credit for team accomplishments
- I readily acknowledge my weaknesses
- I offer and accept apologies quickly

Hungry

My team mates would say

- I do more than what is required in my own job
- I have passion for the "mission" of the team
- I feel a sense of personal responsibility for the overall success of the team

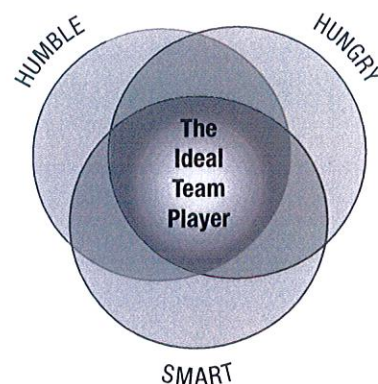


SELF-ASSESSMENT

Instructions: Take this assessment to evaluate yourself relative to the three virtues of an ideal team player. Respond as honestly as possible, as this will allow you to most accurately identify any areas of development that you may have.

Use the scale below to indicate how each statement applies to how you think your teammates may see you and your actions on the team. Choose the rating response number that best applies to each statement and record it in the box to the right of the statement. Then total your scores for each of the three virtues.

Rating Scale: 3 = Usually 2 = Sometimes 1 = Rarely



Name _____		Score
HUMBLE MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	1. I compliment or praise them without hesitation.	3
	2. I easily admit to my mistakes.	3
	3. I am willing to take on lower-level work for the good of the team.	3
	4. I gladly share credit for team accomplishments.	3
	5. I readily acknowledge my weaknesses.	2
	6. I offer and accept apologies graciously.	2
	TOTAL HUMILITY SCORE	
HUNGRY MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	7. I do more than what is required in my own job.	2
	8. I have passion for the "mission" of the team.	3
	9. I feel a sense of personal responsibility for the overall success of the team.	3
	10. I am willing to contribute to and think about work outside of office hours.	3
	11. I am willing to take on tedious or challenging tasks whenever necessary.	2
	12. I look for opportunities to contribute outside of my area of responsibility.	3
	TOTAL HUNGER SCORE	
SMART MY TEAMMATES WOULD SAY:	13. I generally understand what others are feeling during meetings and conversations.	3
	14. I show empathy to others on the team.	3
	15. I demonstrate an interest in the lives of my teammates.	3
	16. I am an attentive listener.	1
	17. I am aware of how my words and actions impact others on the team.	3
	18. I adjust my behavior and style to fit the nature of a conversation or relationship.	3
	TOTAL SMART SCORE	

SCORING

Remember, the purpose of this tool is to help you explore and assess how you embody the three virtues of an ideal team player. The standards for "ideal" are high. An ideal team player will have few of these statements answered with anything lower than a '3' (usually) response.

A total score of 18 or 17 (in any virtue) is an indication that the virtue is a potential strength.

A total score of 16 to 14 (in any virtue) is an indication that you most likely have some work to do around that virtue to become an ideal team player.

A total score of 13 or lower (in any virtue) is an indication that you need improvement around that virtue to become an ideal team player.

Finally, keep in mind that while this tool is quantitative, the real value will be found in the qualitative, developmental conversations among team-members and their managers. Don't focus on the numbers, but rather the concepts and the individual statements where you may have scored low.