

Team Skills

Individual Feedback Report - Sample

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Current co-worker feedback was provided by 11 raters
in the following categories:

2 Boss

3 Peers

3 Direct Reports

0 Internal Customers

0 External Customers

3 Others

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Overview of Your Work Skills

This Feedback Report provides you with feedback from co-workers on 20 high-performance professional practices in four broad categories:

- **Communication:** skills that promote the exchange and understanding of information and ideas among co-workers
- **Working with Others:** practices that promote the personal rapport, trust and support that enable high team functioning
- **Task Focus:** skills involved in organizing and performing work, solving problems, and making decisions in an effective goal-oriented way
- **Business Values:** practices involved in exemplifying accountability, maintaining an awareness of customer needs, and ensuring quality and responsiveness to change

The purpose is to give you information from your co-workers about your relative strengths and weaknesses, and help you compare your work skills to those of others. Additionally, you can compare your self-ratings to the perceptions of your co-workers. Finally, this assessment also allows you the opportunity to explore what co-workers see as the most important skill areas for your current role.

Your results are shown in Graphic Form

In the graphic on the next page, each skill area is represented by two bars. In any skill area, your self-assessment score is represented by the thinner bar. Your score from others—the main focus of the feedback—is represented by the dark, wider bar. If co-workers provided too few ratings to generate a credible score, an “X” (for insufficient data) replaces the dark bar.

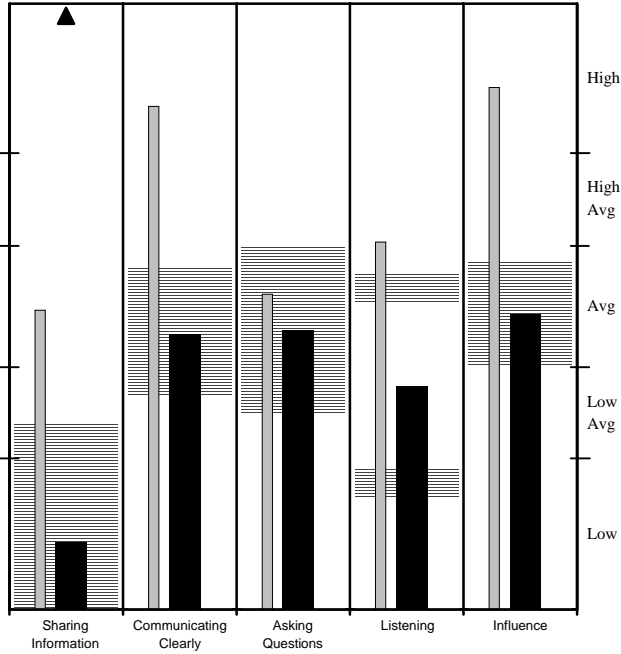
In reading the graphic, a higher score is represented by a taller bar. The bars are scaled in standardized score units to compare your results to an individual contributor norm group. For any skill area, about 40% of all individual contributors will be in the “average” range. (In “statistic-speak,” this range is literally plus-or-minus 0.5 standard deviations around the norm group mean.) About 20% will be in the “low average” range, and 20% in the “high average” range. About 10% will be in the “low” range; 10% in the “high” range.

As you look at your graphic, you may find your results on two or more skill areas look very much alike. It may be hard to tell which score is higher even though, in fact, the ratings differ slightly. The narrative discussion of your results in this report accurately reflects the relative positions of your scores.

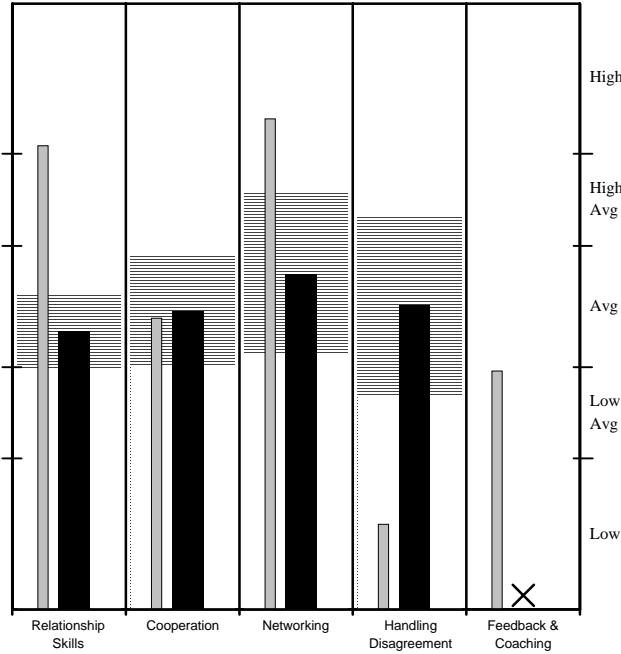
The amount of variation among ratings from others, the “spread,” is indicated by a gray rectangle that appears behind the dark bar. It is centered so that half of the rectangle is above the top of the dark bar and the other half is below. The “spread” indicates the general amount of disparity in the ratings for a skill area, not the highest and lowest ratings (which can place too much emphasis on one extreme rater). For a skill area where your ratings from others are very similar to each other, the spread indicator is relatively narrow. Where raters have a wider range of opinions, the spread indicator is wider. Where your raters are noticeably split into two contrasting descriptions, the spread indicator is split in two equal parts with one part above the top of the dark bar and the other below it.

A triangle at the top of a skill area indicates that co-workers have identified that skill as one of the five most important for your position. A larger triangle at the top of a skill area indicates that co-workers identified that skill as the single most important, or tied with something else for the single most important.

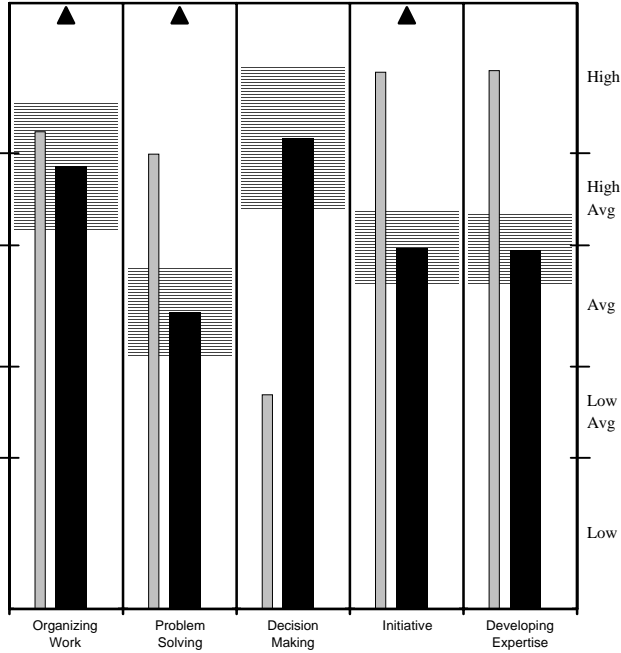
Communication



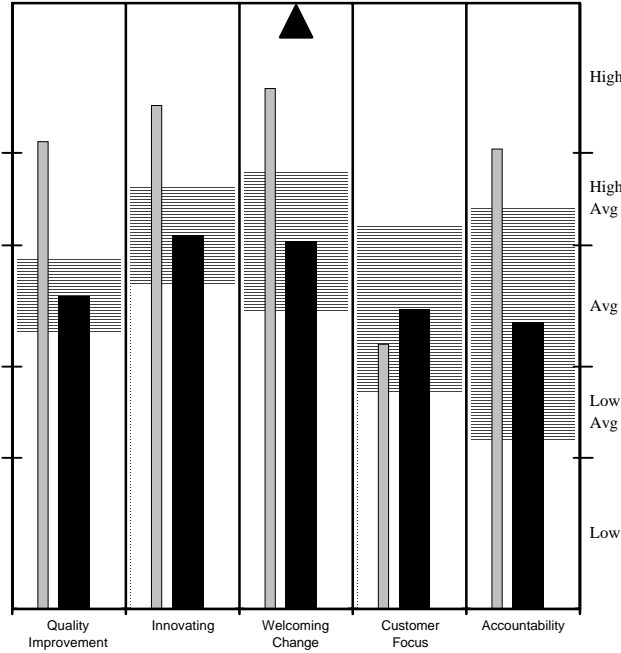
Working With Others



Task Focus



Business Values



- Rating by Self
- Rating by Co-workers
- Spread of Co-worker ratings
- Rated Most Important by Co-workers
- Rated Important by Co-workers
- Insufficient Data

Your Most Important Skill Areas

Raters provided information about which skills they consider most important for your job. The way they see it, the most important area of skill currently is:

- Welcoming Change—promoting and supporting change; being open-minded and responding flexibly.

Of all the areas, this is described as the one at which a person in your job most needs to excel. Other areas which are described as highly important are:

- Sharing Information—assuring a consistent, timely flow of information to co-workers; keeping other co-workers updated.
- Organizing Work—using time and resources efficiently and in a goal-oriented way.
- Problem Solving—assessing problems and finding solutions.
- Initiative—acting in a self-empowered way; able to proceed with minimum direction or guidance from others.

This information about relative importance can be used to help you determine your development priorities. In setting priorities, look first to see what the important skills are for your position. Next, look at where these important skills fall in terms of being a personal strength/weakness. Finally, look at how you rate in these skill areas relative to other individual contributors. A highly important skill which is not one of your strengths or not highly developed compared to other people would clearly be a development priority. If you are really strong in the skill areas that are most important for your job, you might look instead to your lowest score areas as development priorities, since these are where you have the most room for growth.

The information regarding which skills co-workers believe are important for your position may also help you understand the way they view your role. You may discover that your co-workers have not identified the same skill areas that you think are most important. Discussing any differences in perception about the importance of specific skill areas might be a relatively non-threatening way for you to begin a discussion of your role and skills as a professional. It is certainly a safe way to engage your boss in a coaching conversation.

Your Highest Scores

According to the ratings by your co-workers, the three skill areas in which you are the most effective are:

- Decision Making
- Organizing Work

- Innovating

For example, you can see that Decision Making is your best skill area—it has the tallest wide, dark bar. The fact that this dark bar extends into the top quarter of the chart means that your score from co-workers in this skill area is within the high-performance range. Co-workers are very consistent in their ratings as shown by the small size of the spread indicator. You can see that you do not rate Decision Making as being your greatest strength, because it does not have the tallest thin bar. Not only that, but you perceive yourself as being substantially less skilled than your co-workers do.

Based on your three highest scores, some of the things your co-workers see you doing best include:

- Using excellent judgment; acting with considerable logic and confidence in bringing decisions to a timely close
- Staying well organized, planning activities in advance, and using time efficiently and productively
- Creating many useful new ideas, seeking innovative ways to do things better, and experimenting with new techniques

Your Lowest Scores

According to the reports from your co-workers, these are the three skill areas in which you now show the most room for improvement:

- Sharing Information
- Listening
- Communicating Clearly

Sharing Information is your lowest score—it has the shortest wide bar. Your score in this skill area is far below average compared to other individual contributors. Co-workers are very consistent in their descriptions. You can see that you do not perceive this as your greatest weakness. Indeed, you perceive yourself as being substantially more skilled than your co-workers do. You may be very surprised by this.

Looking at your three lowest scores identified above, here are some examples of how co-workers see your performance in these areas:

- Not keeping co-workers well informed about matters that affect their work, and often neglecting to pass on useful information
- Responding in a way that leads others to feel they have not been truly heard, at times interrupting or being distracted by other matters

- Communicating in fairly clear and simple terms and usually emphasizing key points, although sometimes neglecting to tune in to the audience's needs and occasionally leaving people a little confused

Spread of Co-Worker Ratings

For most skill areas, co-workers were in reasonably good agreement among themselves in their ratings of your skills. However, co-workers had considerable variety in their observations about the following skill areas:

- Listening
- Accountability

In each of these areas, your co-workers have a wide spread of opinion. Different co-workers describe your skills differently. The reasons for mixed feedback are unclear. Possibly you act differently with some people or in some situations. Possibly different co-workers have different standards. Possibly there have been a few key incidents which have greatly affected, positively or negatively, the perceptions of several of your raters. It might be worthwhile for you to explore the reasons behind the differences among co-worker ratings in these few skill areas.

Comparing the Assessment Results from Yourself and Others

You can see in the graphic that you give yourself noticeably higher ratings than your co-workers tend to do. This is a common occurrence. Possibly you are a more generous rater, inclined to report that you "always" or "almost always" do a certain thing. Possibly your relations with co-workers are strained, and their feelings "color" their objective assessments, which would be a powerful message in its own right. A different possibility is that you set less demanding standards than other people do; you might see yourself as very skilled, while other people still see considerable room for improvement.

Another aspect of this issue is that you and your co-workers are not in good agreement about your pattern of relative strengths and weaknesses. As an example, you describe Decision Making as one of your three least developed skill areas, but co-workers describe it as one of your three best developed! The skill areas they identify as being most developed are not always among the highest scores from your self-assessment, and the areas they identify as least developed are not always among the lowest scores from your self-assessment. This information suggests that you do not necessarily have a good grasp of what others experience as your relative strengths and weaknesses.

Much of this feedback probably comes as an unpleasant surprise to you. If you are like other people who have received such feedback, you may feel defensive. Sometimes the first impulse is denial, looking for flaws in the feedback process or disbelieving the results—"I asked the wrong people," "Was it scored correctly?"

or "There has been a mistake." A second impulse is often resentment, questioning co-workers' motives or powers of observation. A common reaction is to blame others, pointing at the lack of cooperation or at the impact of recent uncontrollable events. Sometimes the defensiveness expresses itself as anger, leading people to confront the feedback facilitator or their co-workers. More often, though, the defensive reaction is pained withdrawal. Each of these defensive reactions is normal. The main thing is to recognize them as natural reactions and not let them interfere with your ability to use the feedback to your best advantage.

This feedback may be especially valuable to you. Because the assessments from your co-workers are so different than your self-assessment, you are finding out many things you did not know before. In effect, your co-workers are helping you find ways to improve your skills and advance your career by helping you see development opportunities that otherwise you might not recognize.

Breakout of Ratings from Different Sources

Different people may see you in different situations. For that reason, the ratings from different sources—bosses, peers, direct reports, and so on—are displayed separately in the breakout graphic which follows. Each source is represented by a narrow bar. The legend at the bottom provides a key to the shading used for each type of source. The ratings here are scaled exactly the same way as in the main Overview graphic.

The bar for a skill area does not appear if there were too few ratings from a particular source to give a credible score. For any specific skill area, the display of the boss's ratings requires at least one rater for a majority of items in the skill area, while the minimum requirement for each of the other sources is at least 3 raters for a majority of the items in the skill area.

Your breakout graphic shows the ratings from:

- 2 bosses
- 3 peers
- 3 direct reports
- 3 additional raters

Not all the possible breakout categories appear in your breakout graphic. Specifically, your breakout does not include the following:

- internal customer ratings, because there is no skill area where 3 or more internal customers provided ratings for a majority of the items
- external customer ratings, because there is no skill area where 3 or more external customers provided ratings for a majority of the items

Be cautious about the conclusions you draw by comparing the ratings in this graphic, or by comparing these ratings with the composite ratings from all co-workers shown earlier. Ratings from a small number of raters are less reliable, statistically, than ratings from a larger group. For example, if one or two people moved elsewhere, their replacements might describe your skills somewhat differently, even if your skills have not changed. To be a concern, the difference in the ratings must be a relatively large difference. For a skill area displayed in these graphics, a "large difference" is about 1 inch, as a rule of thumb. In that context, resist the temptation to overanalyze small differences.

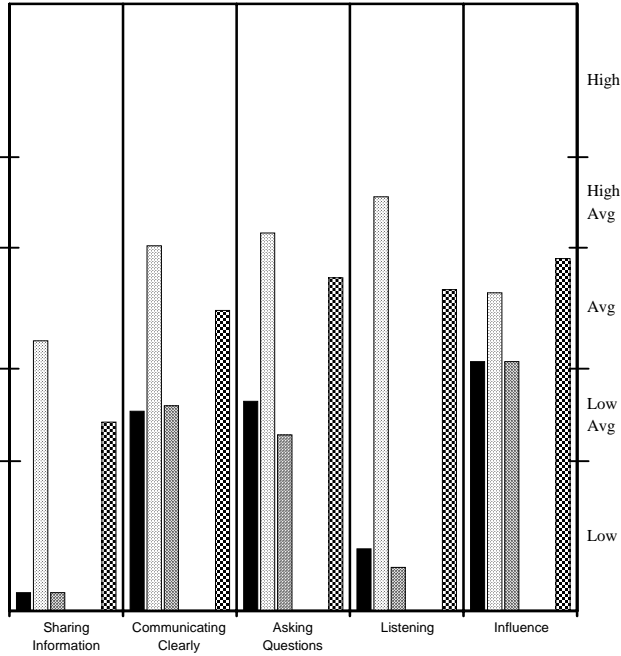
Individuals can give different ratings because:

- they differ in their personal observational skills
- people remember different events, and remember them differently depending on whether the event touched one of their "hot buttons"
- they may feel apprehension about the possible personal consequences of giving a co-worker lower (but accurate) ratings
- some people are well placed to experience your work practices, others less well placed

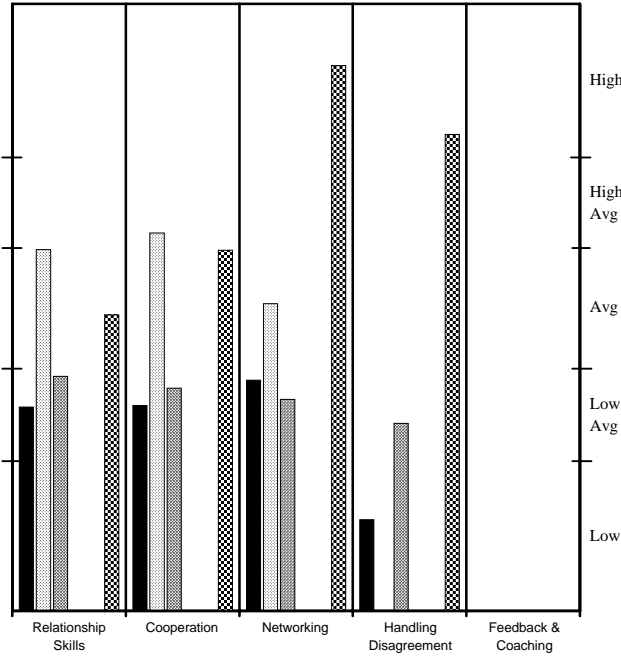
This should not lead you to believe that your ratings depend entirely on who rated you. The reality is that they are rating the same person - you - seen in mainly the same situations. Research involving 360-degree co-worker feedback is very clear in finding that the most raters typically provide similar ratings of the same person, even though there is room for one or two raters to be quite different.

Despite these caveats, this breakout graphic can provide helpful clues about where you might go to seek answers to the question: "What can I do that is different from what I have been doing in the past?"

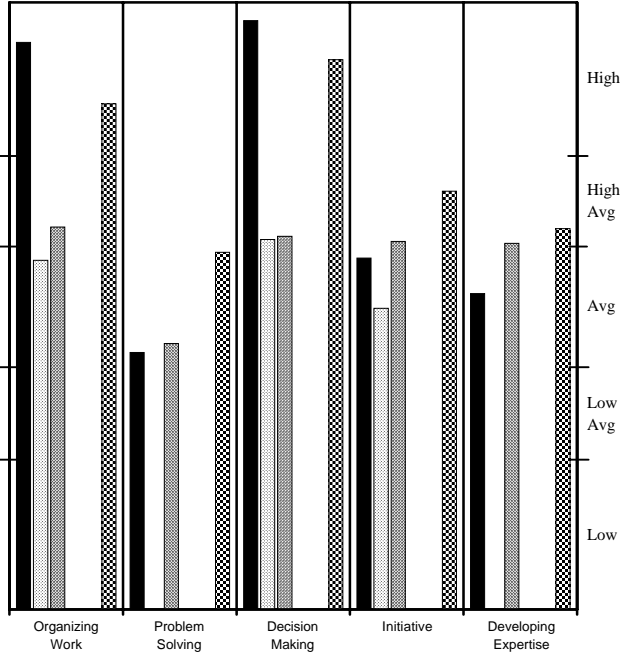
Communication



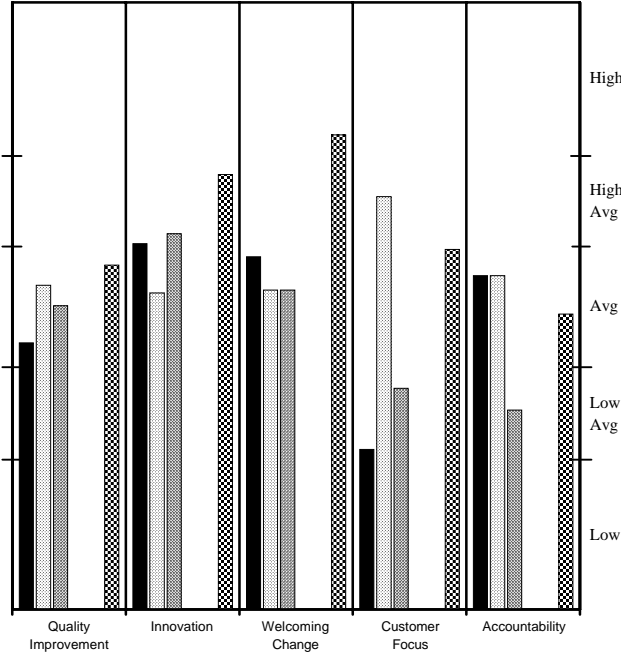
Working With Others



Task Focus



Business Values



Current Development Directions

Based only on your current results, the following skill areas seem to be the best candidates for efforts aimed at further development:

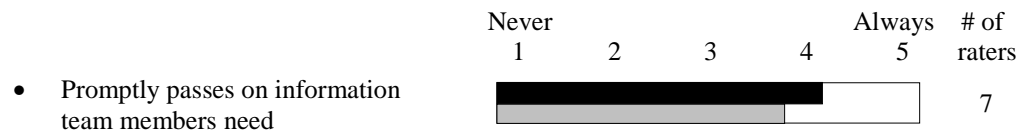
- **Sharing Information**—assuring a consistent, timely flow of information to co-workers; keeping other co-workers updated.
- **Problem Solving**—assessing problems and finding solutions.

These skill areas are among the most important for your position, and they are among your less well-developed skills. Development in one or more of these areas may have greater beneficial impact than development in other areas.

In selecting a specific skill area for development, use the feedback from others, advice from your coach or mentor, and your own good judgment. Consider which skills will have the biggest impact on improving your effectiveness and success in your current situation. Also take into account your long-term career goals and any foreseeable changes to your role.

Skill Area Detail

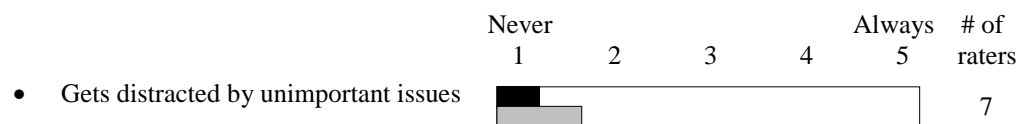
The discussion of each skill area will show you how others rated you on each of the items measuring that skill area. For example, here is what a hypothetical rating might look like on one of the items in Sharing Information:



The scale at the top of the display is the same the raters used in making the ratings, 1 (“Never”) through 5 (“Always”). The length of the dark horizontal bar would show the average rating from others in your current assessment. The more lightly shaded horizontal bar shows the results of the average individual contributor in the norm group. On the item displayed here, the average is about 3.8 for individual contributors in the norm group. The number of people who provided ratings for your current assessment is shown to the right of the item display. For example, on the item displayed here, you would see that the average rating in the current assessment is about 4.3, and 7 people provided ratings. Overall, these results would suggest a relatively high level of skill at this aspect of Sharing Information.

You may notice that the norm group averages are seldom centered near “3.0” on the five-point scale. They are usually closer to the high end of the scale, meaning that a typical professional has good skills. In effect, your skills are compared to a high standard.

Here is another example of feedback about a specific item. This item is from the Organizing Work skill area and this time it describes a counter-productive behavior:



An ideal professional would be described as “Never” doing this behavior. For “counter-productive behaviors,” longer bars show higher levels of undesired behavior—and less skill.

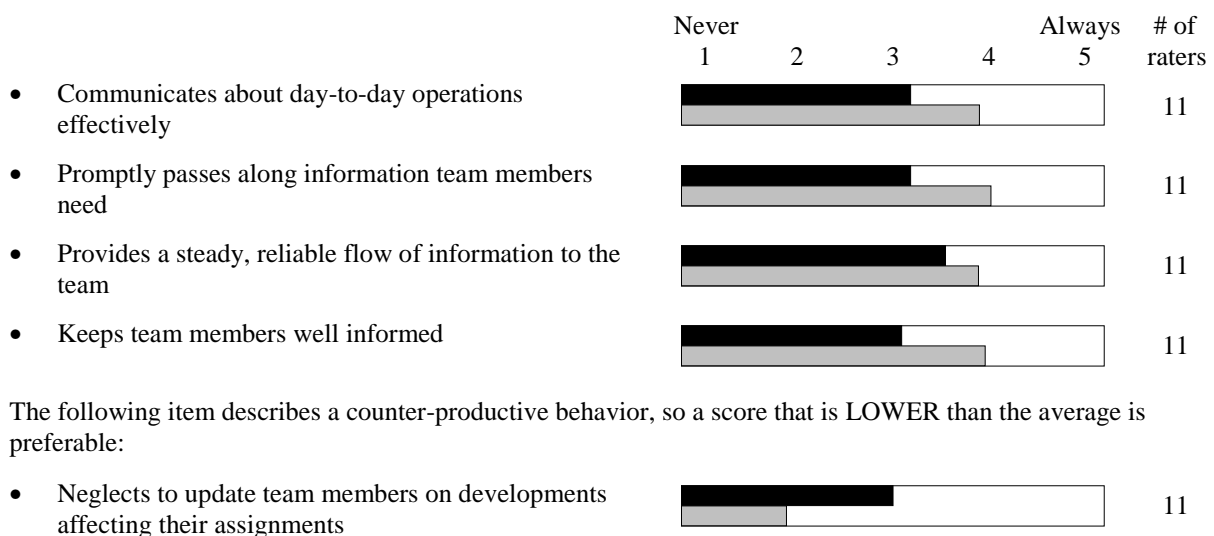
SHARING INFORMATION

Sharing Information is a measure of how well you ensure a consistent, timely flow of information to co-workers. Individuals who score high on Sharing Information see themselves as part of a system in which they affect and are affected by access to information. They help support the functioning of the system by passing on relevant information that keeps co-workers up to date and in the know. Providing information is like providing light—most people do not like to be left in the dark.

