

# COACHING REPORT

JOHN Q. PUBLIC



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## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Birkman Coaching Report is to provide you and your coach with a comprehensive assessment for self-management and developmental purposes. This report focuses on behavior within the range of normal human functioning and does not address clinical issues. This information is based on your responses to questions contained in the Birkman questionnaire and generated from The Birkman Method®

This report should not be depended upon as the only means of evaluating your attributes and areas for development, nor should it be used as a tool for job selection or pre-employment.

The Coaching Report is designed to:

- Provide a means to increase personal and professional self-awareness.
- Provide information to complement other processes important to coaching, such as the coaching interview process.
- Describe your specific tendencies relative to important interpersonal and task-related activities.
- Provide information to help pinpoint areas that may be current or future liabilities.
- Provide areas to be explored within the coaching process that can be translated into specific coaching goals for you.

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## PURPOSE

### ACTION ITEMS

What would you like most to get out of the coaching process?

List at least two issues/challenges/learning opportunities you would like to discuss and work on during the coaching process.

Before reading the Coaching Report consider the following areas and rate yourself to determine whether or not each area has been a strength or a possible weakness for you in your past work and personal life experiences. Rate yourself from 1-5, with 5 meaning you feel it is a true strength and 1 meaning you have known issues with this topic.

- Communicating with others
- Relating to people socially
- Response to policies, procedures and externally imposed change
- Making decisions
- Creating your ideal work environment
- Work/Life balance

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## SPECIFIC PROFILE

Profiles are valuable because they give us a general sense of who we are and how we behave. They are helpful because we can learn how, with our particular profile, we can interact more effectively with people who have profiles different from us. We have aspects to our personality that are unique to us as individuals, based upon the distinctive environment in which we were raised and aspects of our personality that are present at birth.

In the sections that follow, we will define your specific personality in terms of the following areas:

- How You Communicate With Others
- How You Relate to People Socially
- How You Respond to Structure and Change
- How You Make Decisions
- Creating Your Ideal Work Environment
- Work-Life Balance
- Potential Issues
- Areas to Explore

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## COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

Communicating with others involves the sensitivity with which we deliver messages to others (and conversely the degree of sensitivity we want in return) and the level of assertiveness we exhibit in challenging others and defending our points of view.

You describe yourself as someone who is concerned for the feelings of others and who relates to them on the basis of genuine respect and appreciation, about the same as most people. You are mindful of the impact or impression your words and actions may have during the communication process. When you engage in conversations (especially difficult ones), you will be generally diplomatic, but not to the point where your message gets lost. You will not be unduly critical, preferring instead to keep things on a positive note. However, if the situation calls for it, you can be fairly direct with others. Your self-described ability to be sensitively aware of your impact on others appears to be the same as for most people. This behavior appears to be learned or modified over time since what you seem to want from others is somewhat different from the way you usually behave toward others.

Your responses to the questionnaire suggest that you have a distinct need for others to be open and direct with you. You may become frustrated and impatient if others are indirect or evasive in their communication, especially around difficult issues. You prefer that people tackle sensitive or tough issues head on and not allow sentiment or personal sensitivities to get in the way. You indicate a desire for candor from your superiors and prefer to avoid situations where another person's position in the organization interferes with your ability to say what needs to be said. Since this is different from your self-described day-to-day behavior, this difference should be explored through discussion.

Your responses also indicate that during times of stress or pressure, your behavior mirrors, in exaggerated form, the communication practices that you desire from others, but in a way that may impede your interpersonal effectiveness. When this happens, you may convey a lack of concern for the esteem of others or for their reactions to what you have to say. You may focus so much on what you think needs to be said, that you are oblivious to social process and communicate in a way that is too direct, blunt and even harsh. In the process, you might become more detached. This causes you to be unable to recognize the personal needs and feelings of others. Since your needs and stress behavior are somewhat different from the day-to-day, usual behavior you describe, it will be important to recognize when these differences occur.

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## COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

You describe yourself as more assertive and controlling than the average person. In situations where you are communicating from a position of authority or in personal confrontations, your strength is to influence and convince others to your way of thinking through argument and sheer force of will. In discussions, you prefer to be outspoken and to the point, leaving no doubt as to who is in control or where you stand on issues. It is through such verbal assertiveness that your interpersonal competitiveness comes to the fore.

