

# Mapping Leadership Styles of Public and Private Sector Leaders Using Blake and Mouton Leadership Model

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## ABSTRACT

*Effective leadership makes an organization successful. Without leadership, organizations move too slowly, stagnate, and lose their way. The present research is based on the comparative leadership styles in public and private sector using Blake and Mouton Leadership Model to understand whether these leaders are people oriented or task oriented. The study was conducted on 80 leaders of public and private banks to know about what kind of leadership style they possess based on which it could be determined how close they are with people and how much importance they give to the achievement of task. The results indicated that leaders of private sector are significantly higher on task orientation as compared to public sector leaders and their own people orientation, while public sector leaders are significantly higher on people orientation as compared to private sector leaders and their own task orientation. Results further show that private sector leaders come under Authoritarian style of leadership who focus more on task than on people where the leaders of the public sector banks fall under the category of Country Club which shows that the leaders are high on relationship with people and low on task.*

**Key Words:** Blake and Mouton Leadership, Private and Public Bank, Task and People Orientation

## INTRODUCTION

Traditional ideas about what made a great leader were based on a military model. A great leader was a man who took command, acted with courage, and did what was necessary for the success of his organization or country.

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Often he led using fear rather than persuasion. In recent years this model has been replaced with softer ideas of what a leader should be like. We have the servant leader who, as the name suggests, serves the people whom he or she leads rather than controlling them. We have the emotionally intelligent leader who has social charm, empathy, self-awareness and self-control. We have the transformational leader who provides people with a vision of a better world and motivates them to transcend their self-interest. We have the charismatic leader who emotionally energizes followers with an inspiring vision of the future and convinces them that he or she is the heroic figure who can make this vision real.

Leadership theories have been evolving over the past six decades, commencing with the trait approach of the 1930's, the behavioural and situational/contingency approaches of the 1950's and 1970's respectively, and evolving to the transactional and transforming leadership of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985). Students of leadership have produced theories involving traits (Kirkpatrick and Locke 1991), situational interaction, function, behavior, power, vision and values (Richards and Engle 1986), charisma, and intelligence among others.

### **Blake and Mouton Leadership Grid**

Blake and Mouton studied leadership behavior and described two extremes of leadership concern:

**Concern for Production:** The leader cares little about people and operates in fear of something going wrong. This person's focus is on achieving results and productivity.

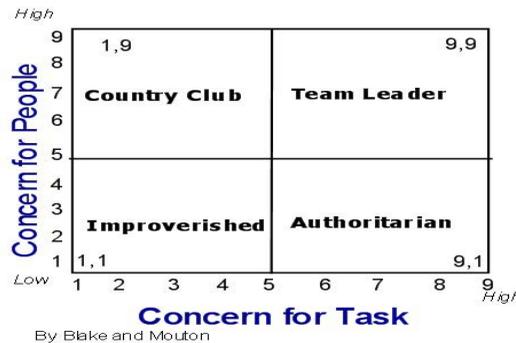
**Concern for People:** This leader cares little about productivity and operates wholly from a desire to be loved and approved of.

The grid Blake and Mouton created from these two dimensions can help you to understand your predominant style on the scale of concern for productivity and concern for people. The scales run from 1-9 with, nine meaning a high amount of concern.

### **Autocratic or Authoritarian Leaders (High Task, Low Relationship)**

Under the autocratic leadership style, all decision-making powers are centralized in the leader, as with dictator leaders. They do not entertain any suggestions or initiatives from subordinates. The autocratic management has been successful as it provides strong motivation to the manager.

Authoritarian leaders provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is also a clear division between the leader and the followers. Authoritarian leaders make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group. Researchers found that decision-making was less creative under authoritarian leadership. Authoritarian leadership is best applied to situations where there is little time for group decision-making or where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group.



**Figure 1: Blake and Mouton Model of Leadership**

**Team Leader (High Task, High Relationship)**

This type of person leads by positive example and endeavors to foster a team environment in which all team members can reach their highest potential, both as team members and as people. They encourage the team to reach team goals as effectively as possible, while also working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds among the various members. They normally form and lead some of the most productive teams.

