Factor Rating Interpretation Guide
Transformational Leadership

What is Transformational Leadership?

Transformational Leadership measures the perception that leaders encourage, inspire, and motivate others to meet new challenges and accomplish tasks beyond what they felt was possible. Characteristics of a transformational leader include idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.[2,4]

The DEOCS asks participants to rate their unit commander or organization leader and senior enlisted leader on *Transformational Leadership*. The following items are used to assess *Transformational Leadership* using a five-point response scale from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. Participants are asked to think about the past three months when responding, or to think about their time with their current unit/organization if they joined less than three months ago.

- My unit's commander communicates a clear and motivating vision of the future.
- My unit's commander supports and encourages the professional development of people in my unit.
- My unit's commander encourages people in my unit to think about problems in new ways.
- My unit's senior NCO/SEL communicates a clear and motivating vision of the future.
- My unit's senior NCO/SEL supports and encourages the professional development of people in my unit.
- My unit's senior NCO/SEL encourages people in my unit to think about problems in new ways.

Note: Survey questions may differ depending on whether the organization is a military unit, Military Service Academy, or civilian organization. Please see the sample survey for each population on the Assessment to Solutions web site (https://www.defenseculture.mil/Assessment-to-Solutions/A2S-Home/) for exact wording.
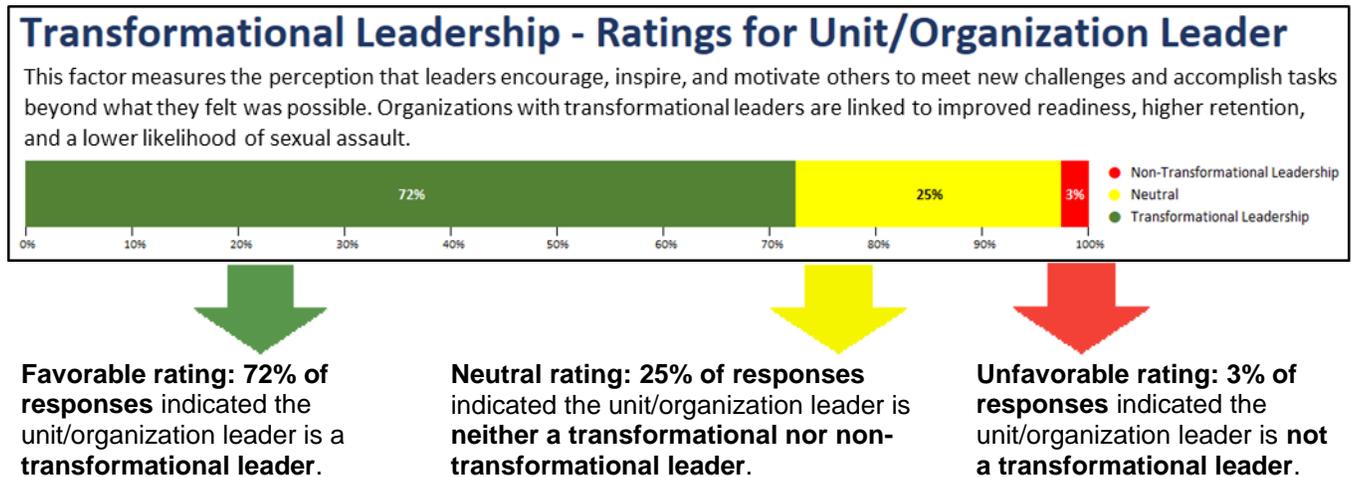
Why is it important?