You function best in an environment that supports, and even encourages individuals to have forthright discussion of ideas, policies and decisions. You prefer supervision from someone who is direct and honest with you, letting you know what the boundaries are and where you stand. You expect persons in positions of authority to be comfortable when you push back with your own ideas and opinions. Ideally, you expect opportunities to openly discuss and debate matters of personal or professional importance with your peers or direct-reports.

During times of stress or pressure, you may air your opinions too freely. In the process, you can come across as bossy and domineering. As you become more confrontational, you tend to resist direction from others and may be inclined to engage in an argumentative style of communication. The frustration of dealing with non-confrontational people or a "wishy-washy" boss can bring out the authoritarian side of your personality.

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## COMMUNICATING WITH OTHERS

### ACTION ITEMS

Are you aware of times when your style of communicating with others has caused a situation to go better than expected? If so, describe that situation and describe why you think your style "worked" in this situation.

Are you aware of times when your style of communicating with others has caused a situation to go less smoothly than expected? If so, describe that situation and describe what you think went wrong. In retrospect, how could it have been handled better?

Has your personal stress behavior sometimes gotten you in trouble? Please describe the situation. Discuss ways to prevent that from happening again.

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## RELATING TO PEOPLE SOCIALLY

Relating to others from a social perspective is determined by how much we like group interaction, how much interpersonal contact we need and to what extent we see emotion or feelings as a significant factor in our relationships.

You view your usual behavior as being far less sociable and outgoing than most people. You will choose to form close personal relationships with a few significant individuals and you are primarily "selectively sociable." Your usual strength is to relate to people more easily on a one-to-one basis than in groups or social settings. Your responses to the questionnaire describe you as being more of a listener than a talker, socially reserved with a quiet demeanor. You are therefore able to be alone and work independently, as well as withstand undue social pressure from your peer group.

Your optimal work environment will mirror your usual behavior. That is, you need to have a significant amount of time on your own or at most, with a few close friends or co-workers, rather than be put into a situation where you have constant social interaction with a wide variety of people or groups. Time alone or with one or two close friends will free you from the pressure of extended social situations.

During times of stress, you may withdraw or appear unfriendly and aloof. Too much social interaction, especially when it doesn't include people that you are comfortable with, can create pressure for you. At these times, you're apt to get impatient with other people, ignore them or downplay and discount the importance of social dynamics.

You describe yourself as displaying more warmth and sincerity towards others than most people. This is due, in part, to above average insight into your own feelings as well as the feelings of others. Your responses indicate that you are easy to confide in and will take the time to listen and to help when you are able. People respond to your warmth and are willing to trust and confide in you. You come across to others as caring and involved.



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## RELATING TO PEOPLE SOCIALLY

However, your personal needs in this area are more moderate and fall within the average range. You prefer an environment where you will not have to constantly deal with the emotional reactions or personal concerns of others, but one that will still provide you with an outlet for your subjective side. This may include dealing with people on a personal level, such as in a counseling or coaching format, or for a chance to engage in activities that challenge your creativity and imagination. You function effectively in an environment that emphasizes practical, matter-of-fact relationships, but you will not want to be treated in a cold, detached manner.

During times of stress or pressure, you may become sensitive to how you are being treated by others or experience feelings of hopelessness and despair. If this happens, it will be the result of your subjective nature over-reacting. Given your balanced responses in this area, your objective side may also affect your behavior by causing you to become impersonal and demanding. The direction your behavior actually takes under stress or pressure should be explored through reflection and discussion. However, given your self-described behavior, it would not be unexpected if, under constant pressure, you would be inclined to become overly sensitive and allow emotion to affect your judgment.

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## RELATING TO PEOPLE SOCIALLY

### ACTION ITEMS

Think of someone who has a very different style from yours when relating to people socially. Do you enjoy being with that person? Why or why not?

What could you learn from that person?

In your current position when would it be beneficial to be a person who is sociable, comfortable in groups and very emotionally engaged? When would it be comfortable to be a person who is more comfortable working alone and less emotionally engaged, and more task-oriented? Which style would be more difficult for you? And, what measures can you take to help you be more productive when this style is needed?

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## RESPONSE TO STRUCTURE AND CHANGE

Our response to structure and change is determined by our levels of comfort with order and systematic detail. It is also determined by the extent to which we prefer variety in our own schedules or want to introduce change into our environment.

