culture circle_

the leadership alignment diagnostic_

reference guide

This guide explains the four philosophical pillars of the Leadership Alignment Diagnostic. Use it alongside your results to understand what each orientation means, what it creates in culture, and what to hold with awareness.

humanity	separation · connection · compassion
money	scarcity · sufficiency · abundance
self	conditioning · awareness · alignment
life	survival · meaning · presence

how scores work. Each pillar is scored from 0 to 100. Under 33 places you in the first orientation, 33 to 66 in the middle, and 67 and up in the third. Your written reflections are for you and are not scored.

know where you stand. honor the gap._ culturecircle.co/lead

pillar 1_

humanity

separation · connection · compassion

separation

under 33

You tend to see people through the lens of their choices, group, or circumstances. Compassion has conditions. You may prioritize accountability over understanding.

in culture

Cultures feel transactional. Rules and accountability exist but warmth does not. People perform but rarely bring their full selves.

area of awareness

May struggle to extend grace when choices conflict with your values. Can come across as unsympathetic during difficult employee situations.

connection

33 to 66

You hold a nuanced view of humanity. You can extend empathy while holding people accountable. You do not always lead with judgment but not always with compassion either.

in culture

Cultures feel reasonable and fair. People feel heard on good days but safety is not consistent enough to be fully relied upon.

area of awareness

May give inconsistent empathy depending on context. Can struggle to take a clear stand in emotionally charged moments.

compassion

67 and up

You see people as whole humans navigating life the best way they know how. You hold compassion and disagreement at the same time without needing someone to have made good choices.

in culture

Cultures feel genuinely human. People bring their whole selves. Mistakes are processed with grace. The culture becomes a place people want to stay.

area of awareness

May overextend grace and delay necessary accountability. May be seen as too soft on performance issues.

when leaders hold different orientations

When leaders hold different orientations here, employees experience inconsistency. One leader humanizes. Another categorizes. The culture says it cares about people but disagreement on what people deserve when struggling creates mixed psychological safety.

pillar 2_

money

scarcity · sufficiency · abundance

scarcity

under 33

Money feels limited, fragile, and hard to keep. There is often an undercurrent of fear around finances even when stable. Generosity can feel risky. Fear of loss may drive more decisions than vision.

in culture

Cultures feel urgency-driven and exhausting. Overwork is normalized. Rest is subtly penalized. There is always more to do and never quite enough.

area of awareness

May create a culture of chronic urgency. Productivity may become tied to worth. Rest and generosity may be subtly penalized.

sufficiency

33 to 66

You believe in enough. You are thoughtful about money without being fearful. You can be generous but you also calculate. You oscillate depending on the season.

in culture

Cultures feel stable and functional. People are not burned out but may not feel inspired. Investment in people can feel inconsistent.

area of awareness

May be inconsistent in financial decisions based on mood or season. Can struggle to commit to bold investment.

abundance

67 and up

You see money as energy and currency that flows and circulates. You invest, give, and spend with intention. Generosity feels natural because you trust more will come.

in culture

Cultures feel expansive and trusting. People are invested in, risks are taken, and generosity is modeled. Growth feels possible.

area of awareness

May underestimate real resource constraints. Can be seen as unrealistic about financial risk.

when leaders hold different orientations

When leaders hold different money orientations, budget conversations become battlegrounds nobody can name. One pushes aggressive growth. Another prioritizes sustainability. The culture may brand itself as balanced while operating from fear and overextension.

pillar 3_

self

conditioning · awareness · alignment

conditioning under 33

Identity and behavior may be more shaped by external forces than you realize. Status, validation, and conditioning may influence decisions more than your own internal compass. A very human starting place.

in culture

Cultures have unspoken rules about what can and cannot be said. Emotional reactivity from leadership creates walking-on-eggshells dynamics. People learn to manage up rather than be honest.

area of awareness

May be defensive when receiving feedback. Identity may be too tied to title or success. Emotional reactivity can create unsafe environments.

awareness 33 to 66

You are aware that conditioning exists and are actively working through it. You can catch yourself in reactive patterns. You are honest about the gap between who you are and who life has shaped you to be.

in culture

Cultures are in process. More self-aware than most but still inconsistent. The culture reflects this, feeling safe some days and unpredictable others.

area of awareness

May project self-awareness without fully living it. Growth may be theoretical rather than embodied.

alignment 67 and up

You lead from an internally grounded place. Your behavior is largely congruent with your values. You are reflective, emotionally accountable, and comfortable evolving without external validation.

in culture

Cultures feel emotionally mature and honest. People can give and receive feedback. Hard conversations happen and the culture survives them. Authenticity is modeled.

area of awareness

May set an emotional standard others are not ready to meet. Can be impatient with lower awareness in others.

when leaders hold different orientations

When leaders operate from different places here, employees experience emotional inconsistency. One leader is reflective and welcomes hard conversations. Another is defensive and unpredictable. The result is pockets of psychological safety rather than a culture-wide foundation.

pillar 4_

life

survival · meaning · presence

survival

under 33

Life feels like something to manage and optimize. Urgency may feel normal. Achievement is closely tied to worth. Slowing down can feel dangerous. Often produces high performance at significant personal cost.

in culture

Cultures feel chronically urgent. The pace is relentless. Burnout is normalized as commitment. The culture confuses busy with purposeful.

area of awareness

May normalize burnout as the price of success. Difficulty recognizing when pace is harming the team.

meaning

33 to 66

You are searching for more than productivity. You want your work and life to mean something. You move between urgency and reflection. Not yet fully in presence but no longer satisfied with pure survival mode.

in culture

Cultures are searching for balance. The intention is there but urgency patterns emerge under pressure. Inconsistent expectations around pace.

area of awareness

Can create confusion about the actual pace expectation. May swing between vision and urgency without landing.

presence

67 and up

You experience life as something to inhabit, not just achieve. You value peace, sustainability, and meaningful experience. You have a calmer nervous system and protect it. Rest is necessary, not weak.

in culture

Cultures feel spacious and intentional. There is room to think, rest, and be human. Sustainability is valued alongside performance.

area of awareness

May underestimate how urgency-oriented team members experience slow pace. Can be misread as disengaged.

when leaders hold different orientations

When leaders hold different life orientations, employees feel confused about what is expected. One leader pushes urgency and constant output. Another values intentionality and pace. The culture cannot define success because its leaders have different definitions of a life well-led.

using your results_

what to do with your map

on your own

Your map is a snapshot, not a verdict. Each orientation reveals how you currently relate to one of the four pillars. Use it to name patterns you already sense in yourself. The most useful question is not what does this say about me, but what do I want to do with this information.

with a partner or team

Where orientations are close, you have a natural shorthand. Fewer translations needed. Less friction when things get hard. Where orientations differ, you have information, not a problem. The goal is not perfect alignment. It is knowing where the gaps are so you can honor them and lead through them with intention. To compare, send your share link from the results page; when they finish, both maps appear side by side.

in a coaching or advisory conversation

These results open the door. They name what was previously unnamed. A skilled conversation partner can help you explore what shaped each orientation, how it shows up in your decisions and relationships, and where you want to grow. The diagnostic is the beginning of the conversation, not the end.

for your culture

Culture is philosophy operationalized. The orientations your leaders hold quietly shape everything from how accountability is delivered to how urgency is normalized to how psychological safety is built or eroded. Understanding the philosophical makeup of a leadership team is one of the most powerful culture diagnostics available.

want to talk through what came up?

book a 30-minute chat at culturecircle.co