Paradox Graph Explained with Sample Detailed Paradoxes for Coaching Mindset (Tough Love) and Equity Mindset

Understanding Your Paradox Report

The purpose of the Paradox Report is to explore your paradoxical abilities related to your job and identify ways to further your success. This introduction uses examples from your own report to explain how to read your Harrison Paradox Report. It explains key principles and theories that will enable you to attain a deeper understanding of your Paradoxical Strengths and ways to further your success.

What are Paradoxical Traits?

A paradox is two ideas that may appear contradictory but are in fact both true. For example, 'Sometimes less is more' seems contradictory but most people have experienced that fewer words can sometimes communicate more effectively.

This report focuses on 12 pairs of paradoxical traits which may appear to be contradictory but are in fact complementary and synergistic. You will have a genuine strength if you are strong on both traits of a paradoxical pair. For example, being both frank and diplomatic is more likely to achieve the goal of getting one's communication across.

Most people mistakenly believe their strong traits are their strengths. However, Harrison Paradox Theory reveals that a strength never results from a single trait. Instead, strengths are a result of a paradoxical pair of strong traits.

For example, someone who is confident in their opinions will usually consider their confidence to be a strength. However, if they are not also curious and receptive to others' views, they will tend to be dogmatic. This is likely to damage relationships and result in poor decisions.

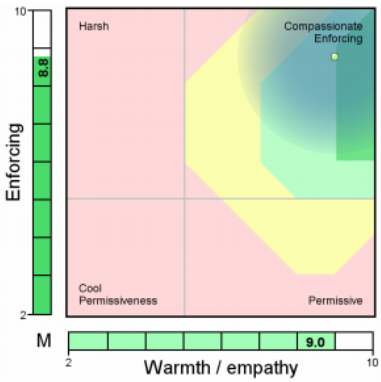
How to Understand the Paradox Report

The colored dot on the graph to the left represents the coordinates of your two paradoxical trait scores. The shaded blue area around the colored dot represents your typical range of behavior.

Paradoxes are interpreted in relation to a role or job. For example, this report is interpreted in relationship to the selected job. The background colors of the graph and the color of the dot help to understand the meaning of your scores. If your colored dot is on the darkest green area, you have the ideal combination of scores for the selected job. The other colors represent the amount of development needed. The meaning of the colors are located on the legend to the left.

The color of the bar for each trait represents the degree of development needed for that trait.

Your balanced paradox example



Apply this strength

Good but development beneficial

Development needed

Development important

An Example of One of Your Balanced Paradoxes

One of your paradoxical strengths is Coaching Mindset. It is defined as: "The tendency to be warm, empathic, and hold others accountable". See your graph to the left.

Enforcing is defined as: "The tendency to insist upon necessary rules being followed". Warmth / empathy is defined as: "The tendency to express positive feelings and affinity toward others".

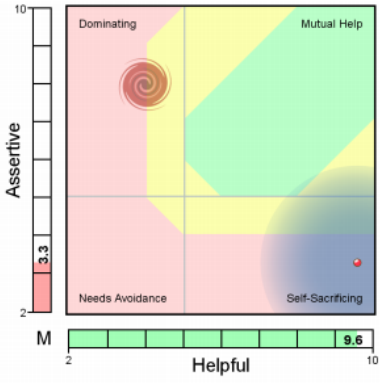
The dot represents the coordinates of your two paradoxical scores.

The shaded blue area around the dot represents your typical range of behavior.

In the example to the left, both of your traits are strong which is called Balanced Versatility. This means you can easily access either or both traits as needed.

For details see the Coaching Mindset paradox page.

Your out of balance paradox example



An Example of One of Your Out-of-Balance Paradoxes

It is extremely rare for anyone to be perfectly balanced in all twelve paradoxes. Normally there are several out-of-balance paradoxes. The diagram to the left is one of yours.

When one trait is significantly stronger than the other, it is considered out-of-balance. A person with this configuration tends to rely on the strong trait even when the other trait would be a more effective or appropriate response. As a result, the assumed strength becomes a derailer.