Your level of concern for the ability to impose structure and order on your activities falls within the moderate range. Your usual approach to tasks is fairly organized, detailed and systematic - but not overly so. You can be expected to plan and follow a set of well-defined steps in the execution of any task or project, but stability and predictability will not dominate your approach. As such, you will not find it difficult to shift your position or to depart from the "status quo" and will do so if it is proven that such a change is warranted.

As expected, your optimal work environment will mirror your usual behavior. That is, you have a desire for situations in which you can plan and execute activities according to familiar methods, but will also want enough flexibility so that the environment does not become rule-bound or the work overly detailed. While you will still prefer not to be in a situation that calls for you to "shoot from the hip" or proceed with less planning and organization than you normally require, your responses suggest that you can adjust to a more flexible approach if necessary. You are able to operate comfortably in an environment where there are definite rules and a pre-defined set of systems and procedures, but your needs are such that you would rather be given the "big picture" and then left to work out the details on your own.

During times of stress or pressure, you may neglect important details or leave things until the last minute. However, since your responses in this area are in the moderate range, you may also swing to the other side of the continuum and begin to become more security-minded and risk-averse. Under stress, you might become somewhat over controlling and change resistant.

You describe yourself as having a significantly higher desire for change and variety in your life and daily schedule than most people. As you are much more responsive to your environment than others, you welcome interruption and novelty into your daily activities and like to juggle several tasks at once. A new schedule every day is fine with you since you will find it tedious to operate on a regular, rigid timetable. You are open to starting new things and will be inclined to take on a wide assortment of tasks and duties.

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## RESPONSE TO STRUCTURE AND CHANGE

Your responses in this area indicate that you have a distinct need to have a minimum of change imposed upon you. You prefer a work situation that favors concentration and allows you time to consider new ways before changing methods - along with an opportunity to give input before changes are initiated. According to your responses to the questionnaire, you will need protection from constant interruptions.

During times of stress or pressure, your behavior may become an exaggerated version of the behavior you describe yourself as exhibiting day-to-day. Specifically, you may have difficulty concentrating, and become restless and easily distracted. When this happens, you might become anxious for quick results and easily annoyed by delays. In short, your patience will be reduced drastically. During this time, self-discipline will not come easily and you will tend to start many projects, but have trouble finishing them.

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## RESPONSE TO STRUCTURE AND CHANGE

### ACTION ITEMS

Is your current work situation providing you the appropriate amount of structure - are enough procedures and policies in place for you to be productive; or are there too many? Describe the reasons for your answer.

If you are not happy with the amount of structure (whether it is too much or too little), what can you do to rectify the situation?

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## MAKING DECISIONS

Our decisions are influenced by many elements. But the core of our decision making is determined by just a few essentials. Our natural pace influences decision making because it determines our self-generated time pressure. The degree to which we rely totally on objective logic or bring in our intuitive side also affects our decisions. And finally, the amount of information we need to have before making a decision and the amount of time to process that information is critical.

Your decision-making can be categorized as idea oriented and creative. You will think about the future as well as the present, build on the ideas of others, and generate many alternatives before deciding. Your scores also indicate that you will use your intuition and reflective capabilities to consider new ideas, strategies, theories, and plans. Additionally, your internal reactions will be an important part of your decision criteria. Since your decision-making will generally have a synergistic orientation you will likely put forth "trial balloons" and gage the reactions of others, using that information to help shape your decisions.

You generally make decisions concerning routine matters rather quickly, but on matters of personal and professional importance, you will take a more thoughtful and reflective approach. You are able to see many shades of gray, and are inclined to consider the subtler sides of issues that some may miss. To others, you appear nicely balanced in that you can make thoughtful decisions, grasp relevant issues, weigh competing factors, and then come to a judgment rather quickly.

Although the amount of time you need to make a decision increases as problems become complicated or unusual, you require no more information or time to make a decision than the average person. Additionally, compared to most people, you have a moderate need for an environment that requires rapid decision making. In other words, your need for reflective thought is about average. Under pressure and stress, you may vacillate between procrastinating on decisions, so that you can collect more information and decrease uncertainty, or in situations that are more familiar, you may become frustrated with ambiguity and decide impulsively.

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## MAKING DECISIONS

### ACTION ITEMS

Based on your Coaching Report results, does your decision-making style seem to align itself with what is required in your current position? Discuss a time your decision-making style truly helped you in a situation. Why did it work for you, what were the benefits? Discuss a time your decision-making style was a hindrance for you. Why didn't it work, and what were the consequences? Can you identify someone you could rely on to help when a different style is needed?