Your Results

As you can see from the Overview graphic, Sharing Information is your lowest score based on the descriptions by co-workers. They describe your skill at Sharing Information as quite a bit below those of a typical individual contributor. Your self-description is much more positive than your co-workers' descriptions of how well you inform them; possibly you overestimate your skills in this area. There is a gap here in perceptions and/or expectations.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Sharing Information items:



Development Priority

Co-workers rank Sharing Information as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Sharing Information may be a HIGH priority for you.

- Sharing Information is one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Sharing Information is not one of your higher scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Barriers to keeping your co-workers well informed might include:

- A workload that is so demanding you feel that little time is available for informal communications with team members
- Continual distractions, making it hard to remember what you intended to tell whom
- An organization-wide atmosphere of secrecy or mistrust
- Fear that others will react negatively to the information you have to give them
- A competitive work environment—information is withheld as a source of power or "one-upmanship"

Sharing information is a necessary aspect of everyday life in an organization. An insufficient exchange of information is a critical barrier to communication. It can lead to the duplication of efforts, conflict within and across teams, as well as the breakdown of organizational morale and productivity.

To appreciate the importance of sharing information, you must see yourself as part of a system. A system is a collection of parts that interact with each other to function as a whole. The cooling system in a car, for example, consists of a radiator, a fan, a water pump, a thermostat, a cooling jacket, hoses, and clamps. Together they function to keep the engine from overheating, but separately they have limited impact. Similarly, the individuals in an organization function collectively toward common goals and objectives. Sharing information is a key element in coordinating the efforts of individuals in the organization into a well-honed system, so the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Evaluate your attitude toward information as a source of power. How much power do you feel comes from holding information versus sharing it? Have you ever controlled access to information as a form of gamesmanship—quietly withholding information that would help political rivals or hoarding knowledge as a way of keeping team members dependent? In general, would you feel more or less secure if all your team members always knew everything you knew? Practice giving others information that you hold, even if you're unsure they need to know it or if you feel uncomfortable about passing it to them. Check in with your co-workers down the line, and ask them if they see improvement in your skills at Sharing Information.

- Search your own experience for incidents in which a co-worker kept you in the dark, either deliberately or inadvertently. For each incident, reflect on how you felt and how you would have liked things to go. Was it an uncomfortable experience? Did you feel as if you were re-inventing the wheel? Think of how these incidents were different from times when a co-worker was very informative about a project, identifying possible resources, likely problems, and possible strategies. How might you be creating negative experiences with your co-workers by not sharing information? Identify what you will change in yourself to create more positive experiences for everyone involved.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Your self-report for Sharing Information is much higher than your co-workers' ratings. Explore these differences in perceptions. What are your co-workers' needs and expectations regarding the content, form, and timeliness of the information you communicate? Where are you meeting those requirements and where are you falling short?
- Make an inventory of your activities related to sharing information. For one month, track the memos, phone messages, and notes you send to others. Also, make brief notes about less formal interactions in which you pass on information to co-workers. Analyze the quantity and quality of your messages. Then, speak with others to find out if you are, in fact, sharing the kinds of information and ideas that others may need. Devise and implement a plan for improving the effectiveness of your efforts to share information.

Involving Others

- Interact with team members more often, possibly following an informal (but explicit) daily schedule. When you see someone, ask yourself if you know something that they should know. Ask team members to support you by giving you timely feedback and reminding you of information that needs to be passed on to others.
- Assess your knowledge of what information your team members need. List those people in your work life who may need information from you. This list could include your boss, a person in finance, your team members, the receptionist, and so on. Go to each of the people on your list and ask them what kind of information they need from you and how frequently they need it. The work you do may affect them in ways you didn't know. Go back to your notes periodically to ensure you are keeping others well informed.

Actions

- Log new information and developments that others need to know on a notepad or a mini-recorder. Review this list frequently, at the end of each day, for instance, and promptly pass information on to the appropriate party. If it helps, schedule time on your calendar each day to review your list and use e-mail, voicemail, memos, and the telephone to pass along information.

- ❑ Structure time in your schedule to talk formally and informally with team members about the status of projects. This may mean saying to yourself, "For the next half hour I am going to walk around and talk with my co-workers about anything that I'm doing that involves them in any way. I am going to do this three times this week." Frequent contact with others may prompt you to pass on useful information.

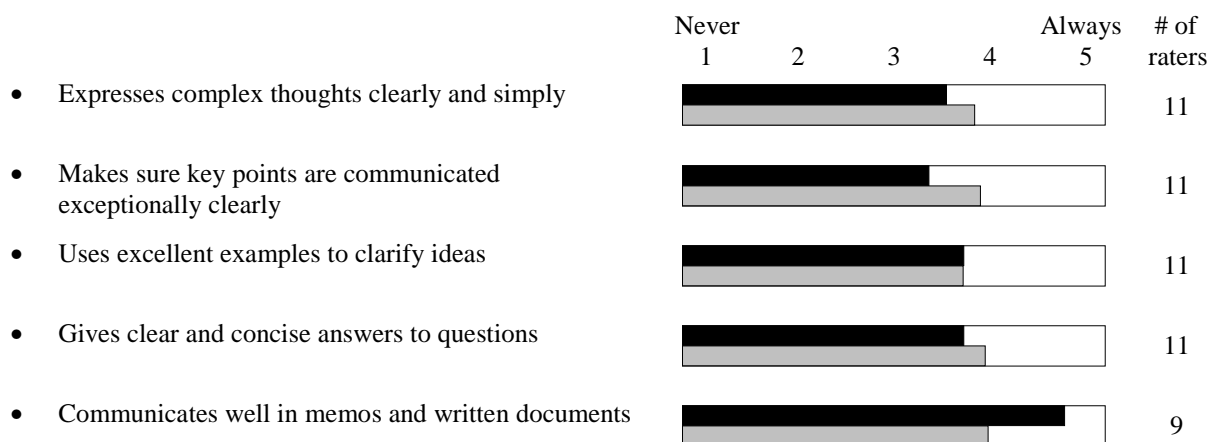
COMMUNICATING CLEARLY

Communicating Clearly measures the extent to which you express thoughts and ideas in a way that is concise and easy to understand. Individuals with strong skills in this area focus their comments on key points, give relevant examples, and tailor the communication to fit the listener's needs and level of understanding. Clear communicators eliminate the excess "noise" from their messages, which enhances the impact of their words and helps avoid misunderstanding.

Your Results

Co-workers rate Communicating Clearly as one of your three lowest skill areas. Yet, they report your skills to be about the same as a typical individual contributor's. The Overview graphic shows that your self-report is considerably higher than the average of your co-workers' reports. With regard to getting your message through to your intended audience, you may have some blind spots that are apparent to your co-workers.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Communicating Clearly items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Communicating Clearly as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Communicating Clearly may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Communicating Clearly is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Communicating Clearly is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

The ability to communicate clearly can be blocked by several factors:

- Inattentiveness to the interests, knowledge, and motivation of the audience
- Feelings of anxiety that can cloud one's thinking
- Distractions in the environment that make it difficult to concentrate
- A tendency to provide too much information, motivated by a perfectionistic desire to cover all the details

Every job, in some way, requires the employee to be a communicator. Most people have to communicate with their bosses, co-workers, or customers on a daily basis. And with the technological advances of e-mail, voicemail, cellular phones, and teleconferencing, the emphasis on rapid, precise communication appears at every turn. The ability to communicate clearly is vital.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Focus on the mindset and needs of your audience when you are communicating. Ask yourself: Who is my audience? What do they already know? What new information or insight can I give them? Avoid becoming focused on your own interests, concerns, and anxieties. When this happens, pause briefly and consciously shift your focus back to your audience.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Ask your co-workers for help in understanding why they rated your skills at Communicating Clearly less favorably than you did. Do specific situations or interactions stand out in their minds where you may not have expressed your thoughts well? Are these the same incidents you recall, but from a different perspective? It is possible that you have good communication skills, but your co-workers, for whatever reasons, are not having a chance to see you at your best. Take this opportunity to ask your co-workers for suggestions on ways you can modify and improve your communications with them.

Involving Others

- Identify a co-worker who is also interested in improving his/her communication skills. Set a regular time when the two of you can take turns being the "questioner" and the "listener." Invite your co-worker to point out times when you need to say more to express your ideas clearly and times when you could say less. Practice explaining tasks or answering complex work questions. Ultimately, the content of what you talk about is not as

important as giving each other specific feedback on **how** you express your ideas.

Actions

- Avoid turning answers or comments into speeches, even when you have lots of information to share. Focus your remarks on key points. Use words such as main, primary, and major (like, "The main reason for the change is . . ." or, "My primary objection is . . ."). This kind of phrasing forces you to prioritize your comments. By experimenting with it, you will probably find that you can shorten the length of your remarks and still express your ideas clearly.

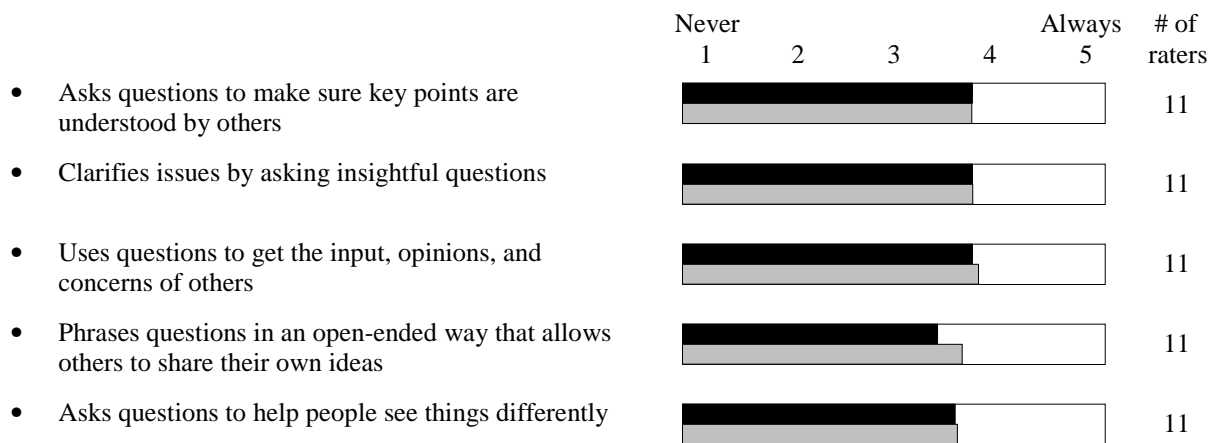
ASKING QUESTIONS

Asking Questions is a measure of how well you use inquiry to gather and clarify information, explore issues, and solve problems. A person who scores high on this scale asks questions to ensure clear communication, to seek additional information, and to make sure that issues are examined thoroughly. When done skillfully, questions are asked in a way that expresses genuine interest and support, without being confrontational.

Your Results

From your co-workers' descriptions, Asking Questions is lower than many of your other scores. Nevertheless, they depict your skills as about the same as those of an average individual contributor. Any difference between their descriptions and your own description of your skill at Asking Questions is not large enough to be significant.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Asking Questions items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Asking Questions as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Asking Questions may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Asking Questions is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Asking Questions is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

The ability to ask questions effectively may be limited by several factors. These might include:

- Overconfidence in one's knowledge or understanding
- The belief that asking questions is a sign of ignorance
- An impatient approach to problem solving and decision making
- Anxiety about speaking up or asking questions, especially in groups
- A work environment that discourages questioning in general, or management that discourages questioning authority

Asking questions is one of the key avenues to confirming information, communicating effectively, and staying involved and connected with one's team or company. As the saying goes, "knowledge is power." This is especially true as products, services, and organizations change at an accelerated pace. The more accurately informed you are about projects, work demands, and others' expectations, the more likely you will be productive and make a meaningful contribution.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Reflect on times when you may have made mistakes or had misunderstandings with co-workers because you did not ask questions to clarify information or instructions. What kept you from asking important questions? Were you too shy or afraid of a conflict or confrontation? Did you think it was impolite or inappropriate to ask someone to explain their points? Looking back on these incidents, how might things have turned out more favorably had you asked more questions? Consider what you can do to overcome these same kinds of obstacles in the future.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Record the content of the questions you ask during meetings or while working with co-workers. Make notes so you can reconstruct the phrasing of your questions and co-workers' responses. Ask yourself: What information was I trying to get? Were my questions successful in getting this information? Could I have asked certain questions more clearly or concisely? Notice the tone of your questions. Did you express warmth and interest or did your tone sound confrontational? Based on what you learn from this exercise, make a plan for improving your questioning skills, and act on it.

Involving Others

- Plan regular times to speak with your co-workers to catch up on their activities and the general operations of your work group. Use this as a time to ask questions about the team's big events, achievements, and challenges. Keep track of projects and activities, so you can ask informed questions at appropriate times.

Actions

- Avoid assuming that you fully understand what co-workers are saying or that they understand what you are trying to convey. When you are speaking, stop and ask: "Am I expressing my ideas clearly? Should I say more about such and such?" When you are receiving information, confirm that you understand the message by saying: "So let me make sure I understand. Are you saying . . . ?" This may seem artificial at first, but it serves an important function: to clarify and verify communications. Make a commitment to try this type of exchange for a week, finding the clarifying questions that feel comfortable to you. Adopt them as part of your regular approach to asking questions.

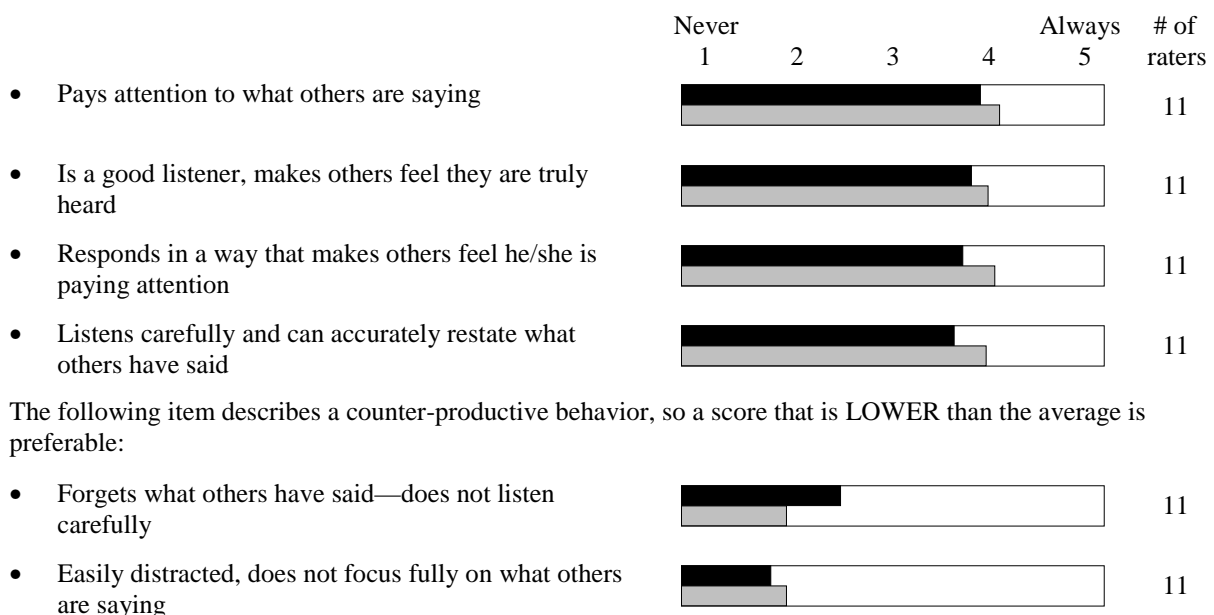
LISTENING

Listening measures the degree to which you pay attention to and remember what others have said. This skill area focuses on the "receiving" aspect of communication. The act of listening involves taking information in through our senses, interpreting and understanding that information, and responding to what we hear. The ability to listen effectively is an important component of professional success, since it is critical for learning, problem solving, and working with others.

Your Results

Listening is one of your three lowest scores, according to your co-workers' ratings. They report that your skills at listening to others are underdeveloped, in relation to those of a typical individual contributor. If you look at the Overview graphic, you can see that your self-report for Listening is somewhat higher than the one by your co-workers. This difference in perceptions is not so large that it should be considered meaningful.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Listening items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Listening as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Listening may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Listening is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Listening is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Some barriers that may interfere with listening include:

- A highly competitive environment that values getting one's own ideas recognized and adopted over coming up with collaborative team solutions
- Excessive stress and overload, resulting in a tendency to "tune out" during conversations by thinking about other issues
- A driven personality type that emphasizes doing rather than listening
- A tendency to assume you already know what someone is trying to tell you

According to a 1985 study by Baker and Morgan, people in the United States spend an average of 80 percent of their waking lives communicating. Of this, about 45 percent is spent listening!

One of the impediments to effective listening is that people can think much faster than others can talk. The average rate of speech—125 words per minute—is slow compared to the higher capabilities of the ear and brain, which can process words at nearly 500 words per minute. Thus, the potential to become distracted by irrelevant thoughts while you are presumably listening is great. In that sense, there are barriers to listening that are experienced universally—obstacles we all must work to overcome to become skilled listeners.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Think of an occasion when someone did not listen to you. Did they interrupt, keep repeating their view, seem distracted, or just brush you off? How did it make you feel? What do you think motivated that person to do those things? Do you see any of those motives and behaviors in yourself? In what ways might you be conveying to others that you are not listening carefully? As you engage in future conversations, consciously work to listen in a way that clearly shows others you are interested in what they have to say.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read **Listen for Success: A Guide to Effective Listening** by Arthur Robertson (1994). This book shows you how to replace ineffective listening habits with more effective ones through easy-to-apply techniques. While reading this book, write down at least 20 things you could do differently starting today to sharpen your listening skills.

Involving Others

- Meet with your co-workers to get their observations of your listening abilities. In particular, discuss the fact that they have different perceptions from one another. What accounts for these differences? Does your ability to listen depend on the person, the situation, or the topic of conversation? Getting direct feedback from your co-workers will allow you to target your developmental efforts to those people, situations, or topics that are most challenging for you.

Actions

- Listen interactively with your co-workers. In conversations over the next few days, make it a point not to automatically say what you think in response to a statement. Instead, reply by summarizing what you think the other person is saying and feeling. This will take patience and effort! But the payoff is learning to better understand others' perspectives. And you may prompt others to discuss important information and concerns that have not been brought up before.

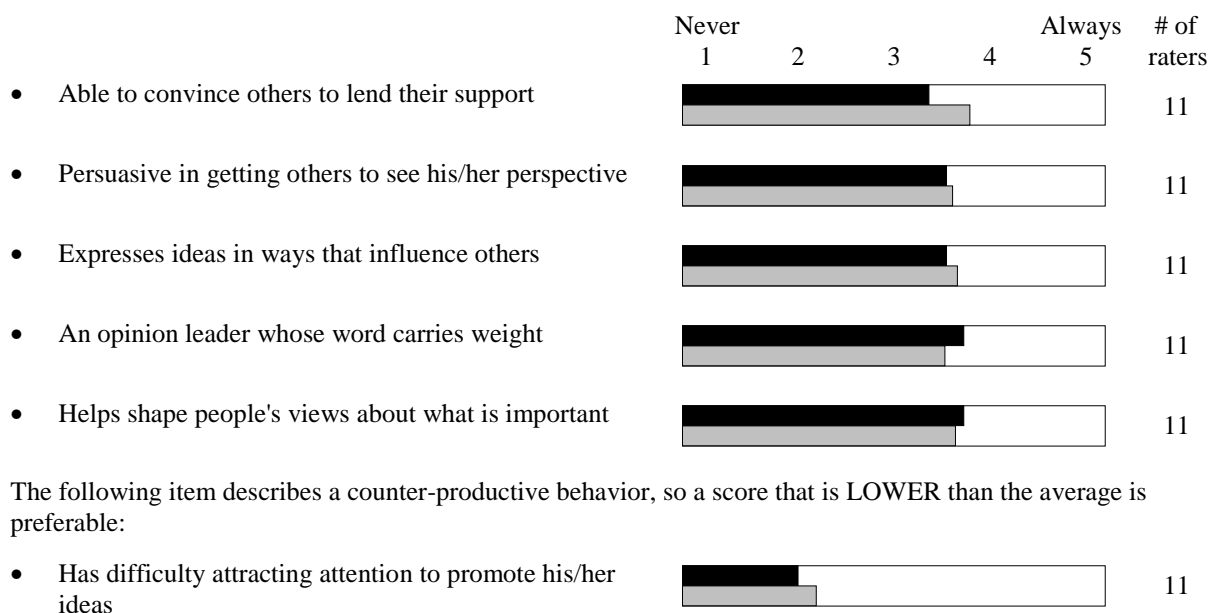
INFLUENCE

The **Influence** scale measures your skill in expressing ideas in ways that lead others to share your perspective. People who score high on Influence are often seen as "movers and shakers" who are able to impact situations and events. They gain the support of others by defining the issues in ways that appeal to others' needs and concerns. They are able to rally the support and fellowship of co-workers through the use of facts and logic, passion and commitment. As a result, they are effective in the work environment—they can convince others to see a situation from a particular perspective, shape events, and make things happen.

Your Results

Influence is one of your lower scores, judging from co-workers' responses. Yet, they assess your skills at influencing others to be average compared to other individual contributors'. In the area of Influence, you rated yourself in a much more positive way than others rated you. You might want to investigate this difference in perceptions.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Influence items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Influence as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Influence may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Influence is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Influence is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

A professional's efforts and skills at influencing others can be impeded by a number of factors:

- Lack of formal authority in one's job
- An overconfident or arrogant approach that may turn off others because they feel your interests are to demonstrate you are "right" and they are "wrong"
- Having strong opinions on issues but not being prepared to back up your opinions with convincing facts and figures
- A lack of training in assertiveness and negotiation skills, which are usually required to influence others effectively
- Poor listening skills, which may interfere with understanding legitimate alternative points of view

Although barriers certainly exist in most work environments, learning to overcome or work with these barriers is at the heart of effective influence. Research has shown that the ability to influence others is a skill that one can acquire with practice, learning, and attention. Many people who are effective in this area have developed and refined these capabilities through discipline, practice, and effort. In a very real sense, developing Influence skills must begin with oneself. If you cannot persuade yourself first, you have little chance of convincing others.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Identify two or three situations where it was critical for you to influence others toward a decision and you were not as successful as you would have liked. Notice how you felt in those situations. Did you feel afraid that others might not listen, causing you to retreat or to come on too aggressively? Were you frustrated that others were missing the point, which limited your patience to hear their views and find common ground? Track your thoughts and feelings. Once you discover patterns that limit your effectiveness in influencing others, take conscious steps to overcome those limitations.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Talk to co-workers to find out why they view you as a less effective influencer than you see yourself. Are their expectations dramatically higher than yours? Is the company's culture one in which your particular approach to influence is less well suited? What is their experience with other people in the company

who have strong skills in this area? Given the difference between your self-view and your co-workers evaluations, it is possible this could be a blind spot in your self-understanding. It may also be a great opportunity to make a quantum leap in your professional effectiveness.

Involving Others

- Identify those people in your department or division who appear to be the "opinion leaders" and who embody the kind of influencing skills you value. Generally, these are people who speak their minds, convey their ideas with enthusiasm, and are ultimately respected and trusted by their co-workers. Meet with two of them and ask what they did to develop their influencing skills and the specific techniques they use to get their ideas heard. Identify the characteristics or techniques you would like to borrow to fine-tune your approach to influencing others.

Actions

- Make a habit of trying out your ideas on friends or a few trusted co-workers before proposing them to others. Ask them to play "devil's advocate" so you can practice listening to and overcoming objections to your ideas. Use their feedback to hone your approach.

