



Understanding Leadership Responses to Frustration

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Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)

Outline what led you to this particular inquiry. Include the following:

- Noticed that I was getting frustrated or stressed out with some situations within my new leadership role.
- The importance of self-awareness in professional and personal growth.
- How frustration and distress impact decision-making and interactions.

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to . . .

- Figuring out the triggers and how I respond to those triggers.
- Using this data to help have better reactions or be more proactive to triggers.

My Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose, we wondered . . .

I wonder what my behavior and response is when I am frustrated or distressed?

My Actions (Slide 5)

I did the following in my actions related to my wondering...

- Observing who or what is happening when I feel distressed.
- Looking for patterns in my frustration responses.
- Used a 1-5 scale checkmark to rate my emotional responses.
- Tracked how I responded to the outcome of the frustration.
- I explored whether distress comes from my Thinker base or Harmonizer phase.

Data Collection (Slide 6)

I collected data using a simple Google sheets form...

- Daily reflection notes.
- Self-check on a 1-5 scale after moments of frustration.
- Identifying triggers and analyzing whether they align with my base or phase.

My Data (Slide 7)

The results of my data collection revealed the following:

- Average stress level: 2.5 out of 5
- Number of times I hit a level 5: 0 (which is encouraging)

- Base/Phase alignment in stressful moments: 4 recorded instances
- Percentage of high-stress incidents linked to delays: 100%

This confirmed what I suspected in that the frustration wasn't usually about the task itself, but rather the delay in action, the lack of communication, or feeling stuck due to waiting on others.

My Discoveries (Slide 8)

Through this reflection and data collection, I identified key patterns in how frustration and distress impact my work and decision-making.

- Higher stress levels (3-4) were often linked to external delays—when progress depended on others responding, following through, or engaging in discussions.
- Lack of communication or responsiveness triggered frustration—especially when emails or requests were unanswered, delaying my ability to move forward.
- My Thinker tendencies led me to control or over-explain in response to frustration, while my Harmonizer side made me hesitant to push too hard.
- Outcomes often resulted in delays, repeated follow-ups, or unresolved issues, reinforcing the need for clearer communication strategies.
- Key Takeaway: My stress is often external (due to delays or lack of communication), not just internal.
- Addressing communication breakdowns and expectations will reduce frustration and improve workflow.

Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 9)

Reflecting on this cycle of action research, I now recognize that frustration often signals a deeper need for clarity and control, which can be addressed through better communication habits and proactive planning.

Here's where I'm heading next:

- Adjust communication methods for individuals who require different approaches. Whether that means follow-up emails, short check-ins, or visual summaries, I want to meet people where they are.
- Clarify expectations and deadlines more explicitly. No more assumptions—clear next steps will help avoid ambiguity and keep momentum going.
- Streamline follow-ups to reduce repeated requests and emotional energy drain. This includes using automated reminders or structured forms to ensure accountability.
- Manage stress proactively through intentional breaks and ongoing reflection. I plan to continue tracking my emotional responses to adapt in real time.

Bibliography (Slide 10)

- McGraw-Hill Education. Goleman, D. (1998). Working with Emotional Intelligence. Bantam Books.
- Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2012). Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High.

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Background Leading to this Inquiry

1

Noticed that I
was getting
frustrated or
stressed out
with some
situations
within my new
role.

2

The importance
of
self-awareness
in professional
and personal
growth.

3

How frustration
and distress
impact
decision-making
and interactions.



Purpose of This Inquiry

- Figuring out the triggers and how I respond to those triggers.
- Using this data to help have better reactions or be more proactive to triggers.



My Wondering

I wonder what my
behavior and response is
when I am frustrated or
distressed?



My Actions



- Observing who or what is happening when I feel distressed.
- Looking for patterns in my frustration responses.
- Using a 1-5 scale checkmark to rate my emotional response.



- Tracking how I responded and the outcome.
- Exploring whether distress comes from my Harmonizer or Thinker tendencies.

Data Collection



How I Collected Data:

- Daily reflection notes.
- Self-check on a 1-5 scale after moments of frustration.
- Identifying triggers and analyzing whether they align with phase and base.



My Data

2.5

Average Stress Level
During Data
Collection

0

Number of times I
hit a level of 5

4

Instances in which I
had Base/Phase
Alignment

100%


Correlation of high
stress related to some
delay in my work





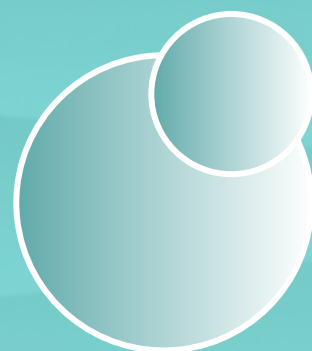
My Discoveries

Through this reflection and data collection, I identified key patterns in how frustration and distress impact my work and decision-making.

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- **Higher stress levels (3-4) were often linked to external delays**—when progress depended on others responding, following through, or engaging in discussions.
 - **Lack of communication or responsiveness triggered frustration**—especially when emails or requests were unanswered, delaying my ability to move forward.
 - **My Thinker tendencies led me to control or over-explain in response to frustration**, while my Harmonizer side made me hesitant to push too hard.
 - **Outcomes often resulted in delays, repeated follow-ups, or unresolved issues**, reinforcing the need for clearer communication strategies.

Key Takeaway: My stress is often **external (due to delays or lack of communication)**, not just internal.

Addressing communication breakdowns and expectations will reduce frustration and improve workflow.



Where am I Heading Next

Clarify Deadlines and Expectations Clearly

- Make deadlines explicit in emails and requests
- Clearly define next steps in conversations to avoid assumptions about follow-through.

Manage Stress Proactively with Intentional Breaks & Reflection

- Build in short, intentional breaks when frustration starts to rise.
- Continue tracking stress levels and patterns to adjust responses proactively.

Adjust Communication Methods for Key Individuals

- Identify individuals who need different communication styles.
- Written summaries, short meetings, or scheduled check-ins to ensure clarity.

Streamline Follow-Ups to Avoid Repeated Requests

- Use structured forms or automated reminders for responses rather than multiple emails.
- Set up progress check-ins to keep tasks moving forward without unnecessary delays.



Bibliography

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2012). *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High*. McGraw-Hill Education.

Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books.