Extensive research has shown that *Transformational Leadership* is linked to positive outcomes such as increased readiness at the individual and unit level[1,2] as well as reduced turnover intentions.[3] A study of full-time professional US firefighters found that safety-specific *Transformational Leadership* was positively associated with safety climate perceptions and safety compliance behaviors.[4] Similarly, transformational leadership used by surgeons in the operating room contributed to improved team behavior and suggested that *Transformational Leadership* development "has the potential to improve the efficiency and safety of operative care", thus positively impacting performance.[5] A study of 72 light infantry rifle platoon leaders found *Transformational Leadership* ratings of platoon leaders and sergeants to be positively predictive of unit performance, particularly those operating in challenging and uncertain conditions.[6] Additionally, a study of nursing professionals found that *Transformational Leadership* increased job satisfaction, staff well-being, decreased burnout and overall stress, thus improving staff retention.[7]

For more information on how to review your DEOCS results with these key outcomes in mind, please see the "Strategic Target Outcome Guide" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.
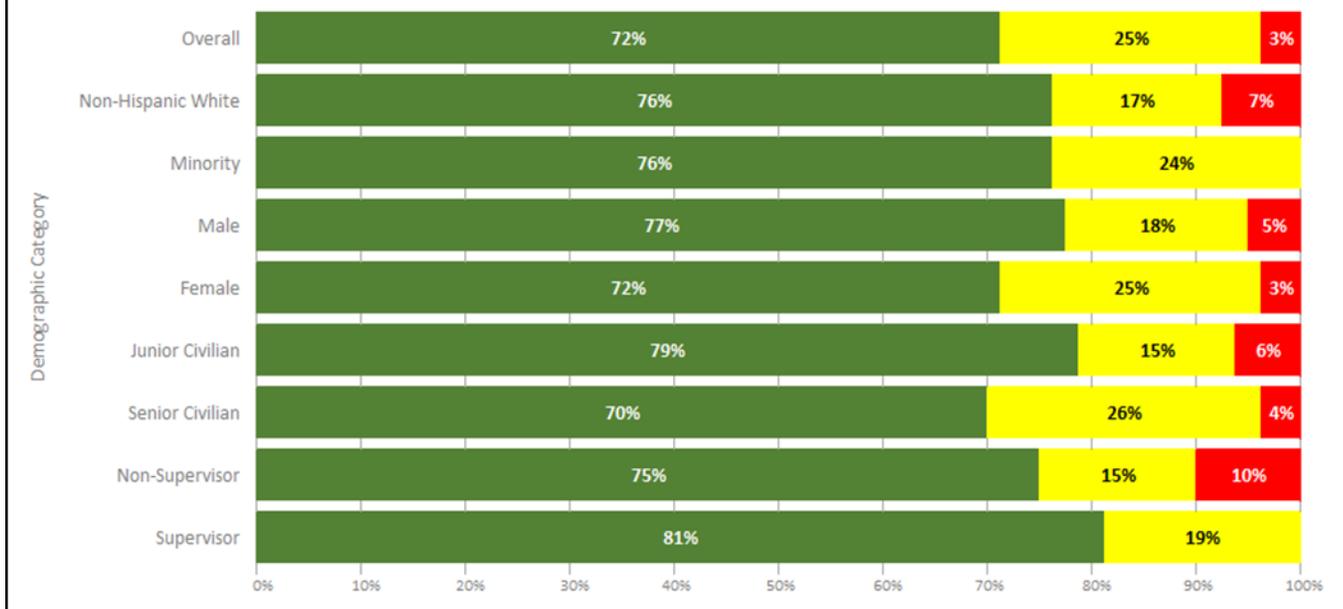
How do I read my factor ratings?

The DEOCS dashboard displays results for *Transformational Leadership* in a stacked bar graph showing ratings for **Non-Transformational Leadership**, **Neutral**, and **Transformational Leadership**. If your unit/organization has a senior enlisted leader/senior NCO, you may also see an additional stacked bar graph with ratings for this individual. Because *Transformational Leadership* is a factor that is measured by multiple questions, you should interpret the results as "X% of responses" (not participants). An example is shown below:

Transformational Leadership - Ratings for Unit/Organization Leader

This factor measures the perception that leaders encourage, inspire, and motivate others to meet new challenges and accomplish tasks beyond what they felt was possible. Organizations with transformational leaders are linked to improved readiness, higher retention, and a lower likelihood of sexual assault.

