

Summary of the Reliability and Validity of the Denison Leadership Development Survey

The Denison leadership model was developed from a general model of organizational culture and effectiveness developed by Denison (Denison, 1990; Denison & Neale, 1996); and was geared toward assessing a broad array of leadership skills and competencies that are related to building effective organizations. The Denison Leadership Development Survey (DLDS) uses 96 items to define twelve separate indices of four basic leadership traits: Involvement (i.e., building human capability, ownership and responsibility), consistency (i.e., defining the values and systems that are the basis for strong leadership), adaptability (i.e., translating the demands of the organizational environment into action), and mission (i.e., defining a meaningful long-term direction for the organization). All items are rated on a seven-point agree-disagree scale.

Each of the indexes is highly reliable. The alpha coefficients for these indexes range from .88 to .94 and can be seen in Table 1. Coefficient alpha scores of .70 or higher are considered to be significantly reliable, thus all indexes of the DLDS are highly reliable.

Results also support the validity of the DLDS. In terms of construct validity, confirmatory analyses reveal that the appropriate items fit into each index as suggested by the model and the twelve indexes also fit into the four basic traits as defined by the model. In terms of criterion-related validity or how effective the DLDS measure is in predicting performance, these four leadership traits have been demonstrated to be important predictors of leadership effectiveness, with the four leadership traits predicting between 43 – 47% of differences in leadership effectiveness scores depending on the rater group (i.e. peers, bosses or direct reports). Overall leadership effectiveness was measured by 7 items that measure the extent to which the leader was seen as a role model, as having future potential, as being capable, as developing quality relationships, as a high performer, and as being able to lead organizational change. Interestingly, and consistent with previous research, we find that direct reports, peers and bosses associate different leadership roles with leader effectiveness. For peers, the mission trait is the most important predictor of effectiveness. Consistency is the most important predictor of effectiveness for direct reports. And for bosses, involvement is the most important predictor of leader effectiveness.

Table 1. Alpha Coefficients by Index

Trait	Index	Alpha (<i>a</i>)
Involvement	Empowers People	<i>a</i> = .89
	Builds Team Orientation	<i>a</i> = .93
	Develops Capability	<i>a</i> = .92
Consistency	Defines Core Values	<i>a</i> = .92
	Works to Reach Agreement	<i>a</i> = .93
	Manages Coordination & Integration	<i>a</i> = .92
Adaptability	Creates Change	<i>a</i> = .93
	Emphasizes Customer Focus	<i>a</i> = .93
	Promotes Organizational Learning	<i>a</i> = .88
Mission	Defines Strategic Direction & Intent	<i>a</i> = .93
	Defines Goals & Objectives	<i>a</i> = .93
	Creates Shared Vision	<i>a</i> = .94