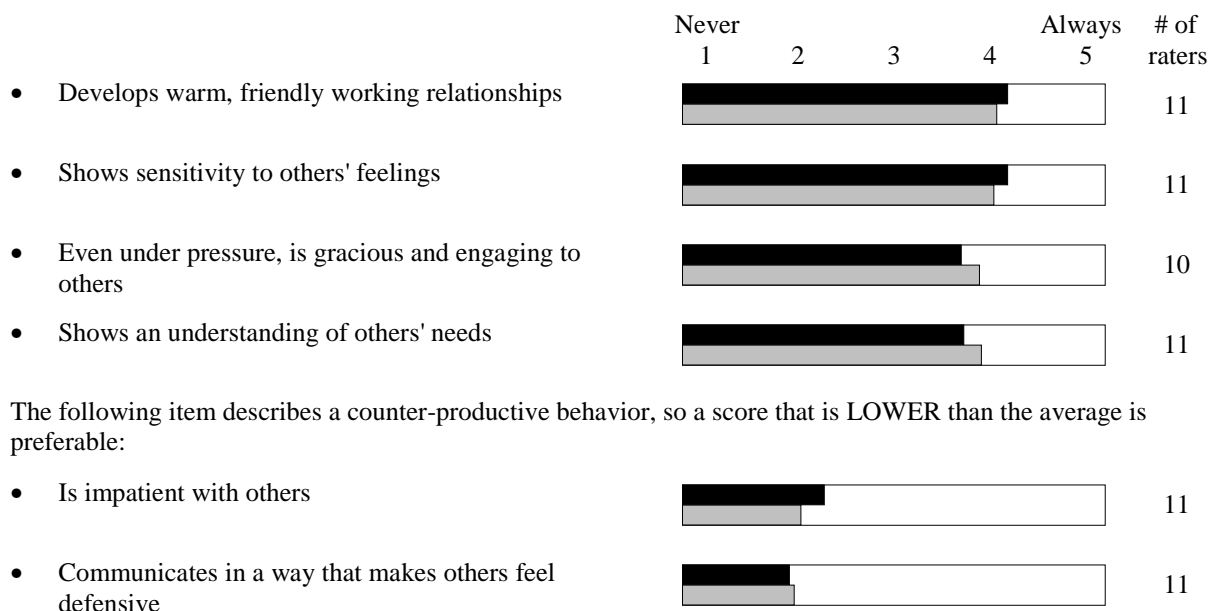
RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

The **Relationship Skills** scale provides information about your ability to relate meaningfully and productively to others at work. These skills help you establish and maintain warm, supportive work relationships that contribute toward higher team morale and performance. Individuals who score high on this scale show that they demonstrate genuine respect and concern for co-workers' needs and feelings, develop trust with others, and relate well to others on a personal level.

Your Results

From your co-workers' descriptions, Relationship Skills is lower than many of your other scores. Nevertheless, they depict your skills as about the same as those of an average individual contributor. You depict your Relationship Skills as being much higher than your co-workers do. This gap in perceptions suggests that you may not always be aware of your interpersonal impact on your co-workers.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Relationship Skills items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Relationship Skills as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Relationship Skills may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Relationship Skills is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Relationship Skills is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Several factors internal or external to yourself can hinder the extent to which you develop and maintain warm, friendly work relationships. These might include:

- A corporate culture that encourages "hard-nosed" productivity rather than social supportiveness
- A job structured around solitary tasks and activities
- An isolating physical workspace
- A stronger personal focus on tasks or ideas, which overshadows an interest in people
- A shy, reserved personal disposition
- A tendency to be highly competitive
- The belief that being "professional" at work is inconsistent with establishing personal relationships with co-workers

The importance of building strong relationships at work cannot be underestimated. Technical competence is rarely, if ever, enough to go the distance in one's career. It is estimated that 80 percent of people who fail in their jobs do so because they do not relate well to others. The fact is, producing results at work requires interdependence among co-workers. Long-term success in almost every organization, therefore, depends largely on the ability to work with people.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Ask yourself if you are paying too much attention to your job tasks at the expense of your relationships with co-workers. As you work with team members over the next several days, note how often you find yourself giving and being supportive, versus how often you are quick to dismiss others in the interest of task efficiency. Under what conditions do you see yourself acting in these different ways? Does the level of stress you are experiencing at work play a role? Remember that good relationships are founded on a premise of give-and-take; your role is to give of yourself and fill the other person's needs, as much as it is to take from them when you feel the need to do so. Think about what you can do to sharpen your focus on people to enhance your relationships.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Speak with your co-workers to determine why their ratings of your Relationship Skills are less favorable than your own. What observed behaviors strongly influence their assessments of your skills? Do specific situations stand out in their minds? In what ways are you impacting people differently from the way you think you are? Is it possible that you hide a sensitive, caring "inner self" behind a tough exterior, and take that softer side into account when judging yourself? Do you sense that people are misinterpreting your intentions and behavior towards them? Devote some time and effort toward thinking about what your co-workers see that you do not, and vice versa, with an eye toward ways you can enhance your relationships at work.

Involving Others

- Identify a co-worker with whom you have had some difficulty establishing a meaningful and productive relationship, a relationship you would most like to improve. For purposes of clarity, let's call that person "Co-Worker A." Now think of a person at work whom you trust and who gets along well with Co-worker A. Let's call that person "Co-worker B." Confide in Co-Worker B your interest in further developing your relationship with Co-Worker A. Draw on B's knowledge of A, his/her interests, needs, and concerns. Get input about what you can do differently in relating to A that might be more fruitful. Take the lead in improving that relationship by acting on what you have learned.

Actions

- Set aside one day each week to have lunch with a different member of your team. Make a real effort to get to know them better. Find out about their families, special hobbies, interests, and concerns. Get a true picture of who they are as people, so you can further understand and appreciate their needs and unique perspectives.

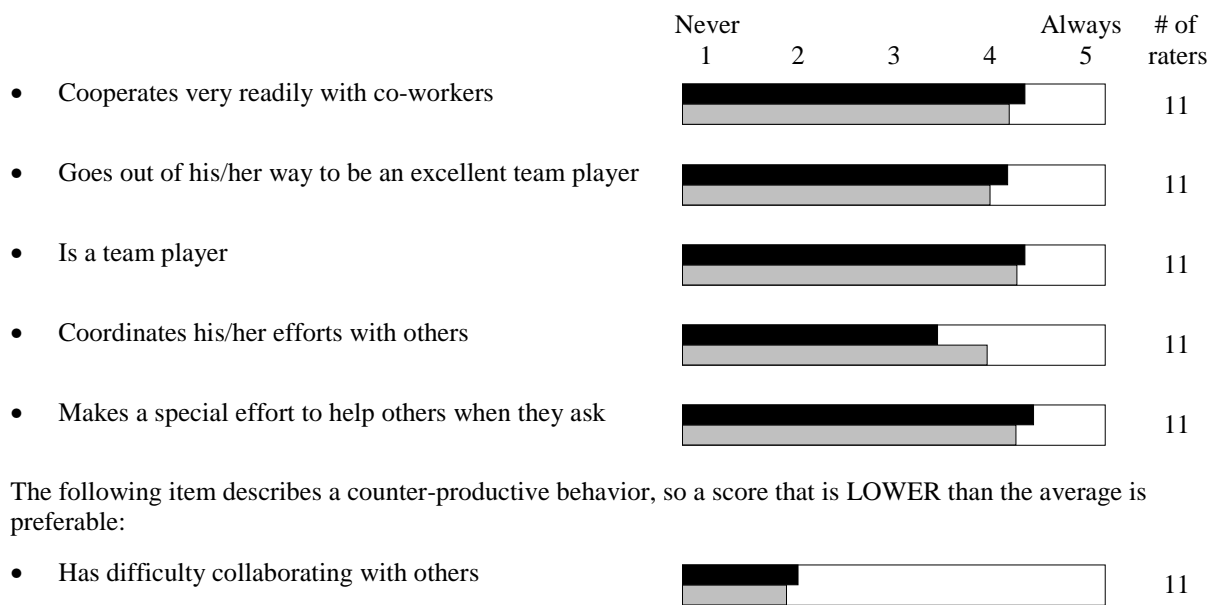
COOPERATION

The **Cooperation** scale measures the extent to which you work interdependently with co-workers and with other teams to meet organizational goals. A key element of cooperation is the ability to set aside the need for personal recognition in the interest of attaining team objectives. Thus, professionals who score high on Cooperation are seen as "team players." They work well with others, recognize opportunities for collaborating, adopt a constructive role on teams, contribute to consensus, and support group projects.

Your Results

Your Cooperation score lies in the middle of your other scores, according to your co-workers' ratings. They report that your skills at cooperative teamwork are comparable to those of most individual contributors. If you look at the Overview graphic, you can see that your self-report for Cooperation is roughly the same as the report from your co-workers.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Cooperation items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Cooperation as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Cooperation may be a LOW priority for you.

- Cooperation is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Cooperation is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Accomplishing personal work objectives while cooperating with others is not always easy. Forces that can make it harder to fully cooperate with other team members include:

- Interpersonal discomfort with other team members
- A strong need to have one's own ideas heard and accepted
- A corporate culture that stresses competition over cooperation
- A sense that you may know better than others—possibly as an outgrowth of having a track record of success and a personal history of being the "star player"
- Concern about protecting the interests of one's own unit

However, teamwork is a requirement for success. Research shows that a cooperative atmosphere makes people feel more satisfied, professionally secure, and productive. Working with others is like rowing or sculling; as an individual, you might be able to row faster than other team members, but the boat actually goes faster if you synchronize with everyone else. Teamwork is essential in the pursuit of common organizational goals.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Assess your decision-making style, paying attention to the extent to which you solicit others' ideas when working on a project or making a decision. Determine the degree to which you are competitive rather than collaborative in the decision-making process. Analyze your behavior in meetings and assess the potential impact of any competitive behavior on getting your decision adopted. Evaluate how your particular working style might impact group processes and outcomes. Consider if there are ways for you to behave in a more cooperative and productive manner.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read **Stewardship** by Peter Block (1993). This book advises us on how to operate in service, rather than self-interest, with those around us. Specifically, the book asserts that we can be more successful by focusing on values, which includes collaborating with others. As you read, think about how the book's ideas relate to your role as a team player in your organization.

Involving Others

- Talk with trusted co-workers to get their perceptions of occasions when your cooperation and teamwork could have been higher. Bear in mind that your skills in working cooperatively with others are already fairly good, and you are looking for ways to enhance them even further. Are there specific occasions or activities when people are most likely to see you as lacking cooperation or pushing an agenda? What specifically can you do differently?

Actions

- Harness your competitive energy by working hard to become "The Most Cooperative" person on your team. Make it a game with scoring rules. For example, you can award yourself points each time you compliment a co-worker's good work, but deduct points each time you find yourself in a round of one-upmanship. Tally your score at the end of each week, and treat yourself to something nice each time you set a new record.

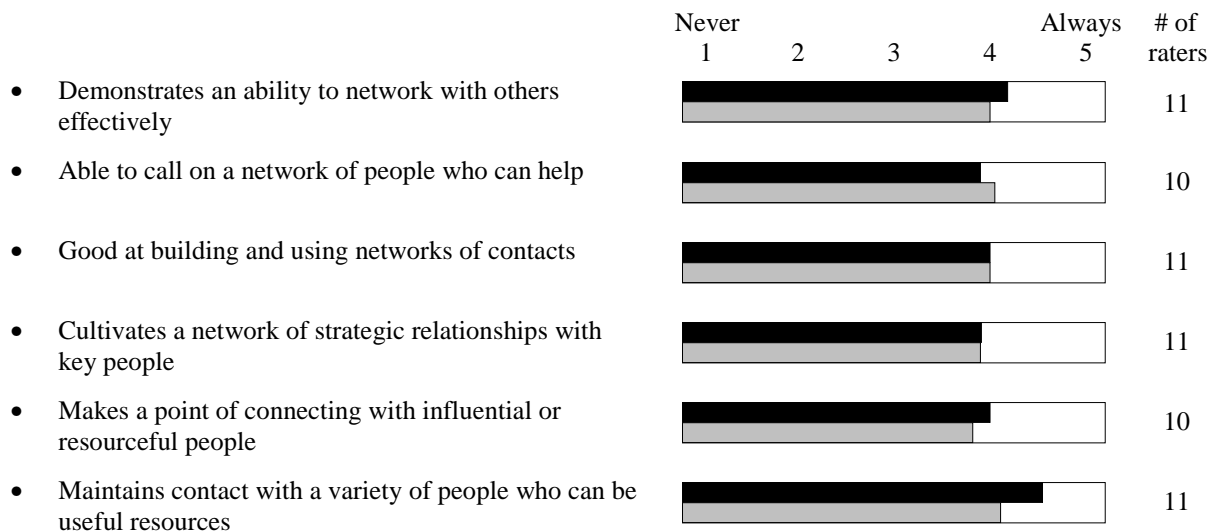
NETWORKING

Networking gauges your skill at developing useful contacts with a variety of people in diverse locations. The networking process involves the exchange of ideas, information, and resources with others who are inside and outside your formal work channels. People skilled at networking know whom to call on for help. They meet new people with ease and enthusiasm, and are active on key committees and in professional and community organizations. They approach networking as cooperative "team players," nurturing their relationships by maintaining contact and offering leads and solutions.

Your Results

Based on reports from co-workers, as shown earlier in the Overview graphic, Networking is one of your higher scores. Your co-workers regard your Networking skills as comparable to those of an average individual contributor. While the graphic shows that you describe yourself more positively than do your co-workers, the difference is not so large that it should become a major concern.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Networking items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Networking as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Networking may be a LOW priority for you.

- Networking is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Networking is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Although networking activities are largely under an individual's own control, several factors make some individual contributors less likely to network as effectively as others. These include:

- Pressure to perform immediate work tasks and neglect personal relationships
- Shyness and social anxiety
- The belief that networking is manipulative, insincere, and impersonal
- A low level of self-confidence
- Feeling uncomfortable asking for favors; not wanting to be perceived as a "user"

Most of the time, individuals are empowered to act self-reliantly within the limits of their jobs. Yet they often lack legitimate power—the kind of authority that comes with jobs at higher organizational levels—to summon the support from others that would allow them to be even more effective. This is where informal social channels can prove especially fruitful. Research shows that people who develop many contacts, friendships, and allies actually achieve more through their expanded base of resources. Effectiveness is greater when this social network involves people in powerful positions and when the connections extend throughout an entire organization and beyond.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Look at networking in the context of "lifelong learning." Many successful professionals approach their work and their lives as a process of continual improvement and growth. Networking can be a wonderful venue for gaining new information and perspectives, learning new skills, and sharing with others what you have to offer. If you have negative feelings about the potentially insincere and manipulative aspects of networking, consciously work at taking steps toward becoming more involved. Give yourself a small reward each time you go to a volunteer committee meeting, attend a professional function, make a new contact, or revive an old one. Once you see how networking can contribute to your own success and the success of others, the networking itself will become its own reward.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read Susan RoAne's book **The Secrets of Savvy Networking** (1993). She points out that "What goes around comes around" is a fundamental tenet in

networking and in life. In an important way, this is an application of strategic thinking—strategic social thinking. Effective networking requires the ability to see beyond the here and now to the larger view of the future. This longer-term perspective motivates individuals to foster contacts and do things for others even though there may be no immediate return.

Involving Others

- Work on developing a self-introduction, along with a handful of natural conversation-starters you can use to help you feel more comfortable approaching people. Try them out with friends and in "safe" professional and social situations where people know you and where you already feel at ease. Before long you will feel ready to branch out and use your conversation-starters with people you don't know particularly well, and then progress even further to use them in new situations with new people. As you become more experienced, your sense of ease will come across to others and allow them to feel more comfortable as well.

Actions

- Keep your business card file organized and up-to-date. As Harvey B. Mackay, author of **Swim With the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive** (1988), has said, "The most important word in the English language, if you want to be a success, can't be found in the dictionary. It's 'Rolodex'." Clearly your card file is a critical component to effective networking! When you get a new card, jot down some memory jogs on the back, such as when and where you connected with that person, people you know in common, and key points about them that you have learned. Get yourself into the habit of filing new cards as you receive them so they are always easily accessible and don't get lost. When you learn that someone has moved or changed jobs, be sure to make the change promptly in your system.

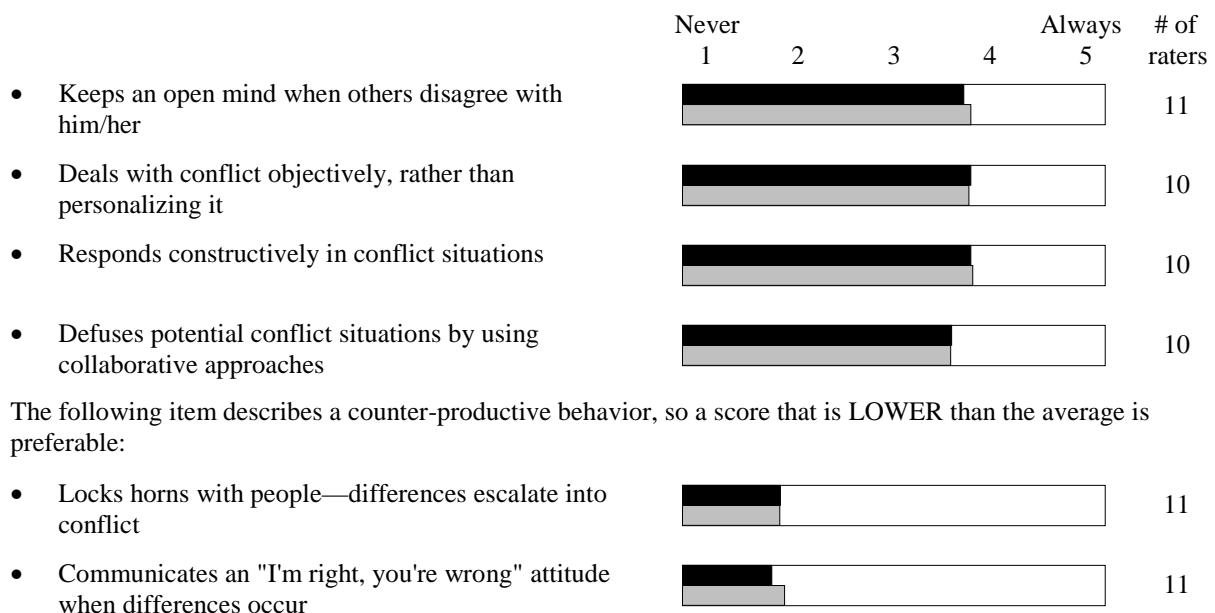
HANDLING DISAGREEMENT

Handling Disagreement measures your skill at finding ways to reach agreement in conflict situations by dealing with differing opinions openly and productively. An individual who scores high on Handling Disagreement typically keeps an open mind, finds ways of creating win-win compromises when differences occur, defuses potential conflict situations by using collaborative approaches, and expresses disagreement in non-threatening ways. In essence, a person who handles disagreement effectively communicates to others, "I respect you and your needs. I take responsibility for letting you know where I stand. I am committed to handling our differences in ways that satisfy both of us."

Your Results

The Overview graphic shows that co-workers rate Handling Disagreement in about the middle range for you, neither one of your highest nor lowest scores. They rate your skills at Handling Disagreement as about the same as those of an average individual contributor. Your own description of your practices related to Handling Disagreement is much less positive than your co-workers' descriptions; you may underestimate your ability in this area.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Handling Disagreement items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Handling Disagreement as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Handling Disagreement may be a LOW priority for you.

- Handling Disagreement is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Handling Disagreement is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

An individual's ability to handle disagreement can be impeded by several factors. These include:

- A tendency to see things in "black or white" terms or to think of disagreements from the viewpoint of "someone's right and someone's wrong"
- A feeling that expressing disagreement or conflict will be too confrontational and will damage interpersonal relationships
- High levels of work stress contributing to "short fuses"
- An organizational culture that strongly values conformity and agreement

Disagreement can arise in any relationship or organization. Honest, well-motivated people can disagree because they have different values, possess different facts, or have had different life experiences that lead them to interpret the same facts in different ways. A classic example comes from the three blind men who stumbled against an elephant. The first blind man encountered a leg. It felt round, gnarled, and sturdy. "It's a tree," he said. The second man found the elephant's flank. "No, it's flat, upright, and solid; it's a wall," he said. The third man grabbed the elephant's tail. "How can you say that? It's obviously a vine!" The three men could not set aside their initial conclusions, so they continued to disagree—right up until the elephant trumpeted.

In the worst case, disagreement escalates into conflict where there are winners and losers, where some people get their way and others sulk. In the best case, disagreement prompts an enlightening exchange of viewpoints, leading to understandings and agreements that feel good to everyone. In that sense, openly expressing disagreement creates a very important opportunity for people to share their needs and ideas.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Consider how you may repeat your way of handling disagreement with different people, both inside and outside of work. Remember that you were taught to react to conflict in particular ways. For example, did your upbringing teach you to be competitive or to be stronger or smarter than others? Or, did your family encourage you to avoid conflict at all costs? You can learn new ways of exchanging ideas and resolving conflict. Start by thinking about what you do now, how you might have learned this habit, and what new skills you would like to teach yourself.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Speak with your co-workers to gain insight into why they judge your skills at Handling Disagreement more favorably than you do. Which disagreements did they observe or take part in that stand out in their minds? Is it possible that you are your own worst critic and that you judge your skills against a more rigorous standard? Reevaluate your skills in this area based on what you learn from your co-workers, and consider shifting your self-perception in a direction that is more consistent with their observations.

Involving Others

- Select one co-worker you recognize as being skillful at handling disagreements. Ask this co-worker if he/she might be willing to serve as your advisor during the next month. Tell your co-worker that you are trying to improve your skills at handling disagreement and would like to consult with him/her periodically to get honest and objective feedback on your responses to disagreements and ways you might approach up-coming discussions.

Actions

- Aim to win agreement, not to win an argument. Prevent disagreements from escalating into conflicts. Disagreements are usually triggered by a particular problem. Keep your agenda focused on reaching a productive agreement on that specific problem. If you find yourself about to mention other problems or past difficulties that were never resolved, stop yourself and think: Do I really need to bring these things into the discussion to resolve the issue at hand? To help everyone stay focused on the present topic, set up a "bin list" to keep track of other issues that come up—but with the ground rule that you agree to deal with them later.

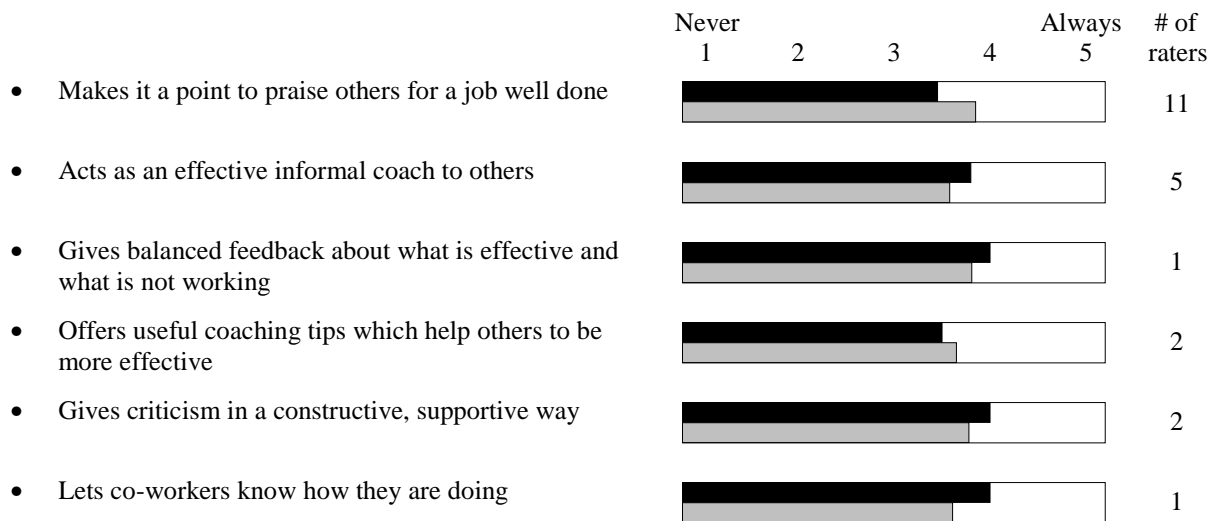
FEEDBACK AND COACHING

The **Feedback and Coaching** Scale measures your ability to provide constructive and timely professional guidance to others. The "feedback" component of this skill area refers to evaluating a team member's work and communicating what is working well and where opportunities exist for improvement. The "coaching" component refers to the direction you provide to help your co-workers modify their approach to operate more productively. Individuals who score high on Feedback and Coaching combine both of these components in a supportive process that helps team members learn about themselves, providing them a foundation for developing better skills and greater effectiveness.

Your Results

Co-workers had difficulty rating you in the area of Feedback and Coaching. They selected the "Unable to Rate" option so frequently that a credible overall score cannot be reported. Your self-assessment ratings suggest that you see your skills in this area to be less fully developed than those of many other individual contributors.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Feedback and Coaching items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Feedback and Coaching as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Feedback and Coaching may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Feedback and Coaching is NOT one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Co-workers who provided you with feedback frequently selected "Unable to Rate" as their response to items that deal with this skill area. This is a signal that your actions in this area are not visible to the people around you.

Potential Barriers

A professional's ability to provide feedback and coaching can be impeded by a number of personal factors. At the same time, certain factors in the team or organizational environment may inhibit the feedback and coaching process. These personal or organizational factors can include:

- A tendency to be judgmental and focus on "right and wrong," causing others to feel defensive
- An approach that focuses on very large or general issues rather than on specific behaviors
- A tendency to think of feedback and coaching as giving the "answer," rather than as a way of providing observations that allow others to reach their own decisions
- A norm or expectation that people act only within the chain of command
- A lack of appreciation or reinforcement in the organization for peers helping peers
- A job where little interaction occurs between people

While some external barriers may exist, it is worth remembering that feedback is the very foundation upon which the quality improvement process rests. In organizations that stress quality improvement as "a way of life," professionals are expected to provide feedback and coaching to other professionals, since they are often in the best position to observe each others' skills and shortcomings. Further, as organizational structures become flatter, individual contributors are assuming more of what was traditionally the managerial responsibility of guiding and mentoring fellow team members. Thus the ability to give instruction, guidance, and informed feedback is a critical skill for professionals at all levels.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Explore your own coaching style with an eye toward potential blind spots in the way you tend to give feedback to others. For example, are you so sensitive to criticism yourself, or so motivated by wanting to be liked, that you are too subtle in pointing out opportunities for others to improve? Or perhaps you avoid giving criticism entirely? By contrast, are you so task-oriented that you criticize in a blunt, non-supportive way? Work toward developing a more balanced approach to giving feedback and coaching to others that is less driven by your personal style.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read **Coaching Skills** by Robert Lucas (1994). Although the book is intended for managers, its principles are easily applied and relevant to all professionals. While reading the book, think about the people in the workplace to whom you provide coaching. Evaluate the extent to which your approaches in coaching others parallel those recommended in the book. Determine what you can do to alter your coaching style to become more effective. Implement these changes and re-read the book a year from now to assess how far you've come.

