

A New Assessment Tool Helps CEOs Discover Their Leadership Style

Dan Adams says there are four types of senior leaders—and only one should be steering the ship. These insights can help CEOs figure out their style.

CUYAHOGA FALLS, OH, USA, December 21, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- It can be tough for people to be objective about themselves and their performance. This is especially true for CEOs and other senior leaders, says Dan Adams.

"Leaders don't always hear the truth," says Adams, author of [Business Builders: How to Become an Admired & Trusted Corporate Leader](#) (The AIM Institute, 2023, ISBN: 979-8-854-42618-3, \$19.95). "It's not about people being afraid to tell them the emperor has no clothes, though that can be a factor. It's more that what they've been taught about growing a company isn't accurate—for example, that maximizing shareholder wealth is the be-all and end-all."

After working with thousands of business leaders, Adams has come to realize there are four distinct "types" that describe their main passion: Builders, Decorators, Remodelers, and Realtors. And while one might think all senior leaders are Builders—the type of leader who drives profitable, sustainable growth by delivering differentiated value to customers—this is far from the case.

While every company was (by definition) founded by a Builder, [research conducted](#) by The AIM Institute suggests only one-third to one-half of them are still led by one. At some point, the reins were turned over to a different type of leader.

Adams invites all senior leaders to take a quick assessment at <https://www.areyouabusinessbuilder.com/>.

Meanwhile, here are a few clues about the four leadership types:

Traits of a BUILDER... Builders have a passion for organic growth. They focus on strategic markets and voice-of-customer research and have a strong R&D project portfolio. They think in years, not quarters, since they know that's what it takes for new products to deliver needle-moving revenue and for employee training to deliver serious change. For Builders, nothing matches the satisfaction of understanding what customers want, delivering meaningful innovation, and watching the sales roll in. What's more, Builders are fun and exciting to work for, since they value

people's contributions and give them a chance to stretch themselves and develop their skills.

Traits of a DECORATOR... Decorators are obsessed with their company's "curb appeal" and are devout believers in maximizing shareholder value. For Decorators, life is all about the quarterly financial report. A bad reporting period has them scrambling to freeze spending and/or cut costs. The problem is, these can damage a business's growth capabilities and have a negative effect on sustainable growth, because they're just the "first domino" that slows dozens of new product projects, delays future revenue, leads to poor earnings growth, and ends in more cuts and/or spending freezes (second, third, fourth, and fifth domino).

Traits of a REMODELER... A Remodeler's focus is on improving quality, boosting productivity, eliminating wasteful costs, etc. These are commendable endeavors, but if nothing new is built, the company reaps diminishing returns. Quality improvements are great, but what happens when the Remodeler gets to zero defects? Once they have achieved fantastic productivity—perhaps by reaching full automation with a lights-out factory—what next? Remodeling is good, but Remodeling without Building ends in commoditization. A Remodeler's competitors eventually match their quality or productivity with similar products, and then the price wars begin.

Traits of a REALTOR... A Realtor loves to buy and sell, reaping their rewards during mergers and acquisitions. Realtors are rewarded when the hard work of others' hands is transferred into their hands. While research shows most acquisitions fail, some can be helpful, especially when acquiring a competency that helps their business change its growth trajectory. When an organization has a Builder at the helm, the acquired business can become a Building block in their Building program. The problem is, many Realtors don't know how to grow what they acquire, and their acquisitions become enormous distractions from the Builder's work needed for organic growth.

Adams says that while all types of leaders have a place in Corporate America, where they fulfill that purpose makes a difference. Bluntly said, only Builders should be steering the ship—everyone else should be in supporting roles.

That may sound like terrible news to a leader who discovers that they've been leading like a Decorator. But Adams insists that being a Builder is a mindset, not a fixed destiny.

"You can shift your mindset and start leading like a Builder," he says. "It won't happen overnight, and, no, it won't be easy...but it's doable. I've seen billion-dollar businesses completely reinvent themselves. And as the leader who undertakes this transformation, you'll likely find that your job, and those of the people who work with and for you, becomes a lot more rewarding."

About the Author:

Dan Adams is the founder of The AIM Institute and author of the books *Business Builders* and *New Product Blueprinting*, as well as the blog *Awkward Realities* and video series *B2B Organic*

Growth. He is a chemical engineer with a listing in the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Dan has trained tens of thousands of B2B professionals globally in the front end of innovation and works with senior executives on driving profitable, sustainable growth. For more information, please visit <https://theaiminstitute.com/>.

About the Book:

Business Builders: How to Become an Admired & Trusted Corporate Leader (The AIM Institute, 2023, ISBN: 979-8-854-42618-3, \$19.95) is available at bookstores nationwide and from major online booksellers.

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