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## CREATING YOUR IDEAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

Effective careers are built on a combination of three factors:

1. An intrinsic interest in what you are doing
2. Knowledge and competencies necessary to perform effectively
3. Taking advantage of opportunities that are presented to you

One way that you can create proper alignment within your job/career comes through understanding how similar you are to people that have found work satisfaction in specific job categories.

Your information suggests that the following environmental components are very important to your success and satisfaction within your career. You will align best in environments that are characterized by:

- \* functions that provide direct measurables to work output and performance
- \* predictable and stable work setting that follows consistent approach to work objectives
- \* general procedural standards following carefully defined office systems and procedures
- \* tangible results are obtained and operational procedures are emphasized
- \* direct instruction and management to clearly understand work goals and expectations
- \* urgency and action are stressed in the scope of projects
- \* consideration for people and individual development
- \* functions that include brainstorming and development
- \* emphasis on strategy and the creation of production concepts
- \* opportunities to work as a part of larger team driven initiatives
- \* high levels of energy and enthusiasm are encouraged
- \* various functions that allow for interaction with stakeholders



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## CREATING YOUR IDEAL WORK ENVIRONMENT

### ACTION ITEMS

Consider each point mentioned in the Coaching Report and identify which characteristics are present in your current position. Which ones are not? What can be done to create more of a work environment that would fit your Ideal? If you cannot change your work environment to make it a better fit, what can be done outside your work life that could meet some of these needs on a personal level?

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## WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Your personal profile does not indicate an elevated risk for work/life balance issues. However, to determine whether or not there may be undetected signals, answer the following questions. The more affirmative answers there are, the more likely it is that your work/life balance is, or may become, a problem area.

1. I find myself spending more and more time on work-related projects.
2. I often feel I don't have any time for myself - or for my family and friends.
3. No matter what I do, it seems that often every minute of every day is always scheduled for something.
4. Sometimes I feel as if I've lost sight of who I am and why I choose this job/career.
5. I can't remember the last time I was able to find the time to take a day off to do something fun - something just for me.
6. I feel stressed out most of the time.
7. I can't even remember the last time I used all my allotted vacation and personal days.
8. It sometimes feels as though I never even have a chance to catch my breath before I have to move on to the next project/crisis.
9. I can't remember the last time I read - and finished - a book that I was reading purely for pleasure.
10. I wish I had more time for some outside interests and hobbies, but I simply don't.
11. I often feel exhausted - even early in the week.
12. I can't remember the last time I went to the movies, enjoyed a hobby, or attended some cultural event.
13. I mostly do what I do because so many people (children, partners, parents) depend on me for support.
14. I've missed many of my family's important events because of work-related time pressure and responsibilities.
15. I almost always bring work home with me.

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## WORK/LIFE BALANCE

### ACTION ITEMS

Consider your responses to the questions listed in this section. Do you currently feel that your Work/Life Balance is in danger? Identify two or three areas you can immediately work on to help you better handle the balance. State two action steps you will take to initiate this change.



## POTENTIAL ISSUES

Strong needs and expectations can be a motivator and can direct our behavior. When we deal with those who have similar needs or expectations, we are more likely to operate easily and in harmony. However, when we must interact on a regular basis with those whose worldview and personal needs are quite different from ours, it will take understanding and patience to be effective. At the same time, it is these people that can best bring balance to what we do and help us become well-rounded human beings. Based upon your responses, the issues listed below may present challenges to you because of the specific nature of your needs.

- **Dealing with those who are sensitive to how they are dealt with, who prefer to initiate by suggestion and who respect status as part of the communication process.**

You prefer that others communicate with you in a direct and straightforward manner. You value the ability of others to be brief and concise with their messages. When you interact with those who are sensitive to the communication and who value supportiveness, it may lead to frustration as the message may appear evasive. You will be more effective if you allow a little more time in your dealings with them. This allows them to feel that they can fully explain their thoughts and actions. It will also help if you express appreciation for their efforts when it is due.

- **Dealing with those who are motivated by team effort, social interaction and who value outgoing and extroverted activities.**

Although you prefer to work in an environment that has minimal social demands and that is independent of group constraints, it is helpful for you to remember that your low need in this area may cause you to be perceived as too independent in your thinking and behavior or too solitary in your work approach. When working with others, you may need to make an extra effort to work as part of a team or become part of the group, otherwise your natural detachment can send the wrong message. If others see you as hard to approach or aloof, they may find it difficult to interpret your behavior or know how to respond to you.