Involving Others

- Engage your co-workers in a discussion about how to use feedback as a way to optimize the course of work you are all involved in. Use the following analogy to stimulate your discussion: An airplane is traveling from New York to San Francisco. Rarely is it exactly on course. However, it has a built-in mechanism that tells the pilot how much on or off course the flight is, so the pilot can make corrections. Discuss the course your team is on and how it might make small or large course corrections to operate more effectively.

Actions

- In providing feedback and coaching, use a general rule of thumb that says you should provide at least three to four times as much positive feedback as corrective feedback. Positive feedback by itself is motivating but provides no guidelines for improving performance. Negative feedback clearly points out areas that need improvement but can be difficult to hear. A combination of both types of feedback recognizes work well done and sparks others' improvement as well.

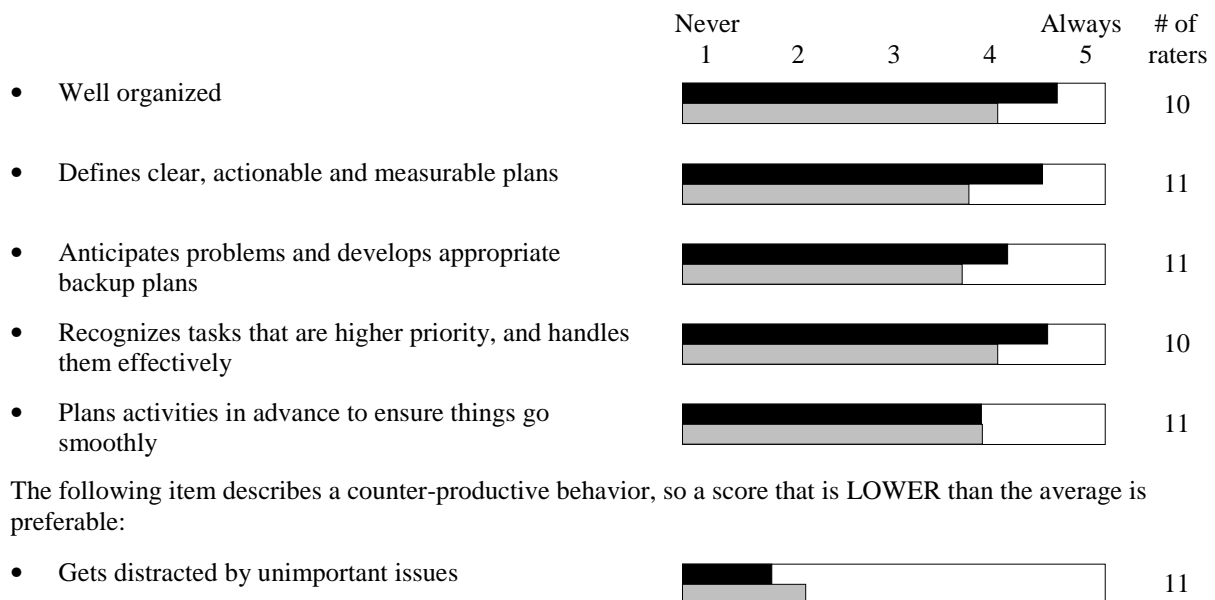
ORGANIZING WORK

Organizing Work measures your effectiveness in using time and resources to deal with the important issues at hand. Individuals with high scores on Organizing Work plan and structure their work productively. They avoid duplication of effort, work efficiently, and stay focused on priorities. Organized professionals are like circus ringmasters, making sure the main events are going well in the center ring and not wasting too much time on the sideshows.

Your Results

Organizing Work is one of your three highest scores based on the ratings by co-workers. As you can see in the Overview graphic, this is an area of strength for you, because they rate your Organizing Work skills as above average compared to other individual contributors. Your own description of your efforts at Organizing Work is similar to the descriptions by your co-workers.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Organizing Work items:



Development Priority

Co-workers rank Organizing Work as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Organizing Work may be a LOW priority for you.

- Organizing Work is one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Organizing Work is one of your higher scores from co-workers.
- Your skills in this area are rated higher than those of a typical leader or individual contributor.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Think back to an experience you had with a team member who was very disorganized and inefficient. How did this affect the work you were doing? How did you feel about it—were you frustrated? What did you do to cope with his/her disorganization and lack of focus? On a piece of paper, list several things you would have this person do to become more organized. Now think about your own work organization and efficiency. Look at your list and choose a few items of your own advice to integrate into your developmental Action Plan.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read **Beyond Time Management** (1986) by Jane Elizabeth Allen. This book introduces a system for organizing time and resources to maximize efficiency. Alternatively, read Stephanie Winston's **The Organized Executive: New Ways to Manage Time, Paper, and People** (1985). This book includes strategies for planning, using time effectively, managing projects, and processing paper; strategies that can be used by anyone, not just executives.

Involving Others

- Compare your daily activities with your job responsibilities. Consult team members to evaluate how you can hand off tasks that are not directly related to your job. Avoid getting involved in other people's work; don't do things they can do for themselves.

Actions

- Post the phrase, "What is the best use of my time right now?" in a prominent place as a continual reminder of what your priorities ought to be at any point in the day. Prevent yourself from taking on unnecessary or excessive work by asking the question, "Do I personally have to do this?" Ask yourself the question, "Am I spreading myself too thin?" Remember the adage, "When you devote a little of yourself to everything, you are committing a great deal of yourself to nothing."

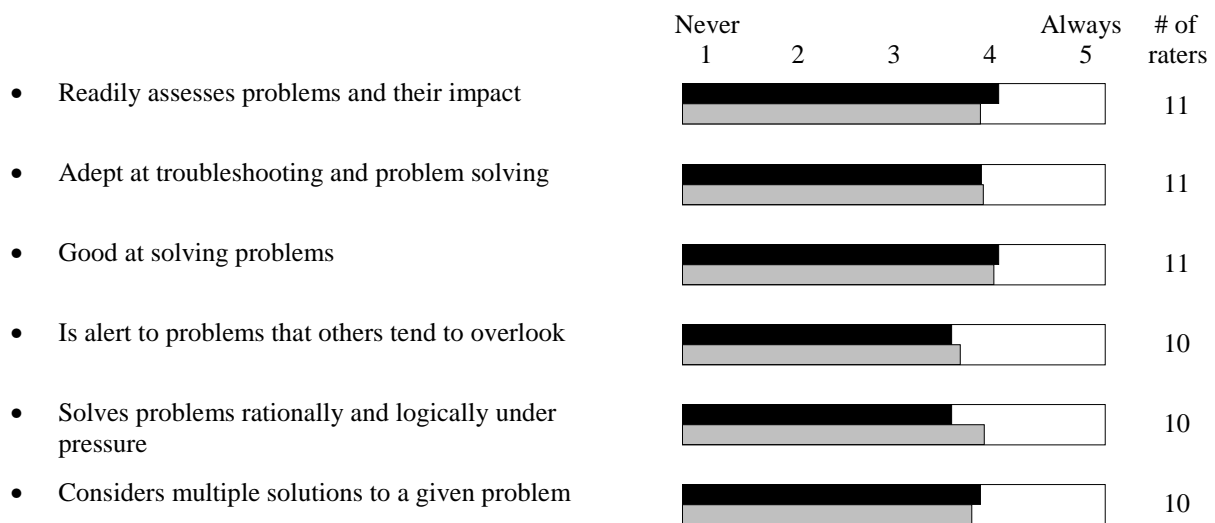
PROBLEM SOLVING

Problem Solving is a measure of how well you can identify problems, assess symptoms and their causes, and find solutions. Analytical thinking skills, experience, and creativity are all important factors in determining the ability to solve problems effectively. A high score on this scale would indicate that you are adept at recognizing a problem when it presents itself, at seeing the interrelationships that exist among symptoms, at troubleshooting to isolate a problem's source, at generating alternative solutions, and at evaluating the risks, rewards, and trade-offs associated with those solutions.

Your Results

Based on reports from co-workers, as shown earlier in the Overview graphic, Problem Solving is about in the middle of your other scores, neither one of your highest nor lowest. Your co-workers regard your Problem Solving skills as comparable to a typical individual contributor's. While the graphic shows that you describe yourself more positively than do your co-workers, the difference is not so large that it should become a major concern.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Problem Solving items:



Development Priority

Co-workers rank Problem Solving as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Problem Solving may be a HIGH priority for you.

- Problem Solving is one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Problem Solving is not one of your higher scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

Several factors can act as barriers to effective problem solving, including:

- Difficulty in evaluating risks, resulting in either excessive caution or over-optimism about potential outcomes
- Technological changes that make an individual's technical skills outdated
- Emotional reactions to the stress of urgent problems
- The fatalistic belief that one has little control over problems that arise

Problems at work are inevitable, as they are in all aspects of life. Someone once said, "Within each problem lies a disguised opportunity . . . but it is the art of unmasking the disguise that distinguishes between the two." Effective problem solving acts as the key that allows one to unmask the disguise, seize the opportunity, and bring about positive change.

At first glance, we may be tempted to think of problem solving as a one-step action—**get it solved!** However, skill at problem solving usually relies on a systematic process involving several steps. First, there must be the recognition that a problem exists, followed by a realistic assessment of the problem's importance, fact-finding to further diagnose symptoms and root causes, and the development of several thoughtful alternatives. Surprisingly often, success lies in simplifying the problem by redefining it in an insightful way.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Examine your incentives when dealing with a problem. To get your problem-solving energies flowing, start by establishing what it is you want to achieve. In other words, **envision your goal**. Once the desired end-state is clear to you, it sets the challenge to discover how to make it happen. Second, put yourself into a feel-good problem-solving mood. An upbeat frame of mind is a powerful enabler, enhancing your resourcefulness and increasing your chances of success. To inspire that mood, think of a time when you felt especially "pumped up." Make that experience vivid in your mind and re-live the emotion. Consciously work to capture that positive mental attitude each time you are facing a challenging problem.
- Examine your beliefs about problems. What are your "gut" reactions when you hear the word "problem" mentioned? To be sure, the term "problem" sounds like a negative experience. Problems are things to be avoided. They throw us off track, and wreak havoc on our lives. Right? Now, consider a different perspective: problems spell opportunity. Problems are the prelude to

progress. Problems create room for challenge and creative expression. As Dr. Donald Noone, author of **Creative Problem Solving** (1993) suggests, by challenging your beliefs about problems and adopting a more positive mindset, you will lift a barrier and empower yourself to solve problems more energetically and creatively.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Examine your own track record for solving problems. What kinds of problems are you good at solving? What kinds of problems do you have trouble solving satisfactorily? While reviewing this feedback report, identify your strengths in the technical, interpersonal, and organizational skills areas. Think about how you can leverage those strengths to increase your problem-solving effectiveness.
- Read Gerald Nadler and Sozo Hibino's **Breakthrough Thinking: The Seven Principles of Creative Problem Solving** (1994), Donald Noone's **Creative Problem Solving** (1993), and Karl Albrecht's **Brain Power: Learn to Improve Your Thinking Skills** (1987) for a variety of approaches you can use to become a more efficient and effective problem solver.

Involving Others

- Speak with an individual whom you recognize as an excellent problem solver. Find out what techniques he/she uses to handle a problem, from the time the problem is recognized through the generation of alternative solutions. In what ways can you adopt that individual's strategies to enhance your own problem-solving abilities?
- Undertake an "assumption busting" exercise with your team members. In a group forum, challenge your assumptions about reality—those aspects of a problem situation that work against your ability to be expansive in solving it. Take it one step further and brainstorm the "what ifs?" You'll be amazed to see that so many of the things we take for granted or view as "givens" need not necessarily be so. Once you cast off those imposing assumptions, you'll be more free to explore vast possibilities in working to find a creative solution.

Actions

- Focus on becoming more adept at troubleshooting when solving problems. Troubleshooting requires that you get down to the root of a problem, isolating its fundamental causes. One simple technique that can help you do this is the "Repetitive Why" analysis. This exercise requires that you ask yourself why a problem exists. After you give your answer, ask why **that** condition exists, and so on, creating a causal chain of "reasons why." Like peeling an onion, this process is designed to help you troubleshoot a problem to its core and subsequently target a sound solution.

- ❑ Focus on stimulating more creativity in your approach to finding solutions. Perhaps the most direct way of becoming more expansive in your thinking is to ask questions. Questions provoke, stimulate, and stretch the imagination. Consider the mind of a young child, free to wildly imagine. It asks countless questions, rarely content to accept the status quo at face value. Excellence in problem solving requires much the same approach: the intent search through questions, and the refusal to accept what is without asking "why?", "how?", and "what if?"

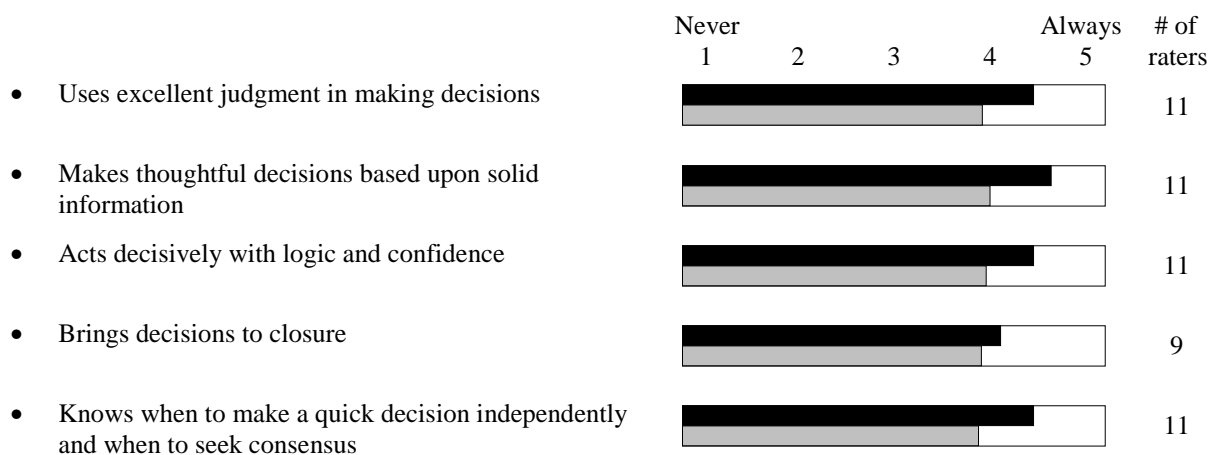
DECISION MAKING

Decision Making assesses how well you use appropriate information and input from others to make sound decisions quickly. A person who scores high on this scale demonstrates excellent judgment in making decisions, includes the appropriate people in the decision-making process, and acts with logic and confidence in bringing decisions to a timely close. Additionally, the highly skilled decision maker flexibly adjusts his/her approach to the demands of the situation, using a quick, decisive mode to make routine judgment calls, and relying on more careful, systematic analytical processes to decide on issues of increasing complexity and importance.

Your Results

Decision Making is your highest score from co-workers. They see your skills as extremely well developed, better than most other people's. By contrast, in your self-assessment you describe yourself as less skilled in making decisions. Although you may feel that there have been times when your own decision-making process could have been much better, others are less critical.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Decision Making items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Decision Making as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Decision Making may be a LOW priority for you.

- Decision Making is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Decision Making is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Keep Up The Good Work

As a highly skilled decision maker, improvement in this area may not be a development priority for you. You may want to explore ways in which you can leverage this skill to enhance your effectiveness in other areas.

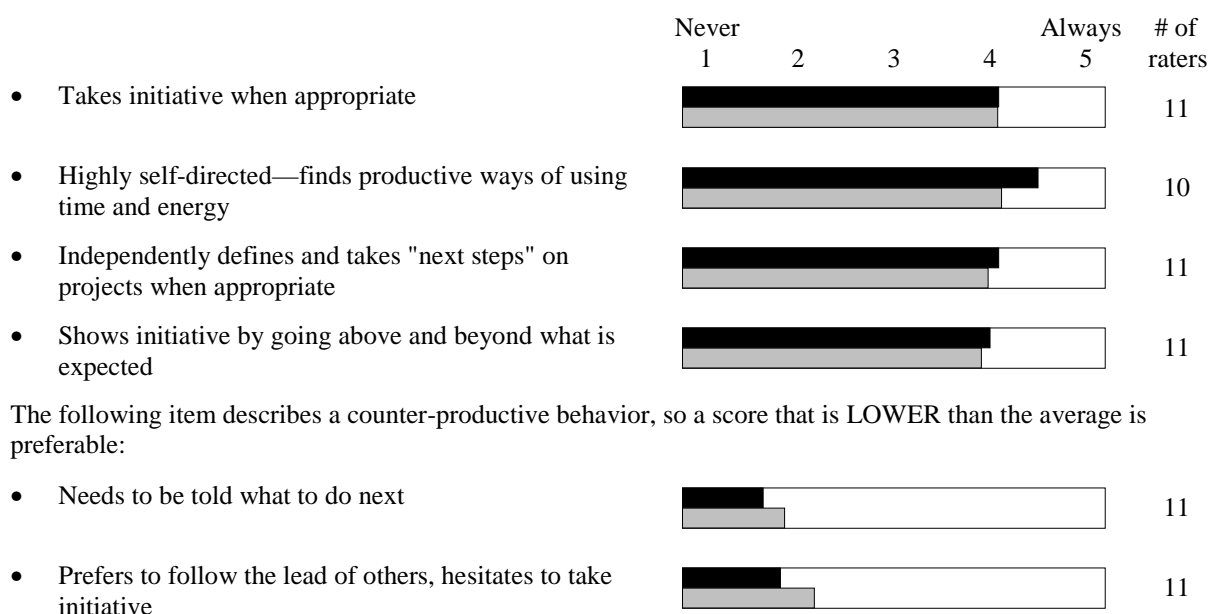
INITIATIVE

Initiative measures your ability to work productively with minimal direction or guidance from others. Individuals who display high initiative take the appropriate "next steps" to continue projects and address new demands. In this way, initiative involves being proactive in meeting or exceeding basic job requirements. Employees with initiative will be increasingly in demand as companies operate with fewer levels of management and look for ways to empower employees and create self-managing work teams.

Your Results

Initiative is one of your higher scores, judging from co-workers' responses. They assess your skills at showing initiative to be average, relative to most individual contributors. In your self-assessment, you actually see a higher level of initiative than your co-workers do. This difference represents a relatively common gap in perceptions, though.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Initiative items:



Development Priority

Co-workers rank Initiative as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Initiative may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Initiative is one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Initiative is one of your higher scores from co-workers.
- Your skills in this area are about the same as those of a typical individual contributor.

Potential Barriers

Several factors can act as barriers to taking initiative:

- Lack of clarity regarding work roles and expectations
- Lack of formal authority to make decisions and take control over one's work
- A low level of self-confidence; not trusting one's ideas
- A value system among co-workers that views initiative as being competitive or "overachieving"
- An organizational culture that emphasizes punishment for mistakes rather than encouraging initiative

Significant changes are occurring in how jobs are organized and how employees are managed. Across industries, organizations are flattening as management levels are cut and individual employees and teams are being empowered with more control over their work. Employees who display high initiative are highly valued in this kind of work environment. They can be called upon not only to perform their job tasks, but also to play some of the roles formerly filled by management, like planning and coordinating projects. This type of initiative can lead to increased recognition and visibility, and eventually higher levels of responsibility—all of which are related to higher job satisfaction.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Think about what you expect would happen if you took greater initiative in your work. Are you concerned you may be blamed if your efforts do not work out? Or, if you are successful, are you concerned that you might be "rewarded" with excessive amounts of additional work? These are common concerns. Still, think about times when your initiative has paid off. Consider co-workers who have taken initiative and been rewarded. Concentrate on these positive experiences and begin to take steps to capture some of the benefits of higher initiative.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learn more about the expectations your boss and co-workers have of you. Re-read your original job description (if one exists) and ask your boss and others to describe your responsibilities as if it were your first day at work. If a job description does not exist, this may be part of the problem, and you may want to ask your boss to sit down with you to draft an outline of your roles and responsibilities. Ask about tasks that you may be currently overlooking. Are

there certain responsibilities that you see as low priority but your co-workers see as high priority? Are your co-workers hoping you will take more control in guiding your own work? Once you clarify others' expectations, do what you can to exceed them.

Involving Others

- Find a co-worker who would also like to increase his/her initiative at work. Schedule a time to talk about ways that you can be partners in supporting each other's efforts. You might offer each other suggestions on how you could be more self-directed or make a special contribution. You can offer each other feedback and support as you initiate these efforts. Most importantly, your partner can be a source of recognition and reinforcement so you can build your self-confidence and commitment to taking a more proactive role at work.

Actions

- Focus on finding ways to go above and beyond what is expected of you. Imagine what your workplace would be like if everyone did only their narrowly defined jobs and refused to do anything outside their job descriptions. For one week, keep track of the times your co-workers provide you with assistance or go out of their way to be helpful. How does their initiative make you feel about them and your workplace in general? Try to recognize times when you have an opportunity to go beyond your usual duties. Help create an atmosphere of mutual support between you and your co-workers.

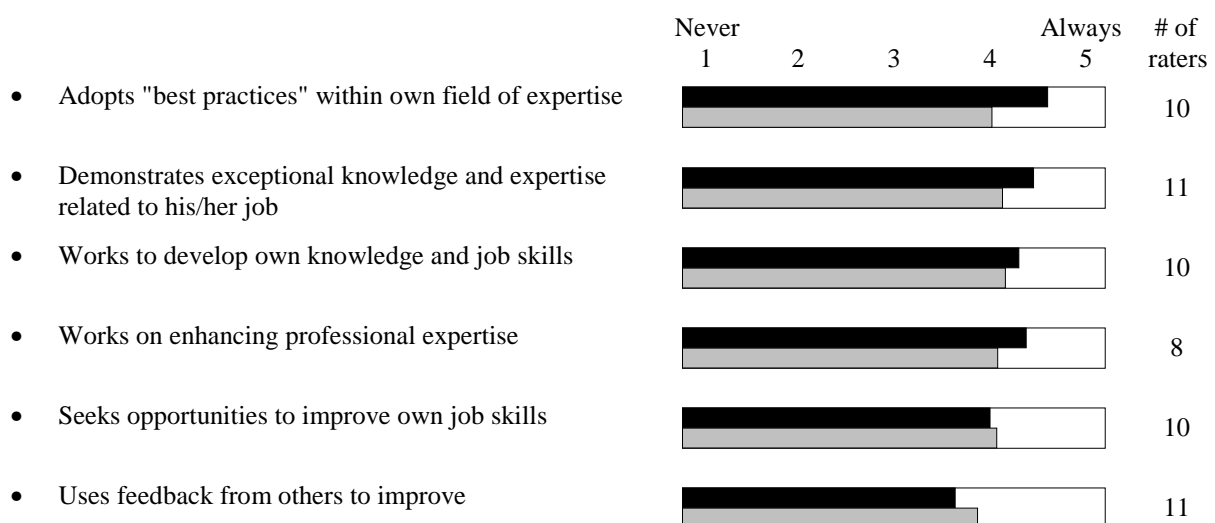
DEVELOPING EXPERTISE

The **Developing Expertise** scale measures the extent to which you focus on continually building your job-relevant skills to achieve and maintain professional mastery. Individuals with high scores on this scale view professional development as an ongoing process. They demonstrate exceptional job knowledge and expertise. They work to stay current with the latest technical developments and "best practices" in their fields, and actively seek out new information and experiences that can contribute to their growth as professionals.

Your Results

Co-workers rate Developing Expertise as one of your higher scores. They portray your skills as about the same as most other individual contributors'. Your own rating of your skills is somewhat higher than the rating from your co-workers. Although this difference may look large, it is actually within the normal range of discrepancy.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Developing Expertise items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Developing Expertise as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Developing Expertise may be a LOW priority for you.

- Developing Expertise is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Developing Expertise is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

The following factors can act as barriers to maintaining and building your professional expertise:

- Mismatched perceptions between what you see as the most critical aspects of your job versus what others feel are most important
- The belief that you have already learned all there is to know about your profession
- The "Not Enough Time" syndrome—not making time to stay current with the "best practices" in your field
- Burnout—working in your particular profession for quite some time and becoming disinterested or bored
- Lack of support—your manager sees little value in your attending professional conferences, seminars, or training sessions

Given the rapid pace of today's business world, job skills and expertise that may be current today can become outdated tomorrow. Continuous learning and development have become the basic insurance policy for success. Maintaining professional expertise in the face of rapid change requires a positive attitude toward learning and self-development. In addition to developing an affinity for learning, developing professional expertise requires that you learn the "right things"—knowing and using the best and latest advancements in data, techniques, and processes that are current in your field.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Compare your level of enthusiasm for your work to the level of enthusiasm you have for your favorite hobby, sport, or pastime. What sparks your interest most in non-work activities? How can you bring some of that motivation and curiosity back on the job? Make a mental list of all the technical skills you currently have. Which one would you most like to improve or update? Why? Is there any new technical skill you would like to acquire? What is it? Get some training in this area within the next few months and apply it to your job.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Put together a reading list of job-related books, trade magazines, journals, and newsletters. The reference staff at your public library can help you find all the appropriate titles through sources like the Periodicals Index or Books in Print. Your local bookstore may also have useful books on their Business, Trade,

Technical, or Self-Help shelves. Set aside an hour every week in your day planner to do some catch up reading in your area of expertise.