**Country Club Leader (Low Task, High Relationship)**

This person uses predominantly reward power to maintain discipline and to encourage the team to accomplish its goals. Conversely, they are almost incapable of employing the more punitive coercive and legitimate powers. This inability results from fear that using such powers could jeopardize relationships with the other team members.

### **Impoverished Leader (Low Task, Low Relationship)**

Improvised leader is a leader who uses a delegate and disappear management style. Since they are not committed to either task accomplishment or maintenance; they essentially allow their team to do whatever it wishes and prefer to detach themselves from the team process by allowing the team to suffer from a series of power struggles.

### **Leadership: is It Better to be People or Task Oriented**

What is most important when managing people? To concentrate first on getting the tasks done and caring for people second? Or, caring for people first and the tasks which need to be done second? The concentration on task does not mean the exclusion of people or vice-versa, just a clear hierarchy of importance. There is no clear opinion on this premise. The decisions, on what to concentrate, are usually determined by individual behaviors' of the leaders in the organization. According to experts emphasis on accommodation of people's needs over the tasks disturbs the clear line between goal, strategy, and a sense of purpose. However it is also evident that the concentration on an employee's individual needs and relationships has increased in preference to task markedly in last thirty years.

Leaders who try to build relationships by accommodating one or more employee's demands separate to the rest of their team signal that relationship are more important than getting the job at hand done. They signal that individual happiness is more important than accomplishing the team's purpose. They can also inadvertently signal elements of bias.

However, if leaders focus on their goal, they can more easily be seen to be consistent and help reduce any perception of bias. By focusing on tasks whilst maintaining a relationship with subordinates, leaders can maintain a position of authority and still be considered as friendly. Differences in leaders' performance can be explained by the extent to which the leader is task- and or person-oriented

The following table illustrates the benefits of focusing on task and the person.

While it is clear that leaders who concentrate on the task and the person is ideal, researchers prefer a task-oriented leader who is a little less able to be warm and supportive of subordinates rather than a leader who is very warm and supportive but cannot set goals and manage tasks.

**Table 1: Benefits of focusing on Task and Person**

	<i>Low task</i>	<i>High Task</i>
High person	Low performance Low turnover Low grievance rate	High performance Low turnover Low grievance rate
Low person	Low performance High turnover High grievance rate	High performance High turnover High grievance rate

### Leaders of Public and Private Sector

There are undoubtedly differences between the public and the private sectors regarding the environment, the goals, and the structure which influences the leadership style and business attitude of managers. Private sector leaders have a clear tendency to go for short term results, being prepared to take calculated risks and to be optimistic about the outcome they can expect. In contrast, public sector leaders take way more distance from the problems they have to face, look strategically at the longer term and opt for a thoughtful, innovative and risk-averse approach of solving problems. The more can be understood through a look on literature.

### Literature Review

In a paper on similarities and differences amongst the public and private sector leadership development Bristow and Clarke found that in the private sector there was a greater focus on the advantages of individual leadership activity in difficult business circumstances. In contrast, in the large public sector organization we studied, in difficult economic and political circumstances, much greater emphasis lay on collective and consensual activity often at the expense of individual leadership. Whilst a collective approach has value for building teams and encouraging mutual support, individual leadership activity can also be important in difficult times, for example, for facing up to tough decisions, motivating staff and looking to the future.