- **Dealing with those who are less assertive, who prefer pleasant, agreeable relationships rather than argument and debate.**

Although you prefer an environment where you can openly debate and argue your



## POTENTIAL ISSUES

position, your naturally assertive style may cause others to perceive you as argumentative or as provoking debate just to challenge. You may need to exercise care when your verbal aggressiveness takes over. It will help if you remember to moderate your style to sound more like a friendly discussion than a confrontation. Additionally, giving others an opportunity to speak their mind without interruption and resisting impulsive remarks will go a long way in softening your approach.

- **Dealing with those who welcome change, take a very flexible approach to planning and execution and who thrive on environments with change and spontaneity.**

You are focused, resist distractions and want a minimum of abruptly imposed changes. For maximum effectiveness, remember that those who have the opposite style do not share your preference for consistency and certainty. They work most productively in a rapidly changing environment where variety and the unexpected are commonplace. In response, they are likely to take a spontaneous approach to projects and tasks. When working with people who have this style, you will benefit by remembering that, assuming competence, they can often reach the same goal as you - except by a different approach. Their approach can be valuable in situations where your concentrative style may be less effective.

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## POTENTIAL ISSUES

### ACTION ITEMS

For each of the areas listed, identify how the issue has manifested itself in your past - list at least one specific example for each area.

If you feel you have already taken some corrective measures on these issues because of previous work experience, list the effective measures you have taken.

Identify someone in your environment who seems to have a very different world view from you. Discuss some of the experiences you have had with this person; and, based on the information in this section, identify ways you could have handled the situation better knowing what you now know about yourself and your perspective versus others' perspectives.

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## AREAS TO EXPLORE

Our usual behavior is the behavior we exhibit when we are not in stress and when we do not have to respond to environmental demands that require specific behaviors which differ from our natural style. Our usual style has been learned over time and represents our perception of what it takes to be productive or effective in our interpersonal interactions and in meeting task requirements. In a very real sense, these behaviors represent our behavioral strengths.

While we can be effective when operating from our strengths, it is these same strengths that can be potential weaknesses when we are under pressure or in stress. Given your stress scores, the following areas should be explored to determine whether they have, or could, create problems for you:

- Stress of Interpersonal Relations
- Stress of Dealing with Schedules or Details
- Stress of Making Decisions

### **Stress of Interpersonal Relations**

Based upon your responses in this area, when under stress or pressure you may begin to:

- Become inconsiderate in personal relationships.
- Become blunt or overly direct with people - even over little issues.
- Turn a "cold shoulder" to people who seem to need your approval.
- Devalue the importance of group opinion or group interaction - stay on the fringe or keep to yourself.
- Withdraw from others and ignore the value of keeping them informed, involved and committed to shared tasks.
- Appear unfriendly, ignore casual conversation and avoid or not initiate social interaction.

### **Stress of Dealing with Schedules or Details**

Based upon your responses in this area, when under stress or pressure you may begin to:

- Have difficulty concentrating, become restless and easily distracted.
- Start things but not finish them, have trouble exercising self-discipline.
- Become annoyed by delays or roadblocks.

### **Stress of Making Decisions**

Your responses do not suggest that this is an area of significant concern for you.

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## AREAS TO EXPLORE

### ACTION ITEMS

Consider each of the areas listed in this section and determine how they are affecting you in your life. Rate them from least important (not affecting much in your life currently) to most important (currently a big issue for you). For the areas that are currently affecting your life, identify examples of how these behaviors have been strengths for you and when they have turned negative? Try to determine what was different between the situations that worked for you and the ones that didn't. How could you have behaved differently to make the negative situation more positive?

This exercise should be repeated approximately every six months since different areas may cause trouble at different times. At one point in your life one area may be having a large negative effect, and at others this same area will seemingly be going smoothly.



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## SUMMARY

### ACTION ITEMS

Look over your comments from each section. Create a separate document listing all action items discussed. Determine a reasonable expectation regarding when to re-evaluate yourself on each item. Document the re-evaluation date beside each item.

Make sure you complete the process by re-evaluating yourself at each given date. Remember, this is a life long process and the work you have done here should be repeated on a regular basis.