Involving Others

- Spend some time networking with friends and acquaintances who work in your field. Professional conferences can be a great source of information—both from listening to the presentations of invited speakers and from informal discussions with other attendees. The alumni association of your college or trade school may also be helpful in providing you with contact information on alumni who graduated in your particular field of expertise. These contacts can be used in informal networking (phone conversations) and formal benchmarking (arranging to visit peers in another company) to explore and learn more about their "best practices."

Actions

- List all the new things you've learned in your area of expertise over the past six months. How long is this list? Just like a professional athlete, you can't expect to stay in peak competitive form without continual training. Based on what you see in reviewing your first list, make a second list of new job-related things you would like to learn. You may also want to get some of your co-workers to review this training plan and coach you with some ideas of their own.

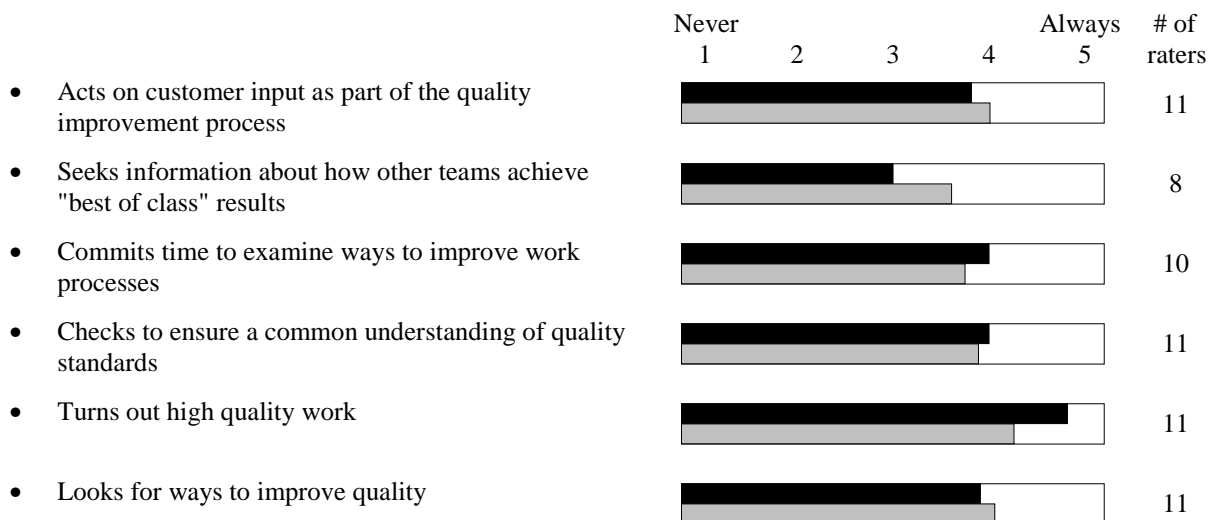
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Quality Improvement measures the degree to which you emphasize high quality and use systematic processes to promote continuous improvement in your work. Individuals who score high on Quality Improvement strive for excellence in their work. They seek input from customers to understand their requirements, and make efforts to meet or even exceed those expectations. They review their work to ensure that it conforms to a high standard. They seek out new ways to raise quality standards by examining work processes and results in other organizations, and by incorporating "best of class" methods into their own work.

Your Results

Co-workers rate Quality Improvement about in the middle of your other skill areas. They report your skills to be about the same as many other individual contributors'. The Overview graphic shows that your own self-report is higher than the average of your co-workers' reports. This kind of difference is common and not particularly noteworthy.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Quality Improvement items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Quality Improvement as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Quality Improvement may be a LOW priority for you.

- Quality Improvement is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Quality Improvement is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

A professional's skill at improving quality can be impeded by a number of factors inside the organization or inside his/her own personality:

- Pressures for immediate results
- A lack of recognition or rewards for quality improvement
- A lack of clarity around where to focus quality improvement efforts
- A corporate culture that focuses on quantity at the expense of quality
- A lack of knowledge or training about quality improvement methods
- A personal style that leads one to accept the status quo rather than challenge standards, which is required in quality improvement efforts
- Feeling overwhelmed by current workloads and assignments, causing one to focus only on what's necessary to get the job done

In spite of barriers like these, the ability to improve quality is increasingly becoming a critical competency for professionals. Research has shown a direct relationship between improved quality and such things as higher revenues, lower costs, rapid response to customer problems, speed of repair, fewer defects, timely delivery, product durability, customer satisfaction, and shorter development, production and service cycles. The pursuit of higher quality on the part of all professionals in today's globally competitive environment is no luxury—it is a requirement for success.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Think of your work as if you were repairing your home. If your roof leaked, you could simply tape a piece of plastic over the hole or smear some caulking into the cracks—resulting in a "quick fix." Or you could buy the right materials and invest the necessary time and effort into replacing damaged shingles—making the roof sound and water-tight. Doing a job "right" will not only make you more satisfied with the end result, but it will ensure that you don't have to constantly re-work "quick fixes."

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read Richard Whitely's book **The Customer-Driven Company** (1991). Then identify your most trusted and valued customers. Meet with them and ask what quality means to them. What are their most important expectations? How well do you deliver relative to those expectations? From your discussions and what you read in the book, select one opportunity for improving customer

satisfaction and take steps to break through to a new level of quality in your customer relationships.

Involving Others

- Identify three to four people in your area of work who are seen as the most successful in terms of producing high-quality results. Write up a set of questions that will help you interview them about how they approach quality standards in their work. Look for patterns in their behaviors and their attitudes toward quality. Generate a list of these behaviors and attitudes. Then rate yourself against this list. Next, go to your manager and trusted co-workers and ask them to rate you. Using this feedback, create a plan to change one or two areas in your approach to work.

Actions

- Get involved in a corporate quality improvement effort by signing up with a quality team or task force. Pick a team that is focused on quality improvement in an area that is related to your work; then take what you learn from this experience back to your job.

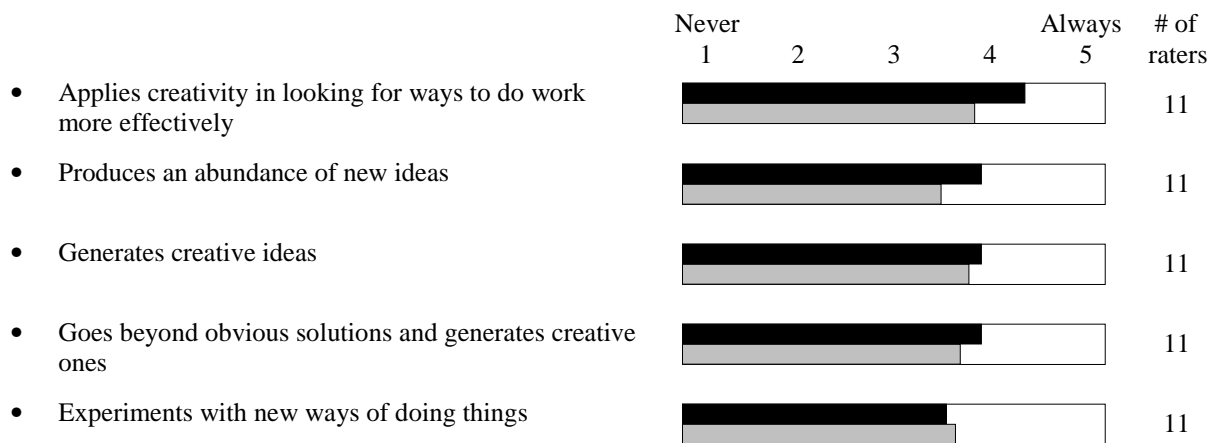
INNOVATING

Innovating measures the extent to which you generate and implement creative ways to accomplish work. It assesses your skill at creating useful new ideas. A high score on this scale indicates that a person experiments with different ways of doing things, comes up with many new ideas, and finds innovative ways to improve work performance. Innovative people are often receptive to new ideas from others, but what is notable about them is how often they come up with useful new ideas themselves.

Your Results

Innovating is one of your three highest scores from co-workers. They see your skills as more highly developed than many other individual contributors'. Although you see yourself as more skilled than they do, that difference in perception is not large enough to be noteworthy.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Innovating items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Innovating as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Innovating may be a LOW priority for you.

- Innovating is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Innovating is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Ask yourself how often you are satisfied with things that are "good enough." How often are you an "optimizer," aiming for the best trade-off of effort and results? How often are you a "maximizer," striving for absolutely the best possible results? Your pursuit of innovation is affected by your attitudes toward getting satisfactory, optimal, or maximum results. The innovative attitude is to say, "This is satisfactory, but what would be **great**?" Build that attitude in yourself by asking that question out loud—and answering it—at least four times a day for 20 days.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learn more about innovation, creativity, and productive thinking by reading books like **The Path of Least Resistance** by Robert Fritz (1984), **Developing a 21st Century Mind** by Marsha Sinetar (1991), or **Whole-Brain Thinking** by Jacquelyn Wonder and Priscilla Donovan (1985).

Involving Others

- Meet with your team to identify ways in which everyone's innovativeness is hindered. For example, make a team list of "killer phrases" such as, "It will cost too much," "We've always done it this way," "Yes but," and so on. Make a list of the difficulties you all encounter in trying something new. Then search for ways to get around these barriers.

Actions

- Voice partial ideas. That is, express ideas that are not fully formed, or that you know have flaws. Don't wait for the perfect idea or the perfect solution to a problem. You may very well stimulate your co-workers by providing the exact piece that is missing from **their** idea! Give them your half-baked idea and maybe they will be able to finish baking it with you.

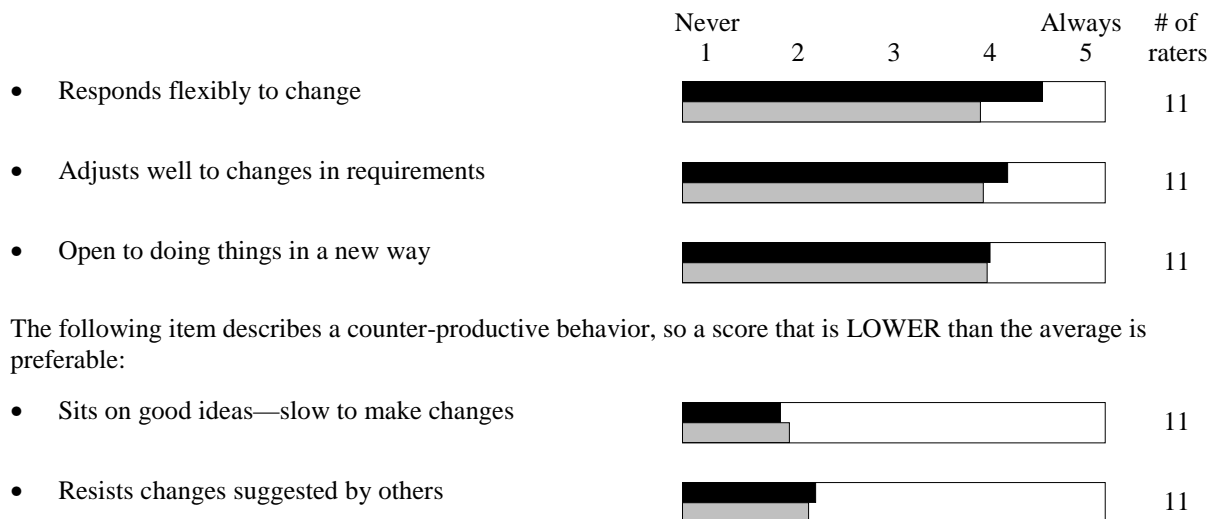
WELCOMING CHANGE

Welcoming Change measures the degree to which a professional invites, supports and promotes change. Professionals who welcome change are always ready to learn from others and adopt good ideas quickly. They may or may not be highly innovative thinkers themselves, but they readily promote the innovations of others. People who score high on this scale tend to be very flexible about doing new things, respond with urgency when changes are needed, and support the changes suggested by others. Professionals who are open to change are often welcomed on projects that are on the cutting edge of the organization's future, and are often seen as leaders.

Your Results

As you can see from the Overview graphic, co-workers rate Welcoming Change higher than many of your other scores. This is an area of some strength for you, because they describe your skill at Welcoming Change as fairly high in relation to those of a typical individual contributor. Although your self-rating is more positive than the average of ratings from your co-workers, the degree of difference in perceptions is normal and should not be a major concern.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Welcoming Change items:



Development Priority

Co-workers rank Welcoming Change as the most important skill area for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Welcoming Change may be a LOW priority for you.

- Welcoming Change is one of the five most important skill areas for your role.
- Welcoming Change is one of your higher scores from co-workers.
- Your skills in this area are rated higher than those of a typical leader or individual contributor.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Promote an attitude that fosters change by using language that minimizes losing. For example, talk about "learning experiences" and "false starts," rather than "failures." Provide encouragement in the face of mistakes by drawing attention to what was learned. Only a fraction of all good-sounding new ideas become successful. To keep yourself and others continually trying to implement new ideas, you must dramatically reduce the psychological costs of unsuccessful efforts so they are greatly outweighed by the rewards of success.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Reinforce your receptivity to new ways of doing things by reading Robert Kriegel and Louis Patler's **If It Ain't Broke . . . BREAK IT!** (1991).

Involving Others

- Become a champion for innovators. Enhance your receptivity to change by actively seeking out and spending time with "idea people." Participate in giving team members time and resources to pursue their new ideas. Encourage these people and reinforce their efforts to be creative. Lend your support to others who propose changes.

Actions

- Identify a project that is very important to the future success of your organization, and one that involves changing the way things get done. As a learning opportunity, get involved in the project and seek to find ways of supporting the change. Use this as an occasion to identify ways that you hold back from change and to stretch your comfort zone with regard to change.

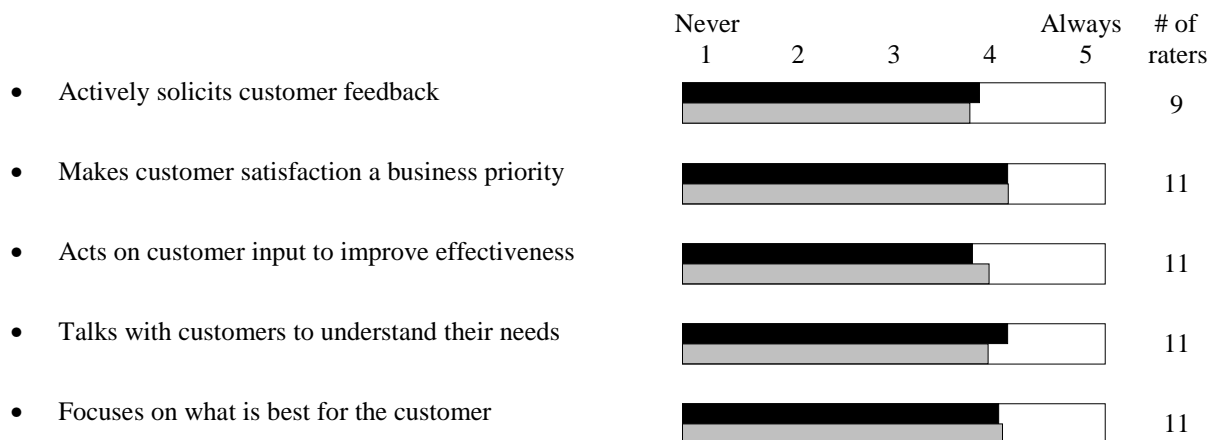
CUSTOMER FOCUS

Measures your awareness of and responsiveness to those people who are on the receiving end of your work—your customers. This involves recognizing that your internal and/or external customers are among the most important sources of information about how to do your job effectively. An individual who gets high scores on the Customer Focus scale stays close to customers by anticipating their needs, by acting on their ideas and complaints in an effort to improve quality, and by continually striving to view the business from the customer's perspective. The underlying philosophy is that your success at work centers on a clear understanding of what your customers want and on making them thoroughly satisfied.

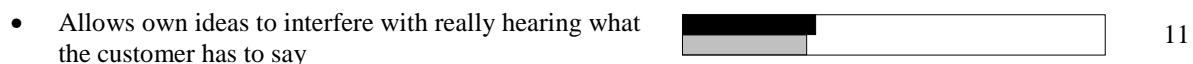
Your Results

Co-workers rate your Customer Focus about in the middle of your other scores. They portray your skills as comparable to those of an average individual contributor. Your own rating of your skills is probably very realistic, since it is very close to the rating from your co-workers.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Customer Focus items:



The following item describes a counter-productive behavior, so a score that is LOWER than the average is preferable:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Customer Focus as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Customer Focus may be a LOW priority for you.

- Customer Focus is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Customer Focus is NOT one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

In striving to achieve excellence in Customer Focus, individuals may be inhibited by several factors:

- The belief that their thorough "behind the scenes" understanding of their own products or services provides them the best vantage point to determine customer needs
- A lack of authority to make decisions that help satisfy customers
- Pride in one's work, creating a tendency to discount customer complaints
- A remote position within the company structure that seldom interacts directly with the ultimate customers
- Bureaucratic processes and procedures, such as excess paperwork and red tape, that are inefficient and frustrating for the customer

An awareness of these and any other barriers that may hinder customer focus, combined with a commitment to overcome them, is essential in developing a strong customer orientation. When you ask your customers to talk and you genuinely listen to and act on what they say, then (1) you are better able to understand, anticipate, and satisfy customer needs; (2) your customers develop loyalty out of appreciation for your successful efforts to serve their needs; and (3) your customers become the best promoters of your work.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Explore the possible negative effects of your emotional ownership of your product or service. For example, who decides how good it is—you or the customer? Are you so impressed with its great features that you do not listen to customers who suggest how it should be different? When a customer voices complaints about your product or service, are you defensive? Remember: the customer is the purpose of your work, and, therefore, the customer's perception means everything.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Think about what your customers are getting from you now and what unmet needs they have. Then ask your customers how well their needs and expectations are currently being met. How on target were you? Read Kristen Anderson and Ron Zemke's book **Delivering Knock Your Socks Off Service** (1991) for ideas on how you can close the gap between what your customers are experiencing now and the ideal they seek to experience.

Involving Others

- Brainstorm with co-workers to come up with new ideas for improving your focus on the customer. Be creative and try to generate as many ideas as possible. Speak with higher-ups about how they can support your ideas for improvements in meeting customer needs.

Actions

- Call your customers just to check in—and for no other reason. Tell them you just want to see how things are going for them. This is a great way of showing your customers that you are thinking of them, that you care about them, and that you are accessible to personalize your service. In doing so, you will be adding that special touch that will probably make them feel they are getting more than their money's worth.

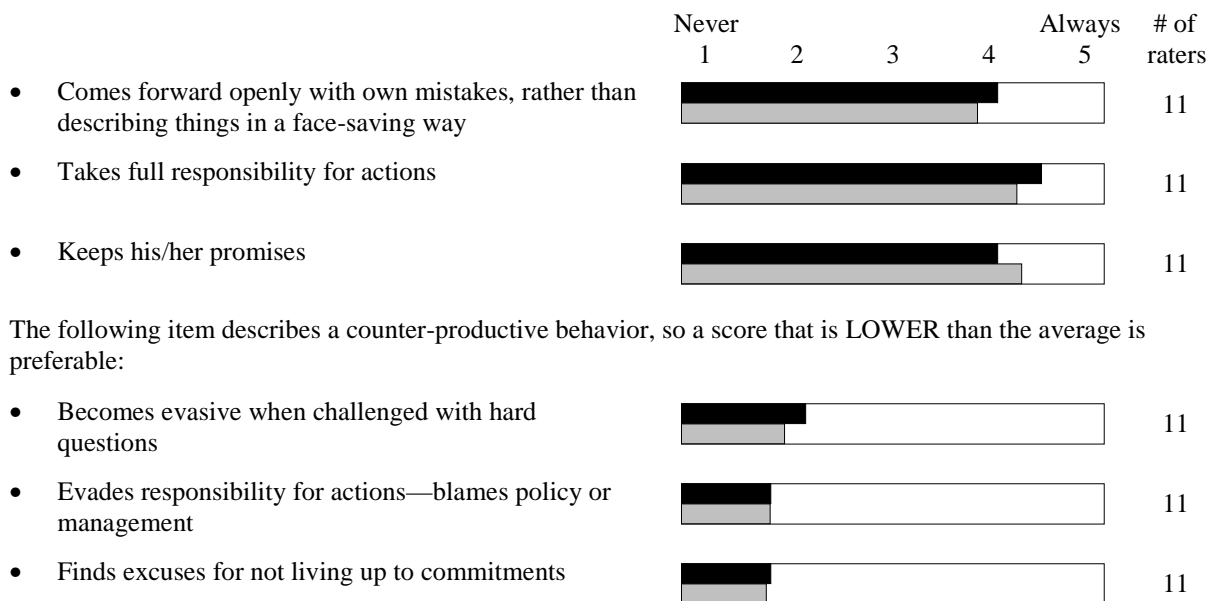
ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability measures the extent to which you personally exemplify responsible, ethical, and honest behavior. A high score on Accountability would indicate that you honor commitments, stress personal integrity and readily assume responsibility for your own mistakes. Individuals who are committed to acting with accountability realize that actions speak louder than words. They demonstrate courage and a willingness to make tough choices to act in a way that is consistent with what they value.

Your Results

Accountability is one of your lower scores, according to your co-workers' ratings. They report that your actions show an average level of accountability. If you look at the Overview graphic, you can see that your self-reported score for Accountability is somewhat higher than the one given by those who rated you. This difference in perceptions is not so large that it should be considered meaningful.

Here are your ratings by co-workers on the Accountability items:



Development Priority

Co-workers do NOT rank Accountability as one of the five most important skill areas for someone in your job.

Developing your skills in Accountability may be a MODERATE priority for you.

- Accountability is NOT one of the most important skill areas for your role.
- Accountability is one of your lower scores from co-workers.

Potential Barriers

A professional's ability to act with accountability can be impeded by a number of personal factors, as well as by elements in the business environment which may inhibit people from acting with accountability:

- A strong belief that it is a "dog eat dog" world
- Fear of the consequences of telling the truth
- A tendency toward defensiveness driven by inner feelings of insecurity
- A competitive environment where "the ends justify the means," or "anything goes" as long as results are produced
- An organizational culture that shows little tolerance for mistakes

While these barriers may exist, professionals in the most successful organizations display accountability regardless of the organizational conditions. Their commitment to accountability and their willingness to tell themselves and others the truth override all other factors. They recognize that telling the truth builds trust, and that trust is the glue that holds working relationships together. They send consistent messages and view their word as their bond.

OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes and Values

- Think about your attitude toward mistakes. Can you tolerate mistakes made by others? How easily can you admit to making a mistake yourself? When mistakes do happen (and they will) remind yourself that a mistake is also a learning experience in that it teaches you about what **won't** work. Viewed from that perspective, you also are one step closer to finding out what **will** work.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Read Section IV, "People, People, People," in **A Passion for Excellence** (1985) by Peters and Austin. This part of the book contains chapters that reinforce the idea that to "live the people message" requires total accountability. Co-workers know and appreciate genuineness when they see it.

Involving Others

- Explore the differences among your co-workers' descriptions of your skill at accountability. How are their observations related to their opportunities to see you in varying situations? Are their observations related to memorable incidents that differ from person to person? Does the same behavior on your

part have a minor impact on some of them but a major impact on others? Are perceptions affected by their personal attitudes toward you, or is it the other way around?

Actions

- Treat every meeting or commitment as though your credibility and your personal reputation were at stake. Keep a written list of any commitments you have, and only make new commitments that you feel confident you can keep, given your current workload. To help you, buy a Day Runner or Franklin Planner. Use it religiously for two purposes: (1) to keep track of all your appointments; and (2) to prioritize all your commitments. With this tool as a guide, you can prevent yourself from making appointments for meetings that you can't keep, and you can track your progress against goals and deadlines to which you have committed.