Javidan and Waldman (2003) reported that charismatic leadership in the public sector in Canada is perceived in terms of vision, risk taking, challenge and encouragement, and energy and determination. But they found that charismatic leadership overall is not strongly related to consequential motivation and not significantly related to operating performance. However, motivation was found to be predicted by risk taking,

**Table 2: KMO and Bartlett Test of Sampling Adequacy for Factor Analysis**

<i>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</i>		<b>.891</b>
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.113E3
	df	153
	Sig.	.000

**Table 3: Showing the Rotated Component Matrix of the statements.**

		<i>Q1</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>Q3</i>	<i>Q4</i>	<i>Q5</i>	<i>Q6</i>	<i>Q7</i>	<i>Q8</i>	<i>Q9</i>	<i>Q10</i>
Component	1	0.657	0.45	0.35	0.72		0.68			0.82	0.75
	2	-0.38	0.67	0.75		0.71	-.33	0.79	0.86		0.44
		Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18		
	1		0.68	0.63		0.45	0.585		0.69		
	2	0.62			0.64	0.61	-0.57	0.61	0.41		

**Table 4: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Score of the Questionnaire**

<i>Reliability Statistics</i>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.823	18

challenge and encouragement by the leader, which engendered higher self-esteem in subordinates. Risk taking, however, may be discouraged or avoided in the public sector. In the words of Senator Dwight Nelson, a Jamaican government minister (2009): In the private sector we have what we call risk management; we have leadership that is prepared to take risk and we do not have that in the public sector. We play it by the rules, whether those rules are productive or not.

The relationship between charismatic leadership and operating performance is much stronger in the private sector than in the public sector (Howell & Avolio, 1993), probably because of political or bureaucratic constraints on leaders' behaviour or accomplishments (Pawar & Eastman, 1997). This relationship is much stronger still in the private sector when there is a high degree of uncertainty, for example in times of crisis or turbulence (Waldman & Yammarino, 1999).

In an article on 'Is leadership different in the public and private sectors?' Gill (2009) stated that leadership in public and private sectors is different as well as similar too. It is similar in relation to social and

environmental responsibility and employees' attitudes to their immediate managers – two favorable characteristics. It is different in relation to perceptions of top-level leaders, risk taking, adequacy of leadership development, organizational approaches to motivation and decision-making involvement, and individual and charismatic leadership versus collective and networked leadership, especially in times of crisis. Differences in attitudes and approaches and in the challenges and constraints that leaders face probably explain the differences in leadership characteristics between the public and private sectors.

In order to better understand what differentiates managers from both sectors, Hudson (2009) used its Business Attitudes Questionnaire (BAQ) to analyze the personality characteristics of 1,185 senior leaders in the public and private sectors in Europe. Of that number, 485 originated from the public sector and 700 from the private sector. Their results were compared to those of over 64,000 people from the global population. It is clear that if differences between senior leaders in the private and public sectors exist, they are smaller than previously thought – but that they do have important consequences for organizations wanting to formulate a proper strategy to acquire and develop their future senior leaders. The major findings of Hudson's study are:

- Leaders in the public sector are more focused on creating a **long term strategy** than on 'winning in the short term'
- Private sector leaders are essentially focused on the short-term and on **quick results**
- Public sector leaders are more inclined to '**control**'; private sector leaders to 'believe and trust'
- Public sector leaders are **less optimistic** about the outcome of their actions, but they go for a more **thoughtful** approach.
- In the public sector, women leaders demonstrate a more **outspoken** profile
- Younger managers in the private sector get more opportunities and more room for **self-development**

There is evidence that this gradual process of homogenization of leadership and management approaches in the private and public sectors has had a significant impact on policy and practice (Brock et al., 1999; Green, 2002: 434). Kempster's (2009) recent comparison of influences on the leadership learning of public and private sector managers identifies

**Table 5: Showing the Mean and Standard Deviation of Public and Private Sector Leaders on People Orientation and Task Orientation**

	<i>PUB_PVT</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
People Orientation	Private	40	2.2745	.33554
	Public	40	3.8868	.24051
Task Orientation	Private	40	3.9525	.32320
	Public	40	2.0535	.39220

**Table 6: Showing Independent Sample t-test of Significant Difference between the People Orientation and Task Orientation of Public and Private Sector Leaders**

		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
People Orientation	Equal variances assumed	-24.699	78	.000
	Equal variances not assumed	-24.699	70.705	.000
Task Orientation	Equal variances assumed	23.633	78	.000
	Equal variances not assumed	23.633	75.251	.000

