

THE CASE OF THE COLORFUL LEADERSHIP TEAM

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When a new CEO took over at GeneBank*, a global supplier of dairy and beef genetics, the Board gave him a strong mandate to double the size of the business to \$1 billion. This was a dramatic shift and required new skills in acquisition, global marketing, data science, and logistics. The team would also have to lead a deeply skeptical, science based organization into a future with much higher expectations.

Naturally, he began by developing a new executive team.

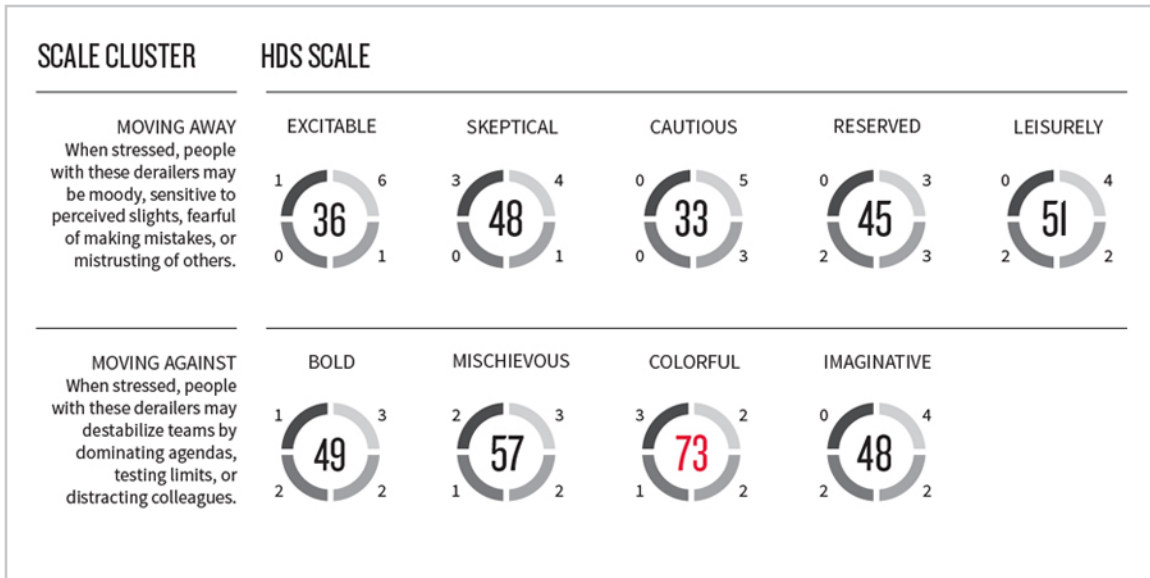
THE PEOPLE ARE THE TEAM

We understand that people play two roles: their functional role – such as global logistics lead – and also their psychological role, which might be their ability to generate ideas or to hustle and drive results. Our research shows that the players on top teams are invariably dominant and outgoing, which can hinder the development of psychological safety and an overarching goal, key conditions for performance. So it proved here, as the team excelled at driving for results and low on process:



*Not the company's actual name.

This team also had a distinctive, shared dark side risk of being colorful:



The organization soon saw the impact of the team's profile. As the Board had wanted, the team was strongly goal driven, competitive, and ambitious. The organization felt as if it had received a huge shot of energy. Targets were increased, standards were raised, and individuals held to account (and non-performers exited). The team was exciting to be around and made strong efforts to connect with each other and the wider organization.

At the same time three other behaviors emerged that caused frustration and resentment. Although driven and focused, the team didn't listen well to the organization, spending its time in broadcast mode. Secondly, goals stacked on goals as they emerged from the long, tough meetings of the top team, and little attention paid to sequencing or resourcing. Finally, the team was distractible, and the strategy began to accumulate pet projects.

The CEO was astute enough to hear grumbling from the organization and the unhealthy patterns forming in his team. He used the Hogan Team Report to reveal a clear picture of the behaviors and dynamics to be expected from the unique mix of team members, and to build a strong coaching and development plan for the group and each member.

He instituted a two year program of team meetings, at which they reviewed their collective and individual profiles, reflected on their improvements and progress, and studied feedback from the organization.

// THE TEAM REPORT HELPED ME UNDERSTAND NOT JUST WHAT WAS HAPPENING, BUT WHY IT WAS OCCURRING. THAT GAVE US THE SHARED LANGUAGE TO CALL BAD BEHAVIOR OUT; AND SPECIFIC SKILLS AND ROUTINES TO STAY CONSTRUCTIVE. //