An example of one of your out-of-balance paradoxes is Equity Mindset. It is defined as: "The tendency to assert one's needs and respond to others needs".

Assertive is defined as: "The tendency to put forward personal wants and needs". Helpful is defined as: "The tendency to respond to others' needs and assist or support others to achieve their goals".

For details see the Equity Mindset paradox page.

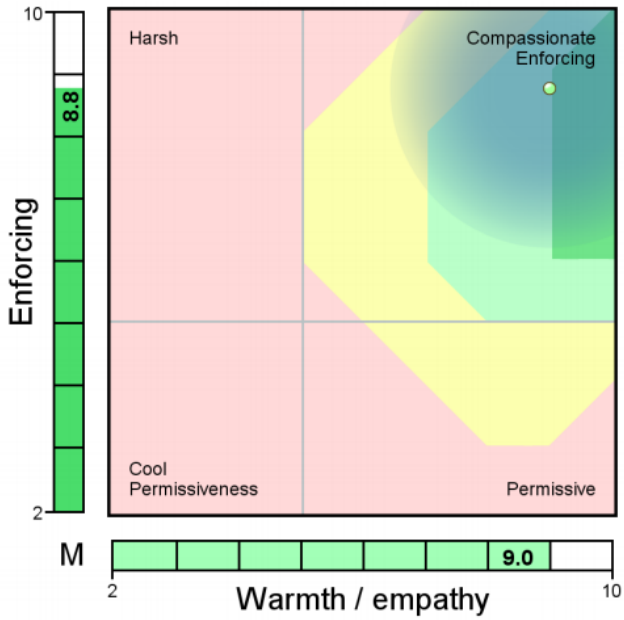
What is a 'Flip Behavior'?

Harrison Paradox Theory states that when we have an out-of-balance paradox and we are under stress, we can 'flip' to the opposite of our normal behavior. For example, if we favor diplomacy over frankness, we may find ourselves in a situation where we feel others have taken advantage. Because we overly relied on diplomacy we react emotionally and flip to become blunt.

The flip potential is represented by the hurricane-like symbol.

Coaching Mindset (Driving)

The tendency to be warm, empathic, and hold others accountable



Paradox Guidance: "Only a person with a kind heart can administer discipline that is beneficial to others."

Paradox Importance to Job: Moderate

Your Mastery Level for this Paradox: 85%

Enforcing: The tendency to insist upon necessary rules being followed

Importance: Hinders if Low

Your Trait Score: Apply this strength

Warmth / empathy: The tendency to express positive feelings and affinity toward others

Importance: Hinders if Low

Your Trait Score: Good but development beneficial

There are four possible combinations for this paradox:

Compassionate Enforcing: The tendency to enforce necessary rules with compassion (High Enforcing and High Warmth / empathy)

Permissive: The tendency to be warm and empathetic without sufficiently enforcing rules or holding others accountable (Low Enforcing and High Warmth / empathy)

Harsh: The tendency to enforce rules without giving sufficient emphasis to building rapport or being empathetic (High Enforcing and Low Warmth / empathy)

Cool Permissiveness: The tendency to lack warmth while at the same time avoiding enforcing necessary rules (Low Enforcing and Low Warmth / empathy)

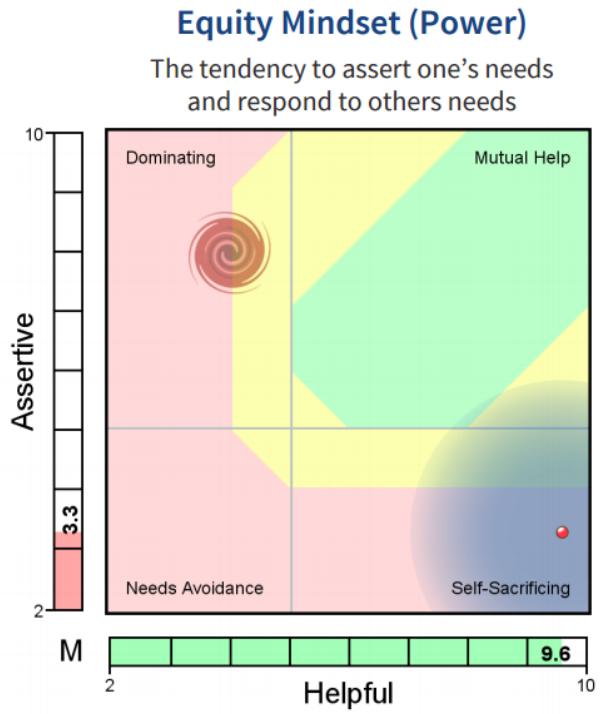
Your tendencies for this paradox are:

You are very willing to enforce necessary rules or hold others accountable. You very often tend to express warmth and empathy.

Your very high level of warmth and empathy combined with your very strong willingness to enforce rules helps you to be effective when giving discipline, coaching others, or holding others accountable. You enforce rules with warmth and compassion. When managing others, you are firm about compliance to rules, but you maintain rapport while doing so. Your preferred behavioral range (large blue area) is entirely in the Compassionate Enforcing quadrant, indicating that you rarely behave permissively or harshly.

In the sample above, the individual has *Balanced Versatility* with the ability to effectively utilize both traits. In the following sample, the individual has an "*Passive Imbalance*" in which their score is in the lower right corner of the graph. With an imbalance, the individual may "*flip*" under stress to a *stress behavior* represented by the red vortex in the upper left of the graph. With a low score in *Assertive of one's own needs*, the individual is normally *Self-Sacrificing* but under stress may flip to *Dominating*. This is a common out-of-balance Paradox for leaders in general and may be even more common in faith-based environments in which leaders seek to support

and help others, often sacrificing their own needs. Certainly, the Biblical mandate to "die to oneself" is essential in the Christian life of servanthood. However, there are times one must care for their own needs or risk burning out. For instance, Jesus often took time to be alone and pray to be refreshed. He took time with his disciples to be away from the crowds. Whether considering family, friends, or one's co-workers/team members, the same wisdom applies! When it comes to working in teams, such as a Board of Elders, *Equity Mindset* is an important Paradox to achieve accountability. This individual must focus on developing *Assertive of own needs* to bring their Paradox into Balance and the ideal green area of *Mutual Help.* In any out-of-balance Paradox, when one develops the weaker trait preference, they improve their Paradox Mastery, improve relationships and performance, and eliminate the potential flip in behavior under stress – a win-win for their own effectiveness and that of the team. Harrison provides *Trait Development Reports* to enable improvement.



Paradox Guidance: "Enduring and positive relationships are a result of meeting mutual needs."

Paradox Importance to Job: Moderate
Your Mastery Level for this Paradox: 30%

Assertive: The tendency to put forward personal wants and needs
Importance: Hinders if Low
Your Trait Score: Development important

Helpful: The tendency to respond to others' needs and assist or support others to achieve their goals
Importance: Hinders if Low
Your Trait Score: Sufficient

There are four possible combinations for this paradox:

Mutual Help: The tendency to pursue solutions that are beneficial to all parties concerned (High Assertive and High Helpful)

Self-Sacrificing: The tendency to respond to others' needs without sufficiently expressing one's own needs (Low Assertive and High Helpful)

Dominating: The tendency to be assertive of one's needs without sufficiently being helpful to others (High Assertive and Low Helpful)

Needs Avoidance: The tendency to lack assertiveness as well as helpfulness (Low Assertive and Low Helpful)

Your tendencies for this paradox are:

You may often hesitate to put forward your own needs. You tend to be extremely helpful and conscious of others' needs.

Your tendency to be extremely helpful can help to establish good relationships with your co-workers. Your supportiveness is likely to be appreciated. However, your tendency to be helpful is much greater than your assertion of your own needs and thus, you may tend to be extremely self-sacrificing. Your preferred behavioral range (large blue area) is mostly in the Self-Sacrificing quadrant indicating that you may often sacrifice your own needs to meet the needs of others. The red circle in the upper left indicates that under stress, your behavior may 'flip' and become dominating if you feel others have taken advantage of your helpfulness.