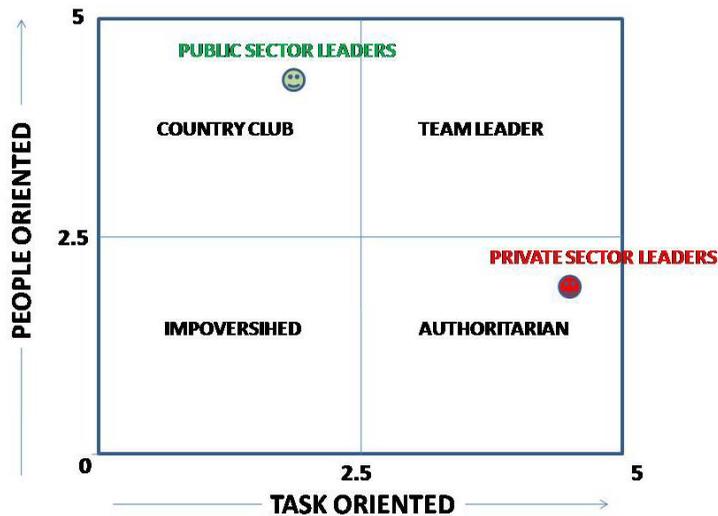
**Table 6: Showing Paired Sample t test of Significant Difference in People Orientation and Task Orientation of Public Sector Leaders**

<i>Public Sector</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>sig</i>
People Orientation-Task Orientation	21.832	39	.000

**Table 7: Showing Paired Sample t test of Significant Difference in People Orientation and Task Orientation of Private Sector Leaders**

<i>Private Sector</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>sig</i>
People Orientation-Task Orientation	21.832	39	.000

much similarity and only a few salient differences. His comparison of public and private sector leadership learning led him to conclude that implicit societal purpose fundamentally distinguishes the two sectors. He claims that intrinsic purpose and the espoused importance of ethics is more prevalent in public than in private sector managers' careers and leadership development.



**Figure 1: Showing People Orientation and Task Orientation of Public and Private Sector Leaders on Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid.**

Task masters are reported to be not effective leaders. Effective leaders believe in developing relationship with the followers. Relationship oriented leaders seems to be more effective than task oriented leaders. Wood and Sobel (1970) found a relationship oriented leadership style has been generally associated with high satisfaction. A number of studies have indicated that the relationship-oriented leader has a more cohesive group than does the task oriented leader. Members of such a group are more satisfied with themselves and with the task. It has been suggested that the relationship-oriented leader affords a quasi-therapeutic environment for the group members, which in turn results in their high degree of satisfaction (Fiedler et al., 1961).

Sharma and Bajpai (2010) conducted a comparative study of public and private sector to understand effective leadership and its linear dependence on job satisfaction. The effective leadership parameters taken includes effective communication, responsive, leaders transform followers, generate sustainable and continuous development, relationship oriented, believe in the inherent self worth of others, supervisors create a trusting and open climate, leaders empower subordinates, leaders keep their promises and leaders do not push too much. Data were collected

from 250 employees consisting of managerial and non-managerial staff from both the public sector and private sector organizations. The results revealed that employees in public sector organization have greater degree of effective leadership in comparison to private sector organizations and also the job satisfaction increases or decreases based on increase or decrease in effective leadership.

## RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Leadership makes a business organization successful. Leadership style influences the thoughts and behaviors of subordinates in a substantial way. This study comes at a time when business leaders need to put themselves up, in order to guide, encourage and motivate their employees be it public sector or private sector. The leadership styles of the managers depicts the motivational level of the workers to contribute to their fully towards achievement of organizational goals. This study has been conducted to compare the leadership styles of public and private sector banks using the Blake and Mouton Model of leadership.

