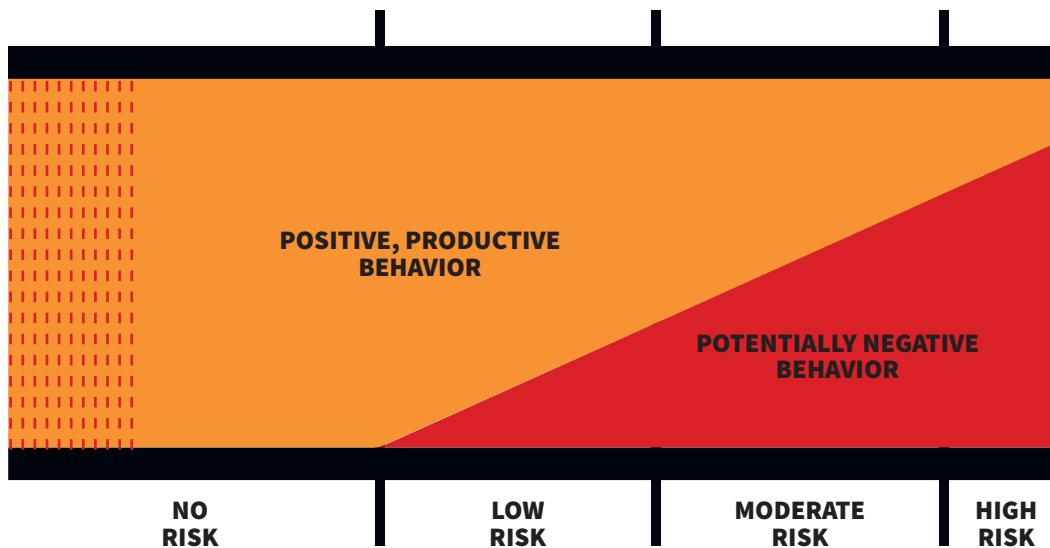


# HDS Low Score Considerations

Low HDS scores and their associated behaviors can be just as problematic as the behaviors associated with high scores. Simply put, a high score on a scale indicates the potential for certain behaviors to be overused or expressed in negative or inappropriate ways. A low score on scale may indicate the underuse or even the absence of associated behaviors.



Specifically, scores in the No Risk or Low Risk range are not necessarily a strength.

The impact of low HDS scores may, in many circumstances, be a greater coaching challenge than those traditionally associated with high HDS scores. Why? In contrast with helping a leader dial back the problem behavior(s) associated with an elevated HDS score, the challenge is helping leaders express new behaviors that are contrary to their natural tendencies, or if expressed, don't seem sincere.

This view leads to a conclusion that for each scale on the HDS in certain contexts, there is an acceptable level of behavior that may be an important strength in a person's performance. Thus, the situational context can elevate or diminish the impact of the behaviors associated with a person's HDS profile (high or low).

Low scores impact how we interpret and coach around the HDS. For the purpose of the following discussion, consider low scores to be anything below 20%, and really low scores to be anything below 10%.

## Derailer: Excitable

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems calm, steady, and stable.*

*Expresses emotions in a mature fashion.*

*Usually seems to be in a good mood.*

*Rarely becomes overly excited.*

*Seems able to maintain relationships.*

### Low Score Strengths

People with low Excitable scores typically seem calm, confident, and steady, which contributes to their ability to manage and coach others – their consistency enhances trust. They seem like congenial colleagues who control their emotions. Their teams appreciate their even-tempered style. Subordinates also appreciate their consistent, predictable, and settling influence in pressure situations and their tendency to remain calm in stressful times.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Not demonstrating adequate excitement or passion
- Conveying no sense of urgency

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Excitable

1. When appropriate, demonstrate energy and enthusiasm to convey a certain level of urgency. Because you are so emotionally steady, it may appear that you don't know or don't care when others are feeling stressed. As a leader, be sure to convey to your staff an appropriate understanding their problems. This will positively impact those you work with, gain the support of others, and motivate them to produce results.
2. Demonstrate more “fire in the belly” intensity. Dealing with challenges, problems, and setbacks with more visible engagement or emotional energy will signify involvement versus imperturbability.
3. Be creative when working with staff on goals. Try to position your staff for additional challenging projects, clients, or roles. This will reinforce the perception that you know they are important to the company success.

## Derailer: Skeptical

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems optimistic, positive, and trusting.*

*Accepts feedback and criticism.*

*Rarely argues with or challenge others.*

*Shows trust in others.*

*Forgives the faults of others.*

### Low Score Strengths

The trusting style of people with low Skeptical scores facilitates their ability to build relationships and enhance their management skills. However, they should be aware that others may try to take advantage of their good-natured disposition. They provide others with feedback in ways that will not upset them and their own openness to feedback facilitates coworker relations. They can be overly optimistic when planning for the future, and they often have an upbeat view of their own career possibilities. Bosses tend to respond well to their positive outlook.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Naïve acceptance of intentions or promises
- Not conducting due diligence when the situation calls for it

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Skeptical

1. It can be important to your career to be more critical. Being alert to others' selfish intentions and learning to appreciate organizational politics can help your career. You don't want to miss subtle or implicit "messages" that might be important in navigating the political layers of the organization.
2. Think about and analyze others' motives and intentions, and challenge their assumptions in constructive, not cynical ways. Maintain a "trust but verify" approach in dealing with commitments.
3. Your realistic appraisal of others' performance and your willingness to help your staff will encourage a positive working environment.

## Derailer: Cautious

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

- Seems confident and willing to speak up.*
- Willing to try new methods and technology.*
- Makes decisions easily.*
- Seems unafraid to make mistakes.*
- Seems willing to state their views.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Cautious scores seem confident and decisive, which is an important leadership skill. They tend to be open to new ideas and willing to accept difficult challenges. They tend to speak up, try new methods and procedures, and are not afraid of failure. Also, they are eager to take on tough assignments to develop their own careers. They seem action oriented, willing to set high goals for themselves and others, and willing to persist in pursuing them, even in the face of adversity.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Taking unnecessary chances
- Failing adequately to analyze the costs of decisions and focusing on the benefits

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Cautious

1. Carefully review plans and proposals for risk; realistically appraise the costs and the benefits when evaluating opportunities. Think about the changes you would like to see in your organization, the challenges your organization currently faces, how technology may change your business, and what your competitors are likely to do. Doing this will help define your vision of the future, which you should share with your work team.
2. You seem quite confident in your judgments and decisions. Be sure to explain your decisions to others rather than simply acting without explaining the intended consequences.
3. Make sure that your decisions are well thought out because others will tend to follow you based on your confidence and your ability to present a well-reasoned analysis.

## Derailer: Reserved

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems outgoing, friendly, kind, and understanding.*

*Meets strangers well.*

*Communicates effectively.*

*Seems concerned about problems.*

*Seems to understand others' feelings.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Reserved scores seem to be good listeners, which enhances their ability to manage subordinates. They seem pleasant and approachable, which helps enroll others in the strategic direction of the business. They also seem responsive to the needs of others and willing to give them feedback and opportunities to develop. They perform well on team assignments, and interact well with a variety of bosses. Their interpersonal style suggests that their careers won't be interrupted by unnecessary quarrels or disputes.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Avoiding conflict and confrontations when they are necessary
- Being overly sensitive to others' feelings

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Reserved

1. Others will see you as accommodating and congenial, but you may need to convey that you are not a pushover.
2. Be sure to address problems promptly; do not wait until a crisis occurs before acting. You don't need to seek out confrontations, but you will need to confront people when it is clear that it must be done. Although you understand the importance of consensus, you may need to take a stand on issues involving key values and principles.
3. Try to strike a balance between work-related and people-related concerns. This will allow you to maximize the performance of your team.

## Derailer: Leisurely

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems helpful, positive, and responsive to criticism.*

*Solicits performance feedback.*

*Supports their organization in private.*

*Willingly takes suggestions.*

*Doesn't mind being interrupted.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Leisurely scores tend to be positive, interested in, and receptive to, coaching and feedback. They tend to work well with a variety of people and are generally seen as good corporate citizens. They honor their commitments and support their bosses. They tend to be cooperative and understand the importance of working together towards common goals and supporting their colleagues.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Seeming to lack convictions with respect to various agendas
- Cooperating and not standing up for themselves

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Leisurely

1. Although your subordinates will appreciate your efforts to meet commitments and deliver timely results, be more willing to disagree openly, but respectfully, if you don't support an agenda or a project plan. Be willing to share your reservations or private opinions.
2. Seem willing to take a stand on issues and challenge the assumptions of others when appropriate. As a leader, don't be afraid of conflict and be willing to give people feedback on their performance.
3. Be willing to challenge your boss on behalf of your staff; this will make you a trustworthy and dependable leader.