Breakout of Item Results from Different Raters

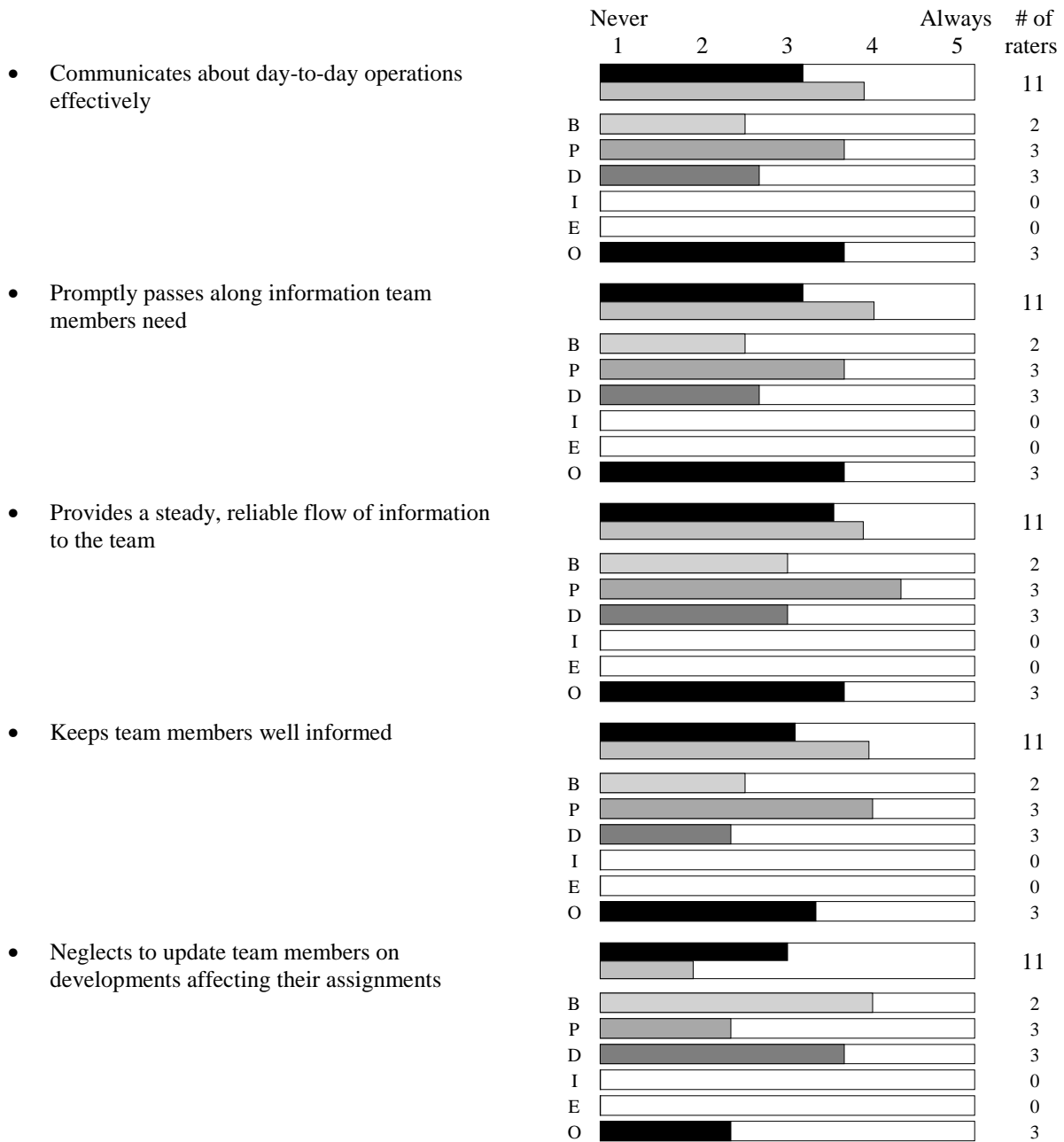
This section of the report displays the results for each item in the assessment. The purpose of this section is to show you how individuals in each rater category responded to each assessment item. If no results are displayed at all, it may be that all your raters are in the same rater category (all were peers, direct reports, and so on) so the "item breakout" is not needed. Alternatively, it may be that you were assessed by fewer than three direct reports, three peers, three internal customers, and so on—there is no single category of rater containing enough data for a display, so the "item breakout" is skipped because it would be empty.

For each assessment item, the top dark bar shows the combined, average rating for all raters who provided feedback to you in the current assessment. The shaded bar below that shows the results of an average person in the norm group. (These two bars are exactly the same as the ones in the Skill Area Detail section.) The narrower bars that follow show results broken out separately—where possible—by boss, peers, direct reports, internal customers, external customers, and others. The letters **B**, **P**, **D**, **I**, **E**, and **O** precede the breakout item bars for **B**osses, **P**eers, **D**irect Reports, **I**nternal Customers, **E**xternal Customers, and **O**thers, respectively. The total number of people who provided valid ratings is shown to the right of the item display.

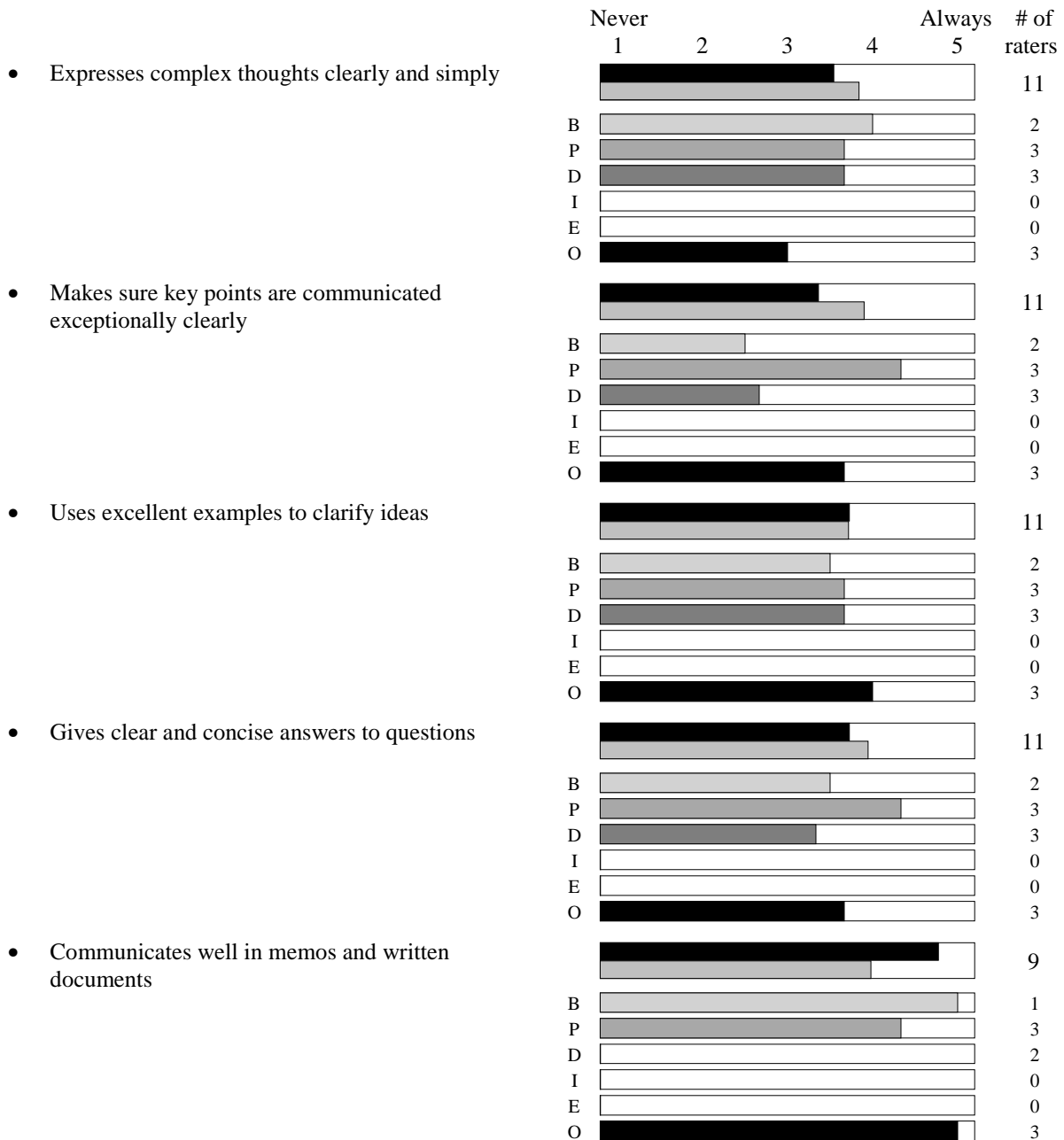
The following rules govern the display of ratings:

- The average rating for each assessment item (the top dark bar) is based on the total number of raters who were able to respond to the item. This number of raters may be less than the total number of raters who assessed you because certain raters may have been unable to respond to the specific item.
- For ratings to be displayed for the boss category, at least one boss must have responded to a majority of the items and the boss must have indicated that he or she agreed to have his or her results shown separately. If the boss did not agree, his or her results are included in the average rating but are not "broken out" separately. If you were rated by two or more bosses, the average rating of the bosses is displayed regardless of whether or not the individual bosses gave consent to have their results "broken out" separately.
- For assessment item ratings to be displayed for each of the other rater categories, at least three raters in the category must respond to the assessment item. If less than three raters were able to respond, a bar with no shading is displayed.