### Objectives

- To design a tool based on Blake and Mouton Model to identify the task oriented and/or people oriented leadership styles.
- To study the leadership styles of Public and Private sector leaders and to compare if these leaders are task oriented or people oriented using the Blake and Mouton Model of leadership.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To assess the leadership orientation (people and task) in public and private sector this survey was conducted in public sector and private sector banks. The findings of the study are constituted using a structured questionnaire, divided into two sections, namely personal details and a five-point likert scale that was developed for assessing the people or task leadership orientation (through 18 statements). The questionnaire was administered on a sample of 80 leaders, working in four nationalized banks and four private sector banks. Data collected for the study was analyzed using factor analysis and t-test.

### Sample Size

The sample was taken from the 4 public and 4 private sector banks. 10 leaders were taken from each bank making it a sample of 80 leaders in total i.e. 40 from each sector

### Tool Used

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, a questionnaire for leaders was developed and the interview questions for the structured interviews were designed. The Questionnaire is used in the research to find out the leader's views using the 5 – point likert scale (summated rating scale) where 18 statements are given and they are given rating according to the parameters like 5 been given to very strongly applies to 1 being does not apply at all. After completing the Questionnaire, answers have been assigned scores on the basis of whether the leaders are people oriented or task oriented using the Blake and Mouton Model of Leadership (Managerial Grid).

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in the survey are employed in government and private sector banks. Factor analysis was conducted on the data collected on 18 statements. The KMO and Bartlett test for sampling adequacy was conducted (Table 1) to test whether sample taken for conducting factor analysis is appropriate or not. The test results are significant at .000 level, meaning that the factor analysis yielded valid results. Principal components extraction was used with varimax rotation. The correlations between factors and the different items expressed by means of the factorial loads were significant. The rotated matrix identified two components (Table 2). The first factor had nine items loaded and thus was identified as 'People Orientation'. The second factor had nine items loaded on it and thus was identified as 'Task Orientation'. People Orientation variables refers to leaders acting as coach, having people participate in decision making, developing great team, and counselling employees. Task Orientation refers to the focus on task in every situation, accounting every detail, managing time, implementing new ideas for improvement of procedures. The Cronbach Alpha value of reliability for the developed questionnaire was calculated (Table 3) and found to be 0.823 which is well above the acceptable value. The mean scores of all the leaders of public and private sector were calculated and it was found that the private sector leaders were

high on task orientation while medium on people orientation while on the other hand the public sector leaders were high on people orientation and medium low on task orientation (Table 4).

Further the independent sample t-test was conducted to find out the significant differences between the people orientation and task orientation of public and private sector leaders (Table 5). The results of the t-test show that there is significant difference in the people orientation and task orientation of the public and private sector leaders. The look at the mean values (Table 3) show that public sector leaders are significantly higher on people orientation as compared to private sector leaders while private sector leaders are significantly higher on task orientation as compared to public sector leaders. The paired sample t test was conducted to see the significant difference within the group of public and private sector leaders on people orientation and task orientation. Table 6 shows that there is significant difference between people orientation and task orientation of public sector leaders. The mean table (Table 3) shows that public sector leaders are significantly higher on people orientation as compared to task orientation. Table 7 shows that there is significant difference between people orientation and task orientation of private sector leaders. The mean table (Table 3) shows that private sector leaders are significantly higher on task orientation as compared to people orientation.

Further the mean scores of public and private sector leaders on people orientation and task orientation were plotted on the Blake and Mouton managerial grid where the X axis constitute task oriented leaders and Y – Axis constitute people oriented leaders (Figure 1). After plotting the values calculated, it was found that the intersection point for the leaders of private sector banks fall on authoritarian block which shows that these type of leaders are highly task oriented and low on relationship. This shows that in Private sector banks, leaders are more of an autocratic style. They provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is also a clear division between the leader and the followers. Though corporate world brag a lot about being participative but the realty measures differs because as we know authoritarian leaders make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group. Heavily task oriented people display these characteristics: they are very strong on schedules; they expect people to do what they are told without question or debate; when something goes wrong they tend to focus on who is to blame rather than concentrate on exactly what is wrong and how to prevent it; they are intolerant of what they see as dissent (it may just be

someone's creativity), so it is difficult for their subordinates to contribute or develop.