72%	25%	3%

- Non-Transformational Leadership
- Neutral
- Transformational Leadership

Favorable rating: 72% of responses indicated the unit/organization leader is a **transformational leader**.

Neutral rating: 25% of responses indicated the unit/organization leader is **neither a transformational nor non-transformational leader**.

Unfavorable rating: 3% of responses indicated the unit/organization leader is **not a transformational leader**.

For the graph showing results by demographic categories, the percentages represent the percentage of responses from each demographic category that were favorable, neutral, or unfavorable.

Transformational Leadership - Ratings for Unit Leader by Demographic Category

This graph displays Transformational Leadership ratings by demographic category. No data are displayed if fewer than five people from a demographic category responed to this set of questions.

Demographic Category	Favorable (green)	Neutral (yellow)	Unfavorable (red)
Overall	72%	25%	3%
Non-Hispanic White	76%	17%	7%
Minority	76%	24%	
Male	77%	18%	5%
Female	72%	25%	3%
Junior Civilian	79%	15%	6%
Senior Civilian	70%	26%	4%
Non-Supervisor	75%	15%	10%
Supervisor	81%	19%	

The first bar will always show the overall results and will be the same percentages that are shown in the stacked bar graph. The next bars will represent various demographic categories for your organization. These results can help determine whether some groups of people in your organization have particularly high or low perceptions of climate factors. In addition, you may have different categories than in the example above. If your organization did not have any participants from a particular demographic category or had fewer than five participants from a particular category, you would not see those categories in your graph. For more information on how the demographic groups are created, please see the "Data Overview" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

In this example, the favorable ratings (marked in green) can be interpreted as:
- 76% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader, and 76% of responses from minority participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader;
- 77% of responses from male participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader, while 72% of responses from female participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader;
- 79% of responses from junior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader, while 70% of responses from senior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader;
- 75% of responses from non-supervisor participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader, while 81% of responses from supervisory participants indicated the unit leader is a transformational leader.

The neutral ratings (marked in yellow) can be interpreted as:
- 17% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational, and 24% of responses from minority

participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational;

- 18% of responses from male participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational, while 25% of responses from female participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational;
- 15% of responses from junior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational, while 26% of responses from senior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational;
- 15% of responses from non-supervisor participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational, while 19% of responses from supervisory participants indicated the unit leader is neither transformational nor non-transformational.

The unfavorable ratings (marked in red) can be interpreted as:
- 7% of responses from non-Hispanic White participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader, and 0% of responses from minority participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader;
- 5% of responses from male participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader, while 3% of responses from female participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader;
- 6% of responses from junior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader, while 4% of responses from senior civilian participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader;
- 10% of responses from non-supervisor participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader, while 0% of responses from supervisory participants indicated the unit leader is not a transformational leader.

You may also see trends over time for your *Transformational Leadership* favorable ratings if there are previous surveys with the same unit identification code (UIC) and the same commander/leader.

When applicable, trends over time are available in the dashboard by clicking on this icon: . They also appear in the PDF reports as a table. Even if your report includes trends over time, the results may not be comparable in certain circumstances. First, the questions used to measure this factor changed from the DEOCS 5.0 to the current version, DEOCS 5.1. It was measured using four questions on DEOCS 5.0 and is now measured by only three questions. There were also slight wording changes between versions. Use caution when comparing trends from DEOCS 5.0 to 5.1 for this factor in particular. Second, it is important to understand differences in roster size and roster composition at different time points as these items may also impact comparability of trend results. Take a close look at the number of participants registered, surveys returned, and the response rate for any surveys for which trends are available to report; use caution when comparing trends over time if there are big differences in these numbers between surveys. Other things, such as deployments or changes in policy, may also make trends less comparable. For more information on factor rating trends, please see the "Data Overview" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

Finally, you may see an alert for your *Transformational Leadership* ratings for the unit/organization leader and/or the senior enlisted leader. This means that your favorable rating for *Transformational Leadership* for the specified leader