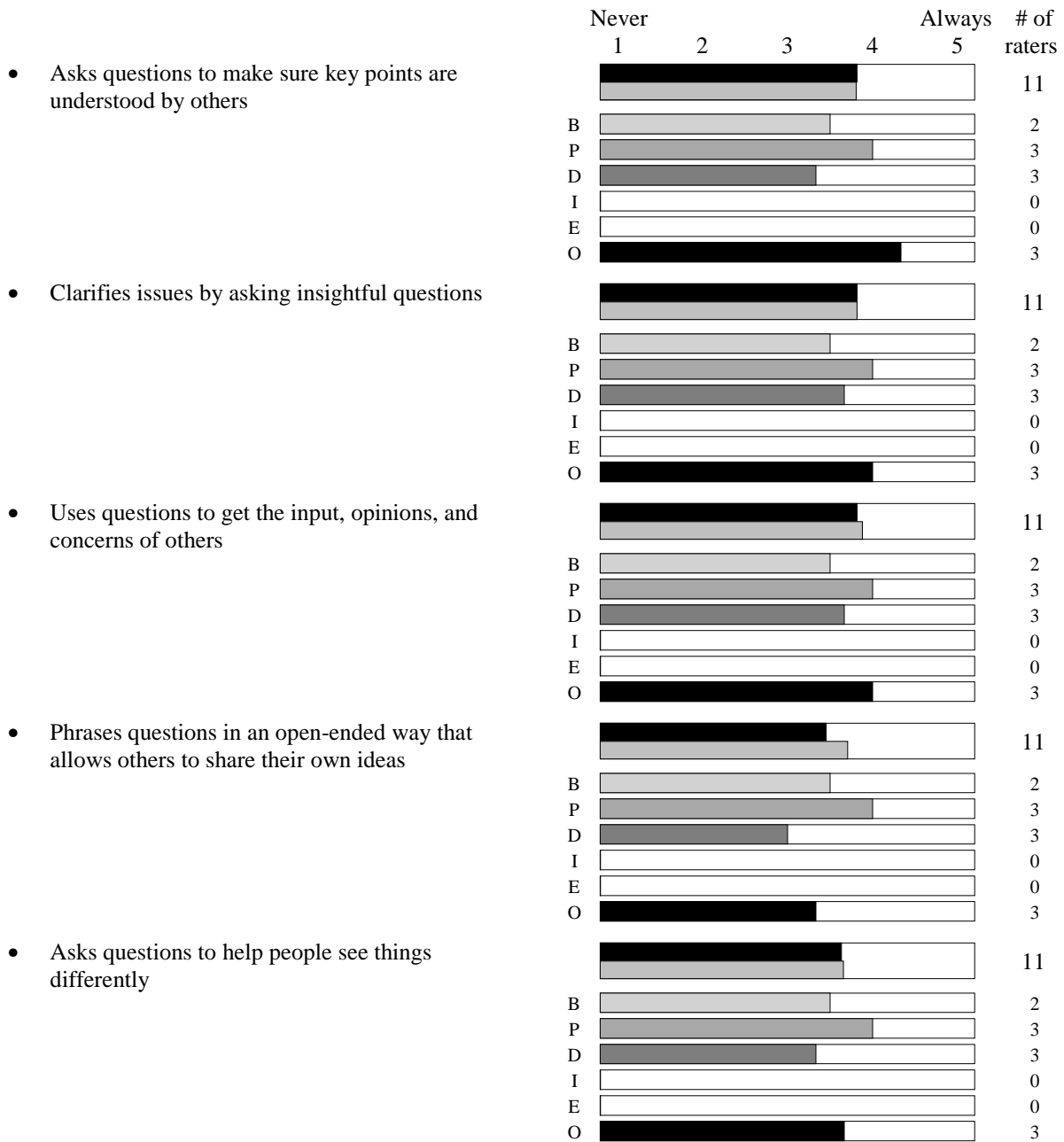
Sharing Information



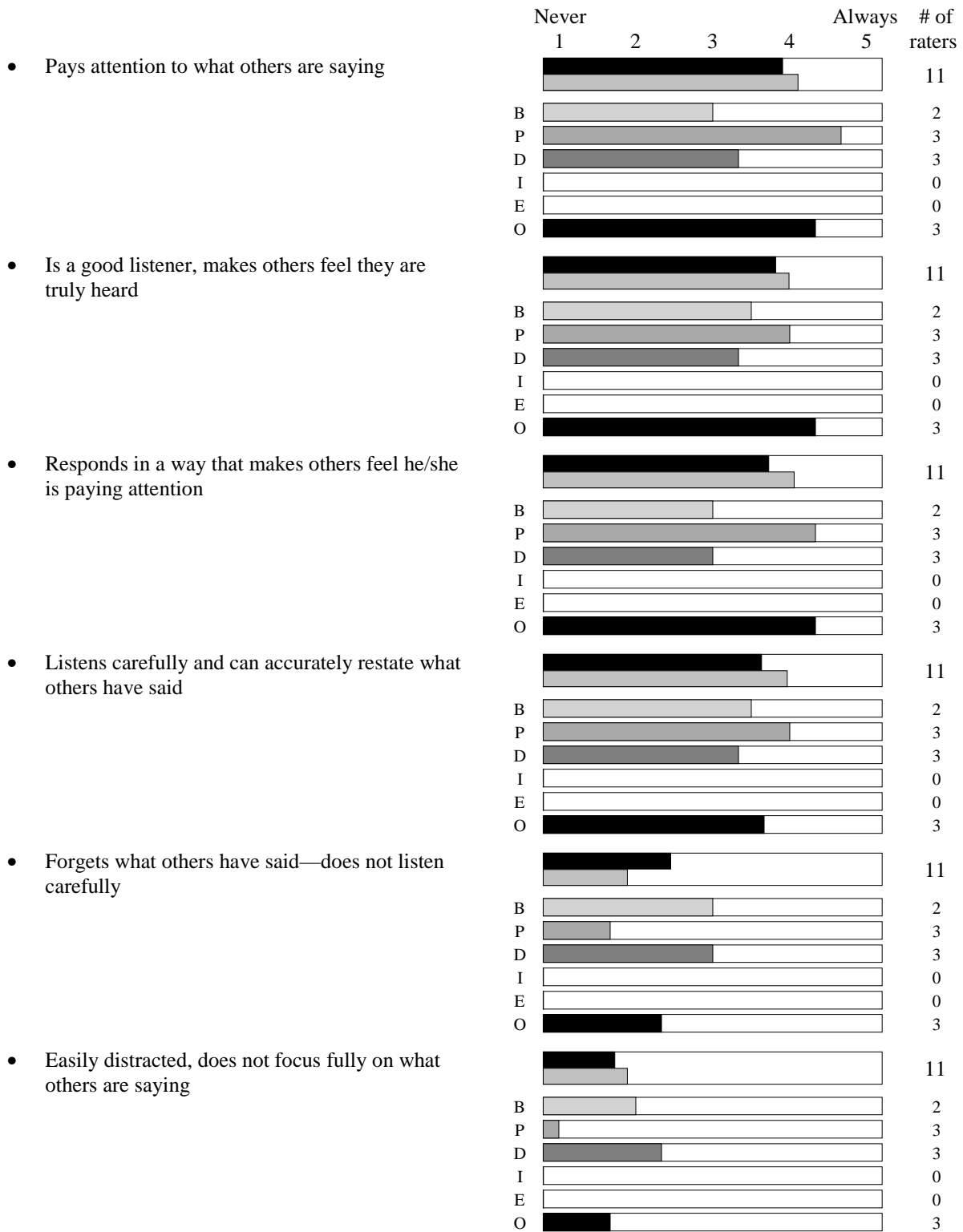
Communicating Clearly



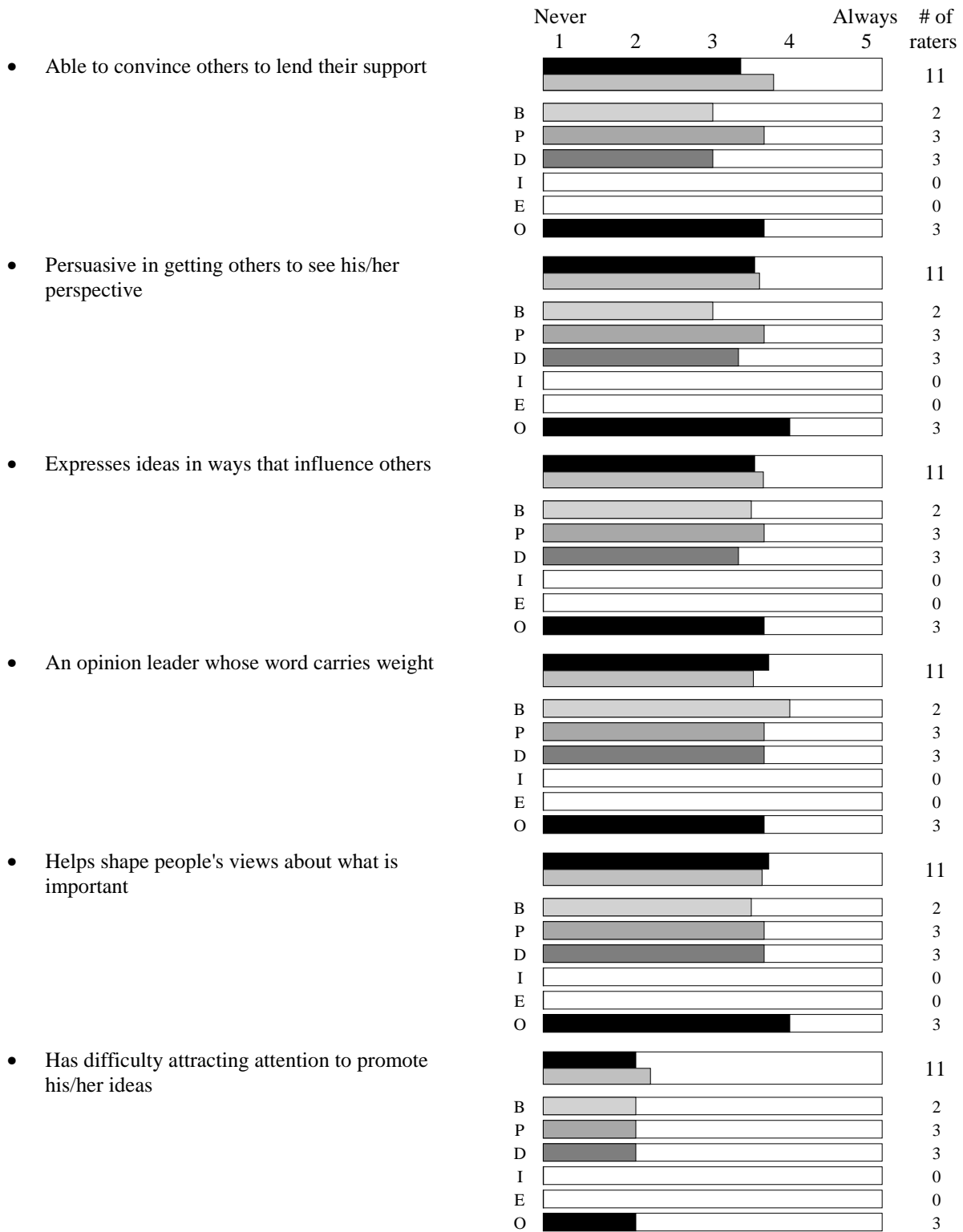
Asking Questions



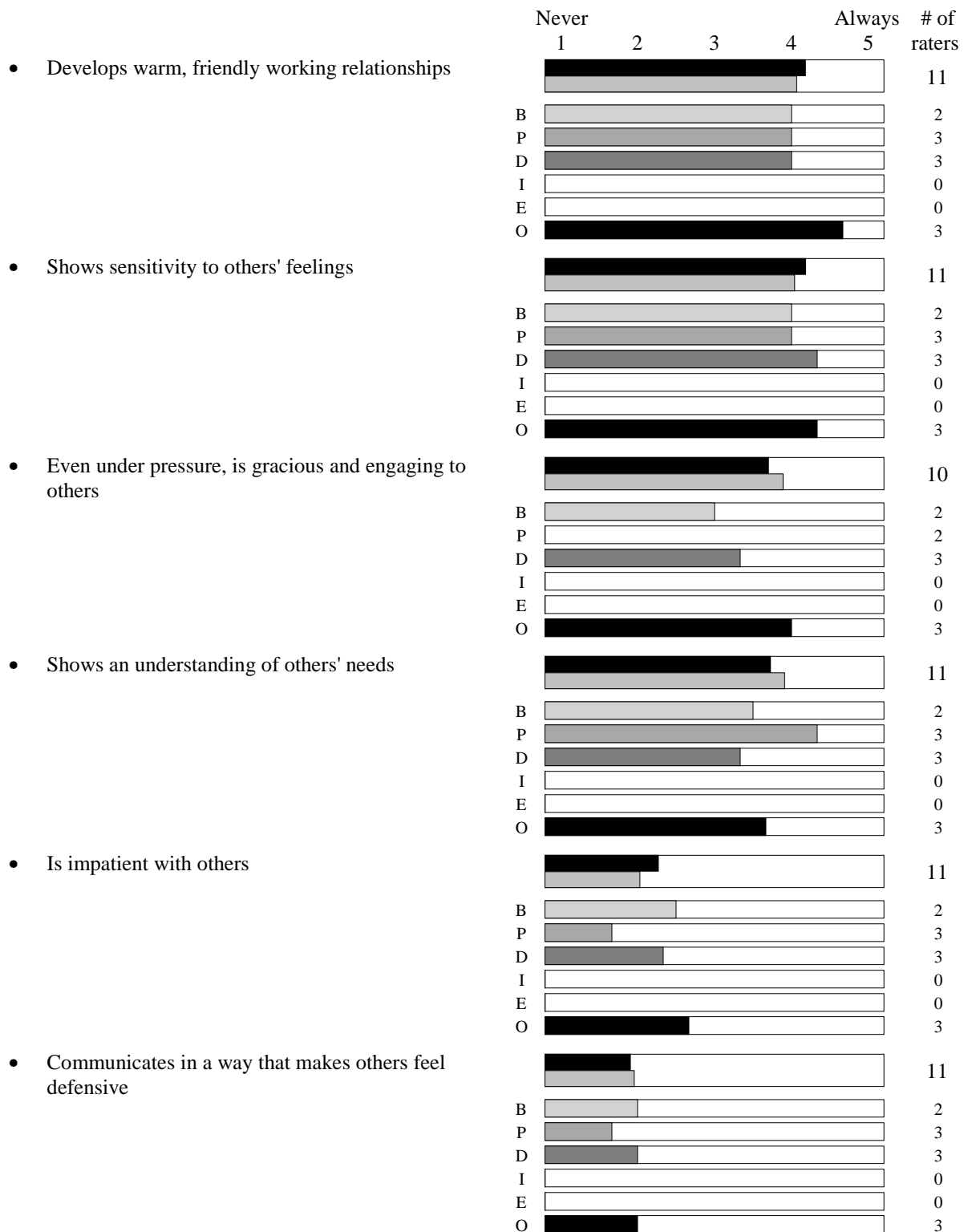
Listening



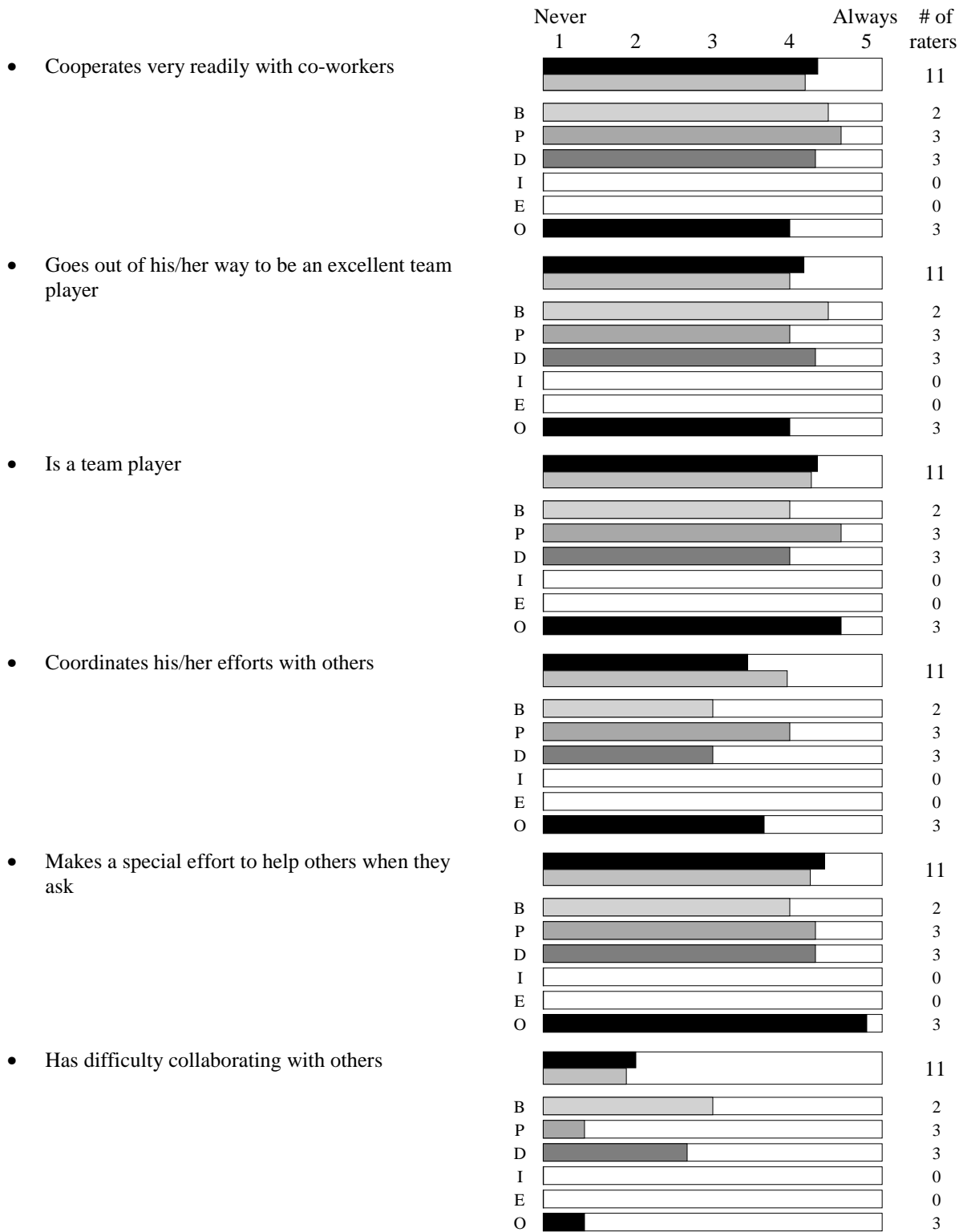
Influence



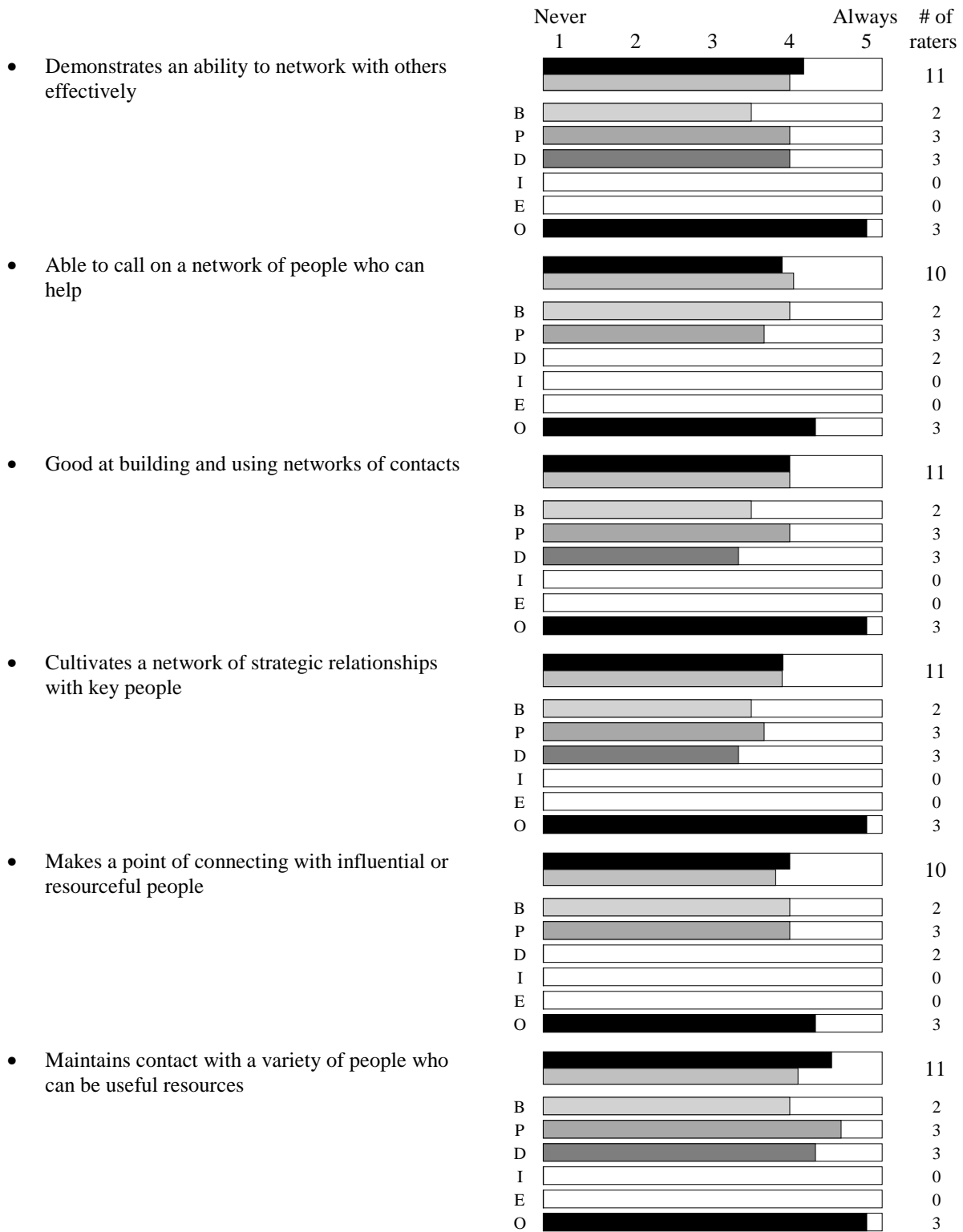
Relationship Skills



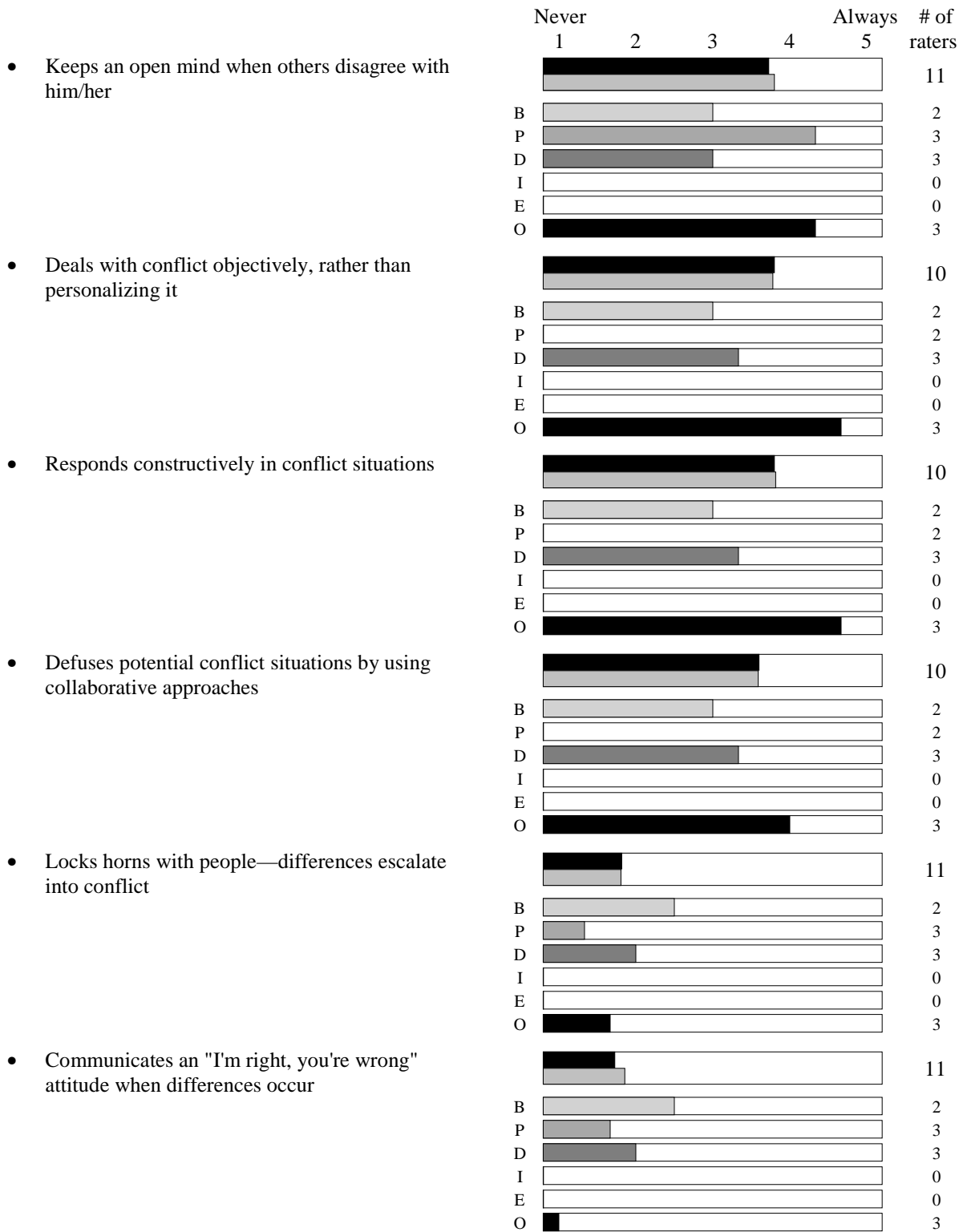
Cooperation



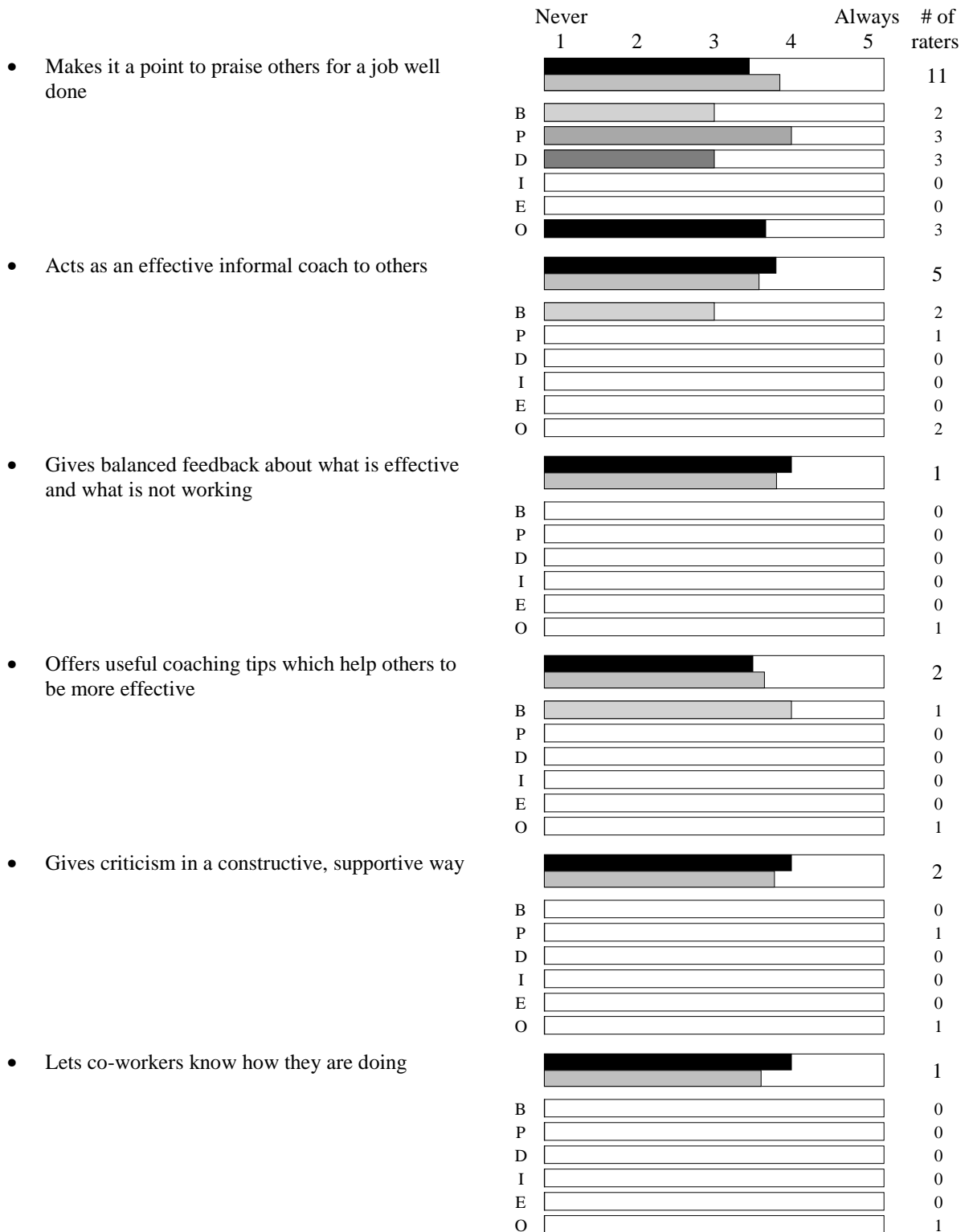
Networking



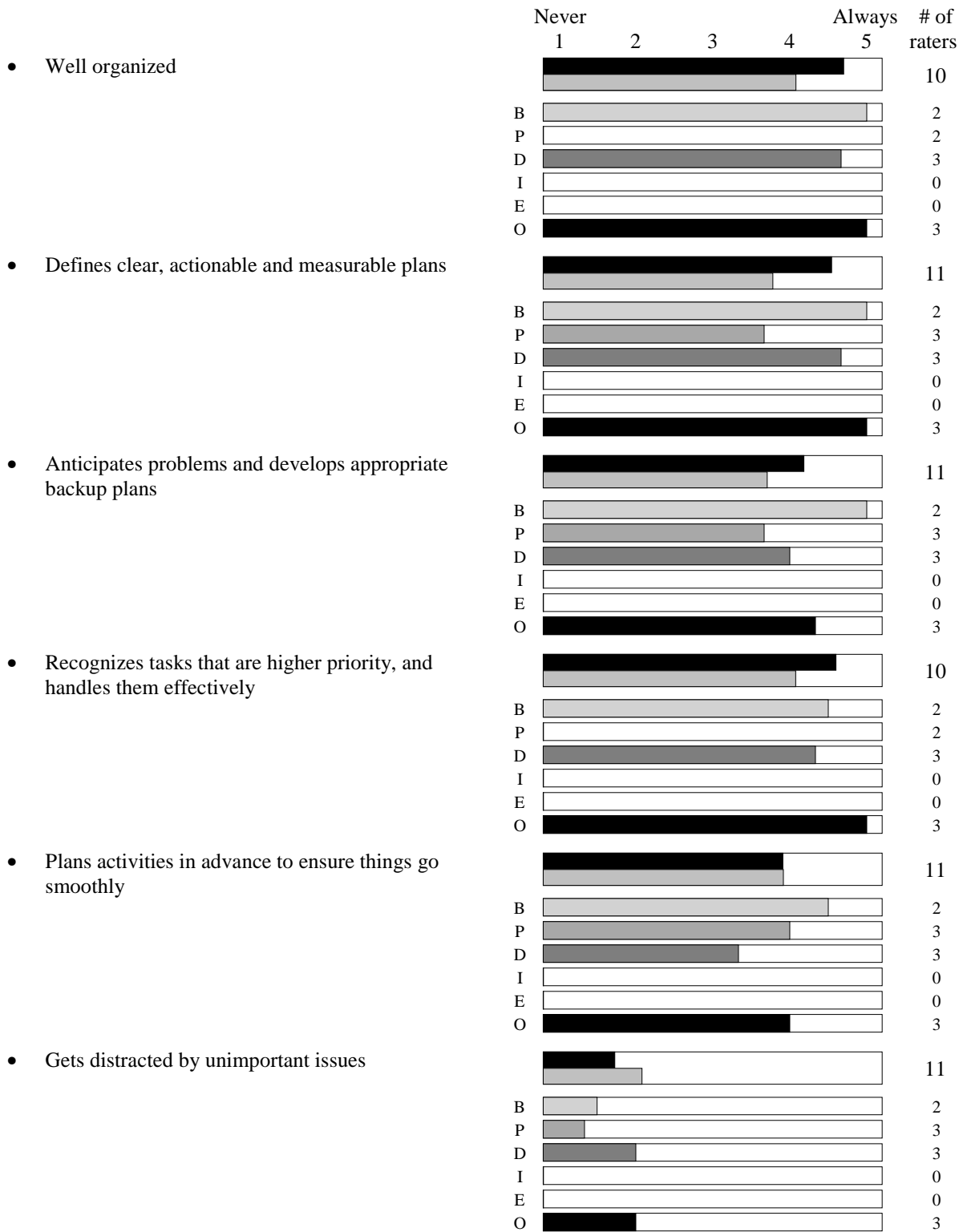
Handling Disagreement



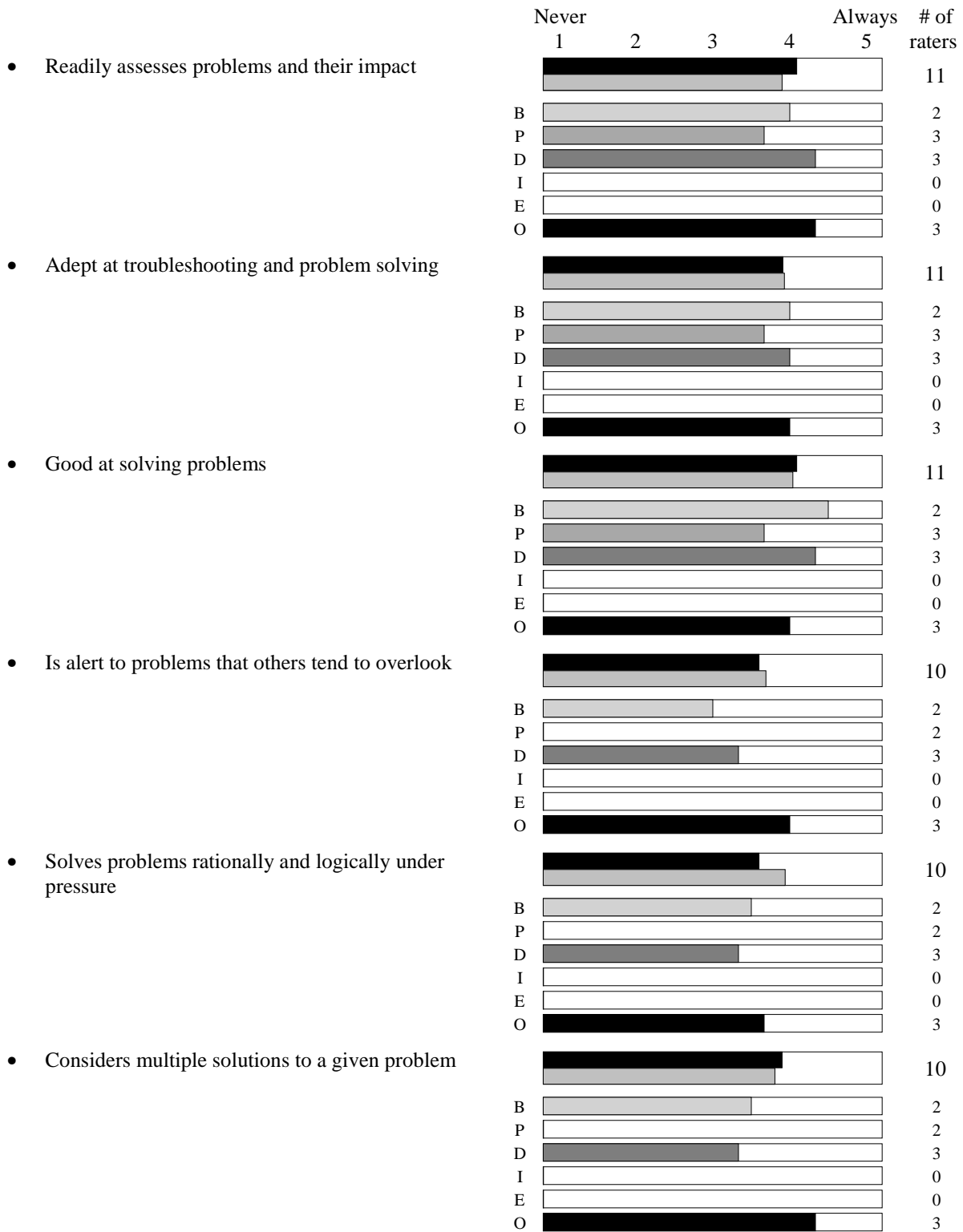
Feedback and Coaching



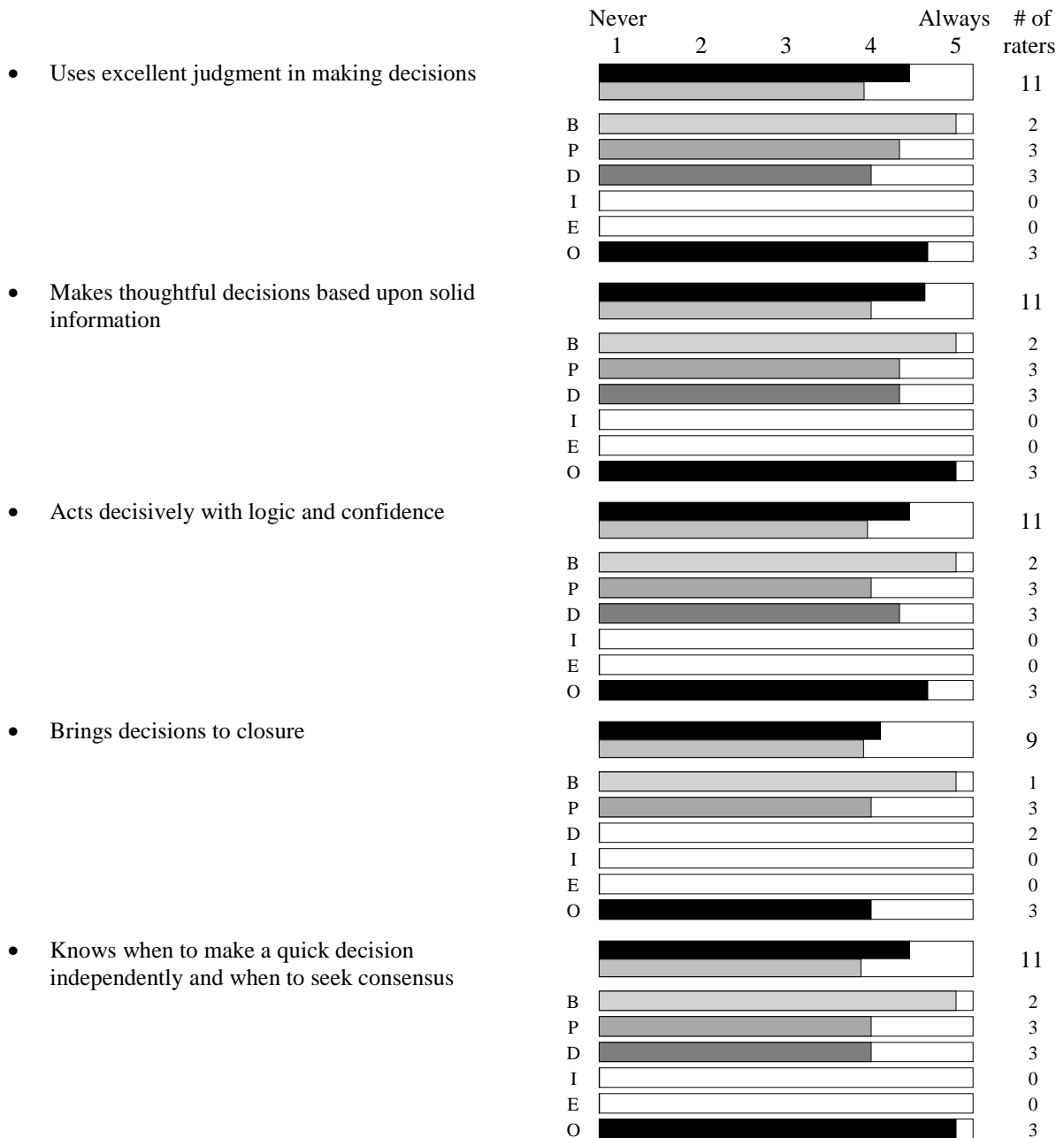
Organizing Work



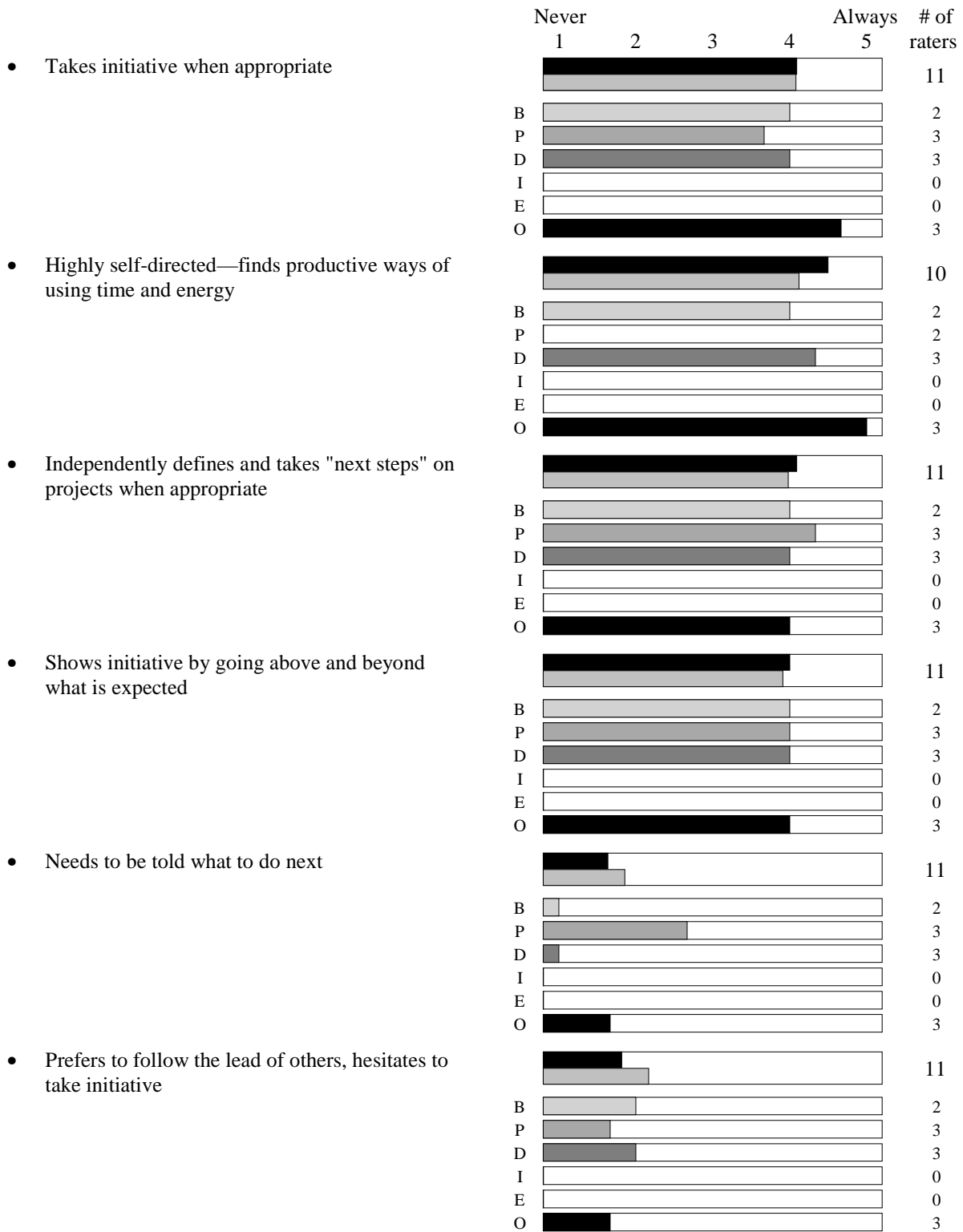
Problem Solving



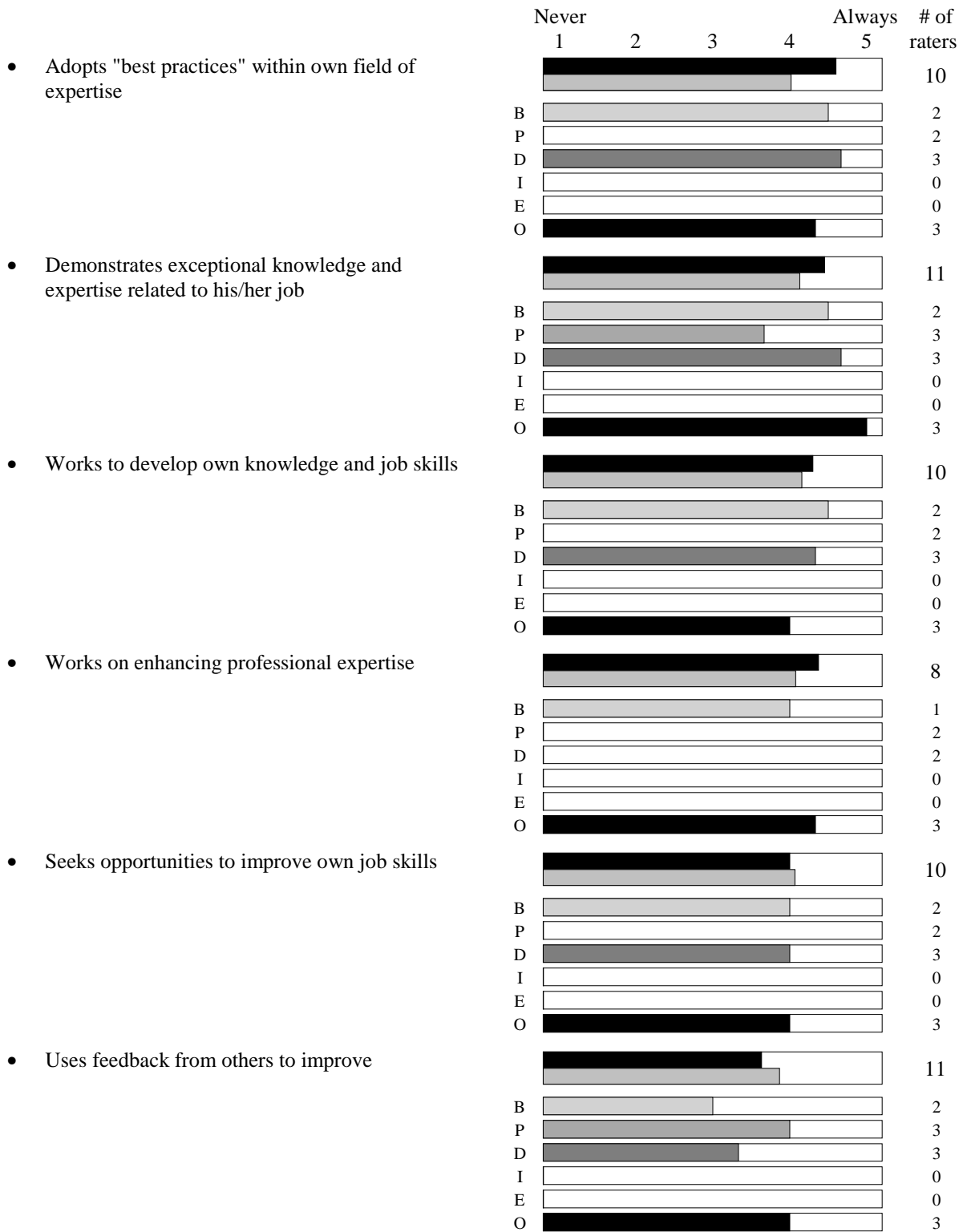
Decision Making



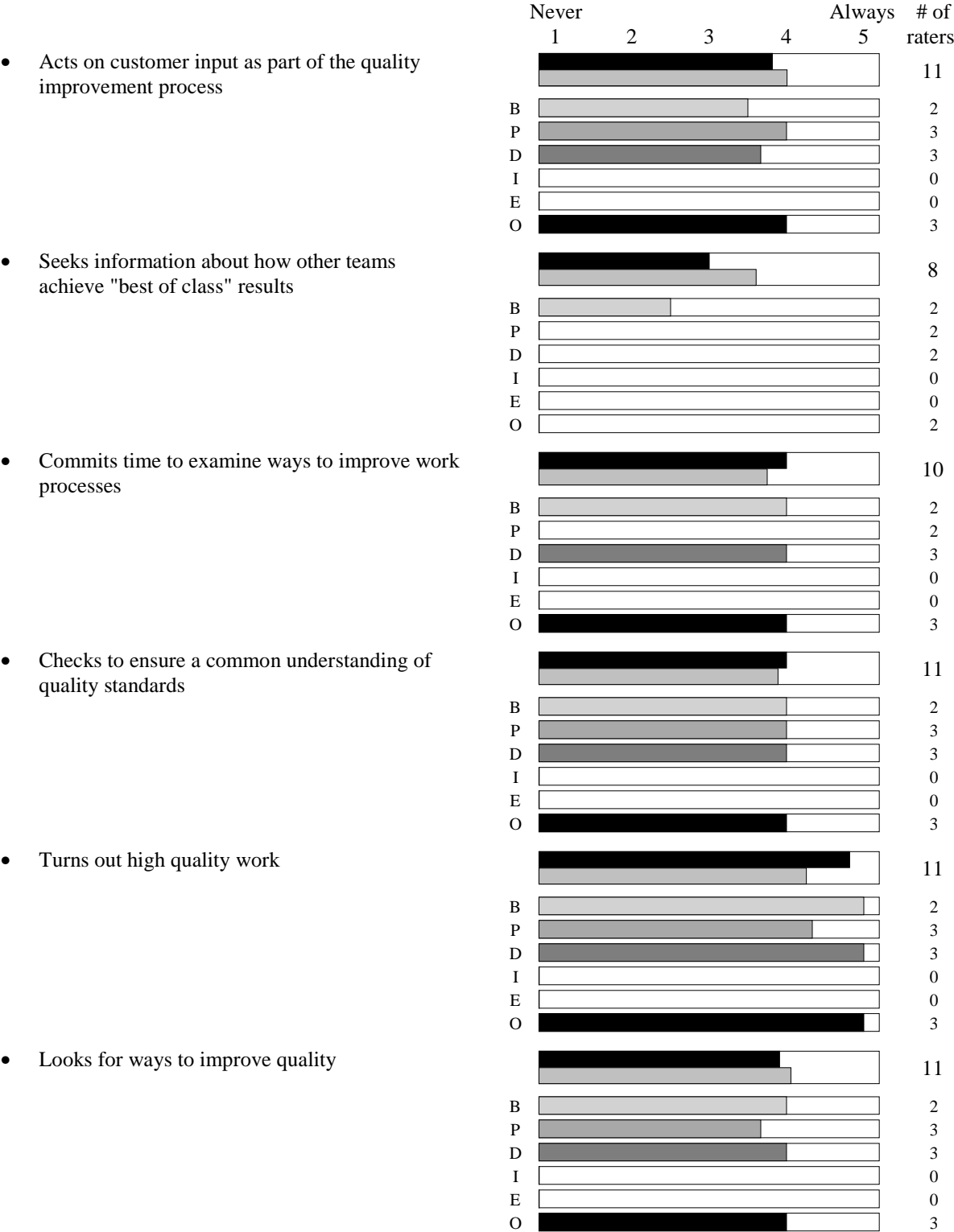
Initiative



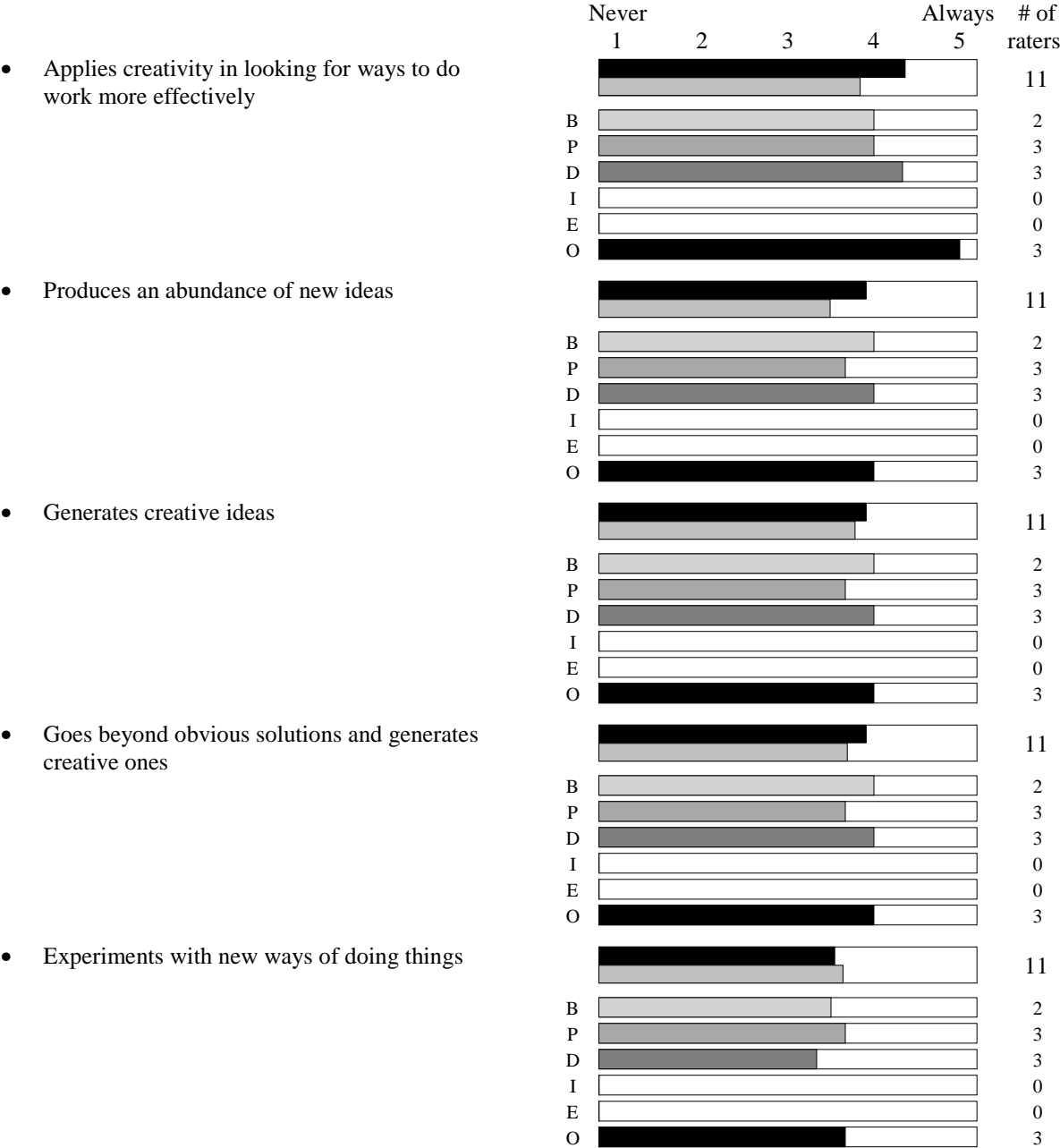
Developing Expertise



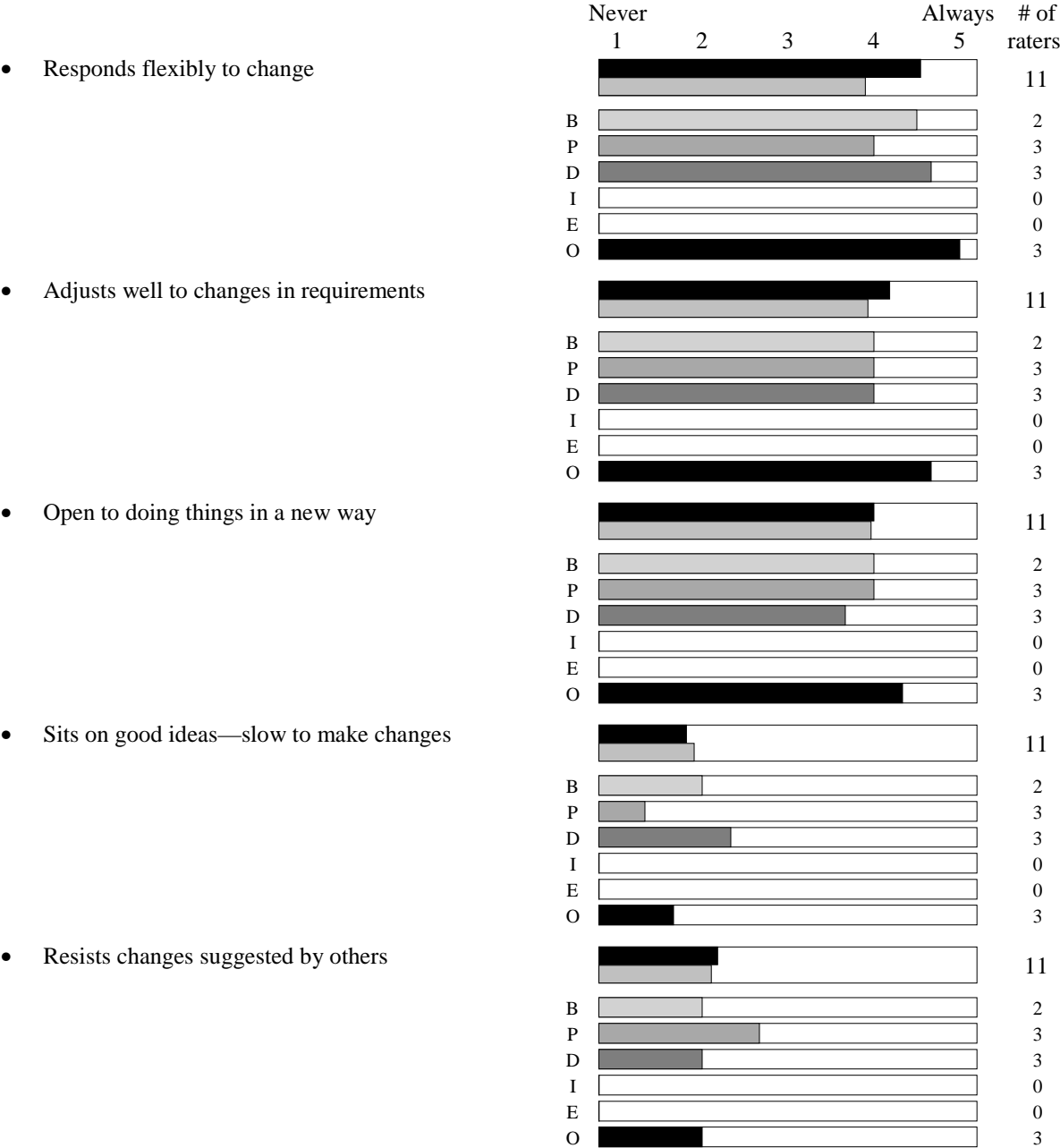
Quality Improvement



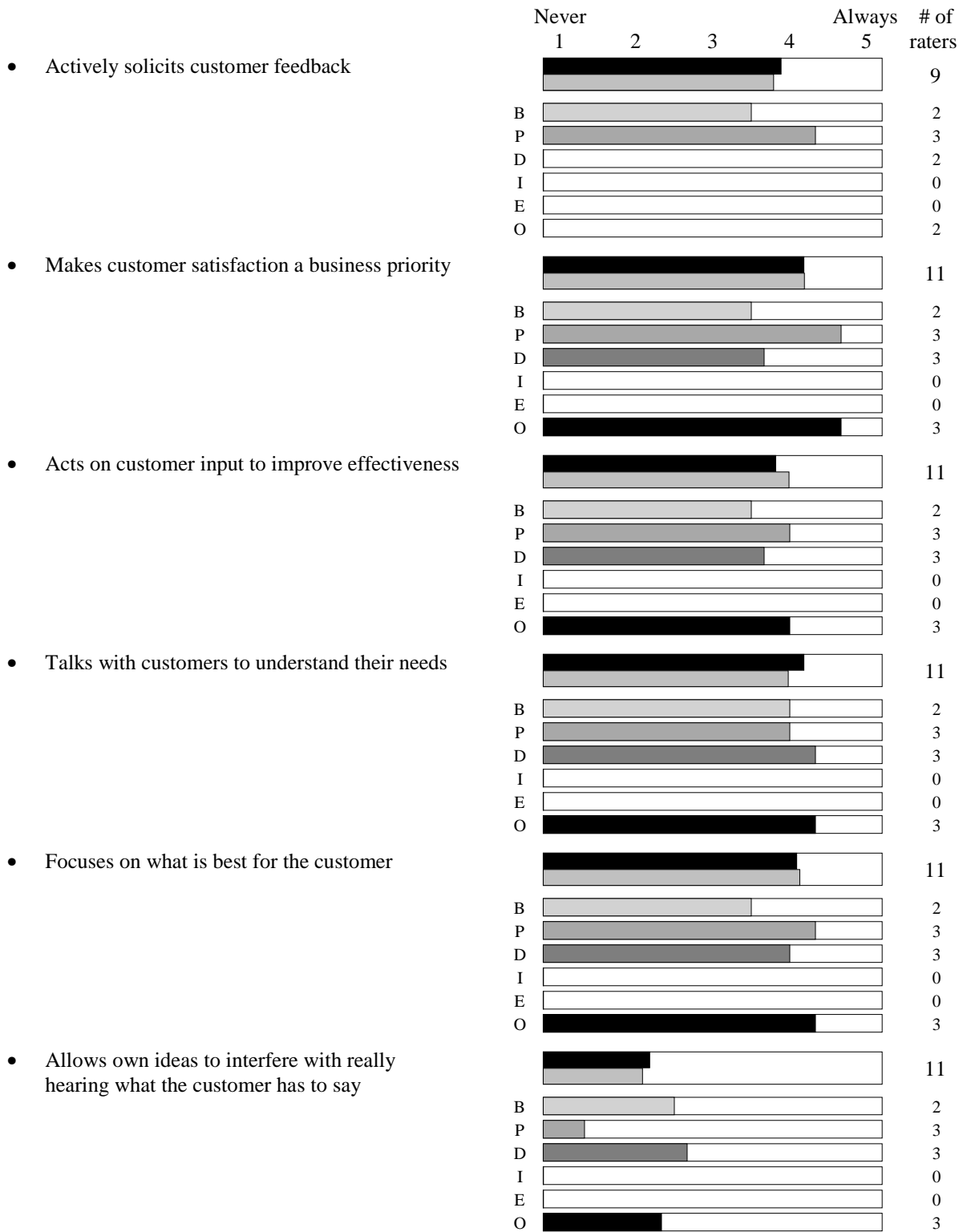
Innovating



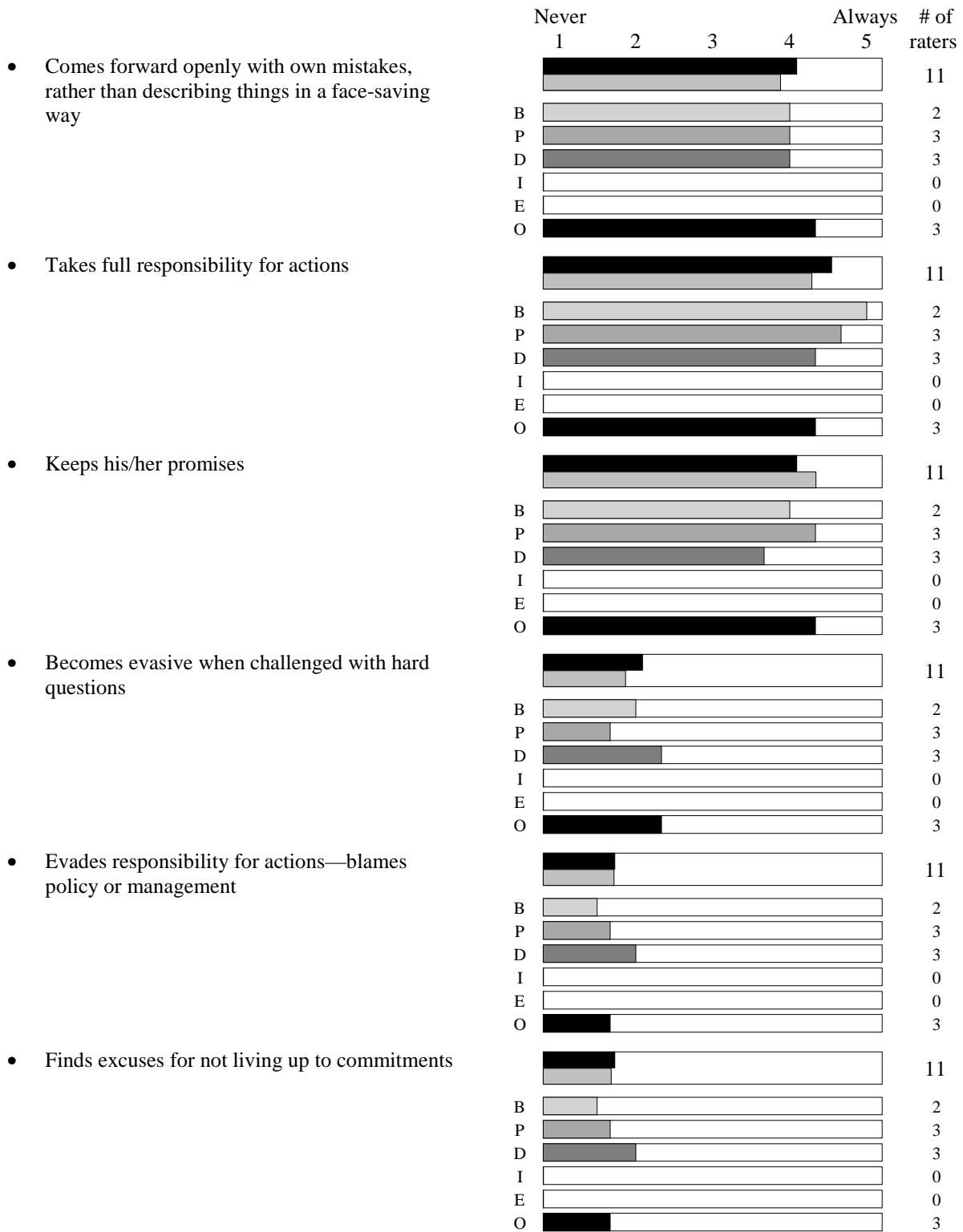
Welcoming Change



Customer Focus



Accountability



Comments from Co-Workers

Co-workers who give feedback ratings for the current assessment also have the opportunity to add comments at the end of the assessment. The comments from your co-workers are reprinted here, unedited and in a random order.

Your great at your job. I thikn your good at cooching the office staff when your a round. Dont lissen to the neigh sayers.

Take speech lessons if you are that self-conscious about your accent/lisp. Having you sit in meetings and not say anything -- when you obviously knew something important -- was a big waste of everyone's time.

Take staff meetings more seriously. Drink coffee or something so you at least stay awake. And if you know there's not enough money left in the budget to do something, say so early, so that we don't waste our our time making all these great plans only to find out later that we can't follow through.

You would benefit from learning how to use email, and getting in the habit of checking it frequently.

You could be much more proactive about keeping other people informed.

It's really annoying to leave you voicemails and not have you return them. It leaves me not knowing whether you never got the message, got the message and took care of it without closing the loop with me, or got the message and ignored it. I end up having to do things myself, sometimes when you've already handled it, because I have no way of knowing.

The only thing I would suggest is that you make a deliberate effort to spend more time in face to face communication with people. I find that you pass on a lot of information in casual conversation that you don't write down or share otherwise.

Please let the office staff know when you leave the office, either for the day or just for a few hours. They never seem to know where you are.

YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE IS REALLY GREAT. I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE YOU ARE REALLY THERE FOR ME.

When you hand over work for the office staff to complete, please leave thorough instructions about what to do. You sometimes neglect simple things, like who the letter is to.

Stick to you're knitting. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Better an ounce of prevention than a pound of cure. (What would that be in metric?)

List of Raters

Your feedback was provided by the following raters:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| BANKS, SHARON | (Direct Report) |
| BLUE, PATTI | (Other) |
| BOGART, MIKE | (Boss) |
| CRANE, ERNIE | (Other) |
| FUTRELLI, JOHN | (Peer) |
| HEATH, CHRIS | (Peer) |
| INM, TONI | (Direct Report) |
| INNOCENT, LAURIE | (Boss) |
| MILES, DAVID | (Other) |
| VANDENGARD, DIANE | (Direct Report) |
| WILLIAMS, HARRY | (Peer) |