## Derailer: Bold

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems modest and unpretentious.*

*Seems unlikely to interrupt, criticize, or challenge others.*

*Avoids self-promotion.*

*Accepts responsibility for failures and mistakes.*

*Lacks a sense of entitlement.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Bold scores seem modest and unpretentious and tend to work well with a variety of bosses. They have realistic views of their competence and importance, which often enhances their credibility. They may be reluctant to give others feedback on their poor performance, but probably would do so when asked. Their career plans may not be very aggressive, and they may be reluctant to nominate themselves for a key role in the future of the business, preferring to wait for others to notice contributions.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Appearing to be content with a follower role
- Seeming to lack confidence in positions and views

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Bold

1. Although you have ideas about how to develop new business, you may not promote them with sufficient vigor. Be a role model for a positive attitude toward challenges and problems.
2. When managing your career, your easy going style may cause you to hold back unnecessarily. When appropriate, you should actively promote a vision or strategy for the organization and not wait for others to ask for your opinion. Your natural modesty and self-restraint may cause you to set your aspiration level too low.
3. Demonstrate social self-confidence by promoting your agenda when there are leadership opportunities within the organization. Demonstrate an action-oriented attitude with your colleagues without braggadocio or self-aggrandizement.

## Derailer: Mischievous

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems careful, responsible, and socially appropriate.*

*Learns from their mistakes.*

*Communicates respectfully.*

*Follows corporate rules.*

*Avoids taking unnecessary risks.*

### Low Score Strengths

People with low Mischievous scores tend to avoid risks and play by the rules, which make them valued corporate citizens. Their bosses appreciate their dependability and trust them to think through the consequences of proposed actions. They are somewhat risk averse and tend to make few mistakes in managing their careers; however, they may not take many chances. When formulating business strategy, they will remember past mistakes and try to minimize risk.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Rigid adherence to rules or procedures
- Unwillingness to take risks and try new tactics or technology

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Mischievous

1. Your natural cautiousness may cause you to miss opportunities to enhance your career. Be willing to take on moderately risky or speculative projects by considering them and formulating a plan of action. Taking some appropriate risks, especially regarding innovation and strategic opportunities, could benefit you and your organization.
2. You may be reluctant to act in situations where you lack experience. Try to be less afraid to fail and push some limits. Reflect on your earlier successes and failures as guides to future decisions and behavior, and then take responsibility for the consequences of your actions.
3. It is important to follow rules and procedures, but sometimes expediency and resourcefulness are important and appropriate. Taking initiative will show that you are an independent and self-reliant person who is willing to make your own decisions and challenge the business assumptions of others without reckless defiance. Others will see this as taking initiative.



## Derailer: Colorful

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems quiet and self-restrained.*

*Avoids calling attention to themselves.*

*Tends to work behind the scene.*

*Doesn't mind letting others take the lead.*

*Seems able to stay on task.*

### Low Score Strengths

Low Colorful individuals tend to be quiet people who rarely engage in self-promotion. Their modesty and willingness to listen make them trusted and credible managers. However, their staff may want them to take a higher profile from time to time. They may also be reluctant to provide feedback and career advice until someone asks for it. Their career may not advance as rapidly as it should due to their reluctance to advertise their successes.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Failing to speak up enough to get noticed
- Taking such a low profile that they have no impact

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Colorful

1. You tend not to engage in self-promotion. You may appear too quiet in meetings and people may underestimate you. As a leader, however, you need to celebrate and promote the accomplishments and achievements of your staff.
2. As a leader, your modesty could lead you to miss opportunities to cheer and encourage your team members. Although you might not require a lot of recognition, your subordinates will appreciate your paying attention to them and their achievements.
3. You may not actively seek development opportunities for yourself or your staff. Without encouragement and support for learning experiences, the productivity of the group will diminish. Think strategically about how you can develop the skills of yourself and your staff.

## Derailer: Imaginative

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems practical, steady, and sensible.*

*Stays on task.*

*Doesn't show off.*

*Makes realistic decisions.*

*Seems sensible, level-headed, and task-oriented.*

### Low Score Strengths

People with low Imaginative scores seem businesslike and predictable. As coaches and mentors, their advice is practical and grounded. They tend to work well with bosses who appreciate their steady work and sensible problem-solving style. They plan their career path in a practical, deliberate manner. However, they may seem to lack vision or long-range planning skills when they requires radical departures from previous strategies.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Missing opportunities to lead pr drive innovation
- Stifling the creativity of others by adhering to routine

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Imaginative

1. Although you are most comfortable solving problems using tried-and-true methods, those methods might not always work, especially when you are dealing with novel issues. Ask yourself if there are better ways to achieve the same results. Make a list of alternative solutions, evaluate them against the decision you normally choose, and then make a decision.
2. Ask your group to identify alternative solutions to problems and then review these ideas. That way, you encourage innovation and increase your chances for success. Listen to them to expand your perspective and enhance your ability to think differently; and capitalize on your ability to take their ideas and turn them into workable solutions.
3. You seem task-oriented and may prefer to focus on your immediate assignments. Effective leaders take a broad perspective and question standard procedures. The next time you start a project, ask: “Why am I doing this?”; “How can I do it more effectively?”; “How does this work impact others?” and so forth. Your perspective will change, and you will make better decisions for yourself and your team.

## Derailer: Diligent

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

*Seems undemanding and relaxed about rules.*

*Does not micromanage their staff.*

*Routinely delegates tasks.*

*Tends to be flexible.*

*Prioritizes tasks appropriately.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Diligent scores seem relaxed and undemanding, and their tolerance and willingness to delegate often makes them popular with subordinates. In addition, their willingness to delegate gives their staff opportunities to learn. Bosses like their flexibility and adaptability, but may wish they would pay more attention to the details of the business.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Failing to follow up after delegating to others
- Missing or omitting details critical to success

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Diligent

1. Although you may not need a lot of structure for your work, your subordinates do, and may find working without structure to be a challenge, particularly when they are learning their jobs. Take the time to explain the rules, procedures, and expectations up front. Make sure issues get resolved and the decisions get communicated to those who need to know.
2. As a leader, you prefer to think about outcomes rather than details. However, you should try to understand the details of the work in your area. Doing so will enhance your ability to represent your team to others. Although you may not like details, paying attention to them and to deadlines can improve the quality of outcomes.
3. Talk to people and make sure you are on the same page concerning what rules need to be followed. Ignoring rules that superiors consider important can have serious consequences. Your indifference to rules may annoy some people. Moreover, some members of your group may follow your example. Be careful about the kind of role model you become.

## Derailer: Dutiful

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**NO RISK**  
0%-39%

- Seems independent and self-reliant.*
- Seems willing to act without prior approval.*
- Seems willing to challenge their boss.*
- Trusts their direct reports.*
- Sticks up for their subordinates.*

### Low Score Strengths

Persons with low Dutiful scores are independent and self-reliant, like to make their own decisions, and are willing to challenge the business assumptions of others. They tend to work best with bosses who appreciate the way they take initiative and challenge assumptions. Although they are willing to stick up for their staff, they may not always be perceived as being team players. In planning business strategy, they are often willing to take unpopular positions.

### Potential Watch-Outs

- Inappropriately challenging those in authority
- Acting independently to the point of diminishing trust

### Behavioral Suggestions for the Low Dutiful

1. Although you may be very comfortable advocating on behalf of your staff, as a leader, it will be important that you present yourself as a cooperative and congenial person who can work well as part of a team. Show that you are good at resolving disputes and soothing ruffled feelings, and you are a loyal supporter of good people and admirable causes.
2. Seek advice and others' buy-in when making decisions or moving on a course of action. If other people think that you follow your own agenda and don't consider how your decisions impact them, they may be reluctant to make commitments to you. Thus, you need to be careful to follow through on all your good faith commitments and consult others for their input and approval if appropriate.
3. Maintain a responsive and accessible interpersonal style; attend to social cues and understand the social impact of different responses so as to build rapport with peers, subordinates, and others.