The leaders of public sector banks on the other hand were found falling in the category of country club block which shows that such kind of leaders are more of people oriented. These leaders use predominantly reward power to maintain discipline and to encourage the team to accomplish its goals. Conversely, they are almost incapable of employing the more punitive coercive and legitimate powers. This inability results from fear that using such powers could jeopardize relationships with the other team members. The results are akin with the observed trend of private sector leaders being more task-oriented who can extract high performance from their employees and their employees facing more turnover and grievances. While on the other hand the public sector leaders are more people oriented with low performance, low turnover and low grievances of employees. However with the changing trends in business scenario where public sector is also facing competition and radical changes, the need of the hour is that their leaders should also become more task-oriented because with strong grievance redressal mechanisms and job security in public sector, employee turnover will not be a major point of concern, so their more focus on task will generate better performance of employees. In private sector on the other hand the task oriented leadership is followed and contrary to the ideal situation of high task and people orientation, researches also show that only high task orientation generates higher performance.

## CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Leaders in the public sector are more focused on people orientation, are less optimistic about the outcome of their actions, but they go for a more thoughtful approach. Private sector leaders are essentially focused on the short-term and on quick results and are more concerned with completion of the tasks. Private Sector Leaders are Authoritarian by nature where as Public Sector Leaders are participative or democratic.

The business scenario at any point of time requires leaders who can generate results as well as contain their people assets. For this leaders should have a perfect blend of task and people orientation. But contrary to this research suggest that a high relationship orientation does not yield high performance but a high task-orientation generate high performance. However it is also true that only high task orientation creates high grievance

and turnover amongst employees. So what should be the best for leaders? A high task orientation with a medium high people orientation where leaders are concerned with the people yet do not lose the focus of task the very reason for any organization to exist seems to be the best approach. With this pretext the leaders of the public sector banks have to focus more on task, so as to get the performance from employees and the leaders of private sector banks have to be little more concerned with the people aspect without losing sight of task being completed.

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## ANNEXURE

Below is a list of statements about leadership behavior. Read each one carefully, then, using the following scale, decide the extent to which it actually applies to you ranging from 5 for very strongly applies, 4 strongly applies, 3 applies at times, 2 undecided, to 1 does not apply at all. For best results, answer as truthfully as possible.

1	I encourage my team to participate when it comes decision making time and I try to implement their ideas and suggestions.
2	Nothing is more important than accomplishing a goal or task.
3	I closely monitor the schedule to ensure a task or project will be completed in time.
4	I enjoy coaching people on new tasks and procedures.
5	The more challenging a task is, the more I enjoy it.
6	I encourage my employees to be creative about their job.
7	When seeing a complex task through to completion, I ensure that every detail is accounted for.
8	I find it easy to carry out several complicated tasks at the same time.
9	I enjoy reading articles, books, and journals about training, leadership, and psychology; and then putting what I have read into action.
10	When correcting mistakes, I do not worry about jeopardizing relationships.
11	I manage my time very efficiently.
12	I enjoy explaining the intricacies and details of a complex task or project to my employees.
13	Breaking large projects into small manageable tasks is second nature to me.
14	Nothing is more important than building a great team.
15	I enjoy analyzing problems of the employees.
16	I honor other people's boundaries.
17	Counseling my employees to improve their performance or behavior is second nature to me.
18	I enjoy reading articles, books, and trade journals about my profession; and then implementing the new procedures I have learned.

## SCORING SECTION

After completing the Questionnaire, answers have been assigned to the space given below:

People Question	Task Question
1. _____	2. _____
4. _____	3. _____
6. _____	5. _____
9. _____	7. _____
10. _____	8. _____
12. _____	11. _____
14. _____	13. _____
16. _____	15. _____
17. _____	18. _____
TOTAL _____	TOTAL _____
X 0.2 = _____	X 0.2 _____
(multiple the Total by 0.2 to get your final score)	(multiple the Total by 0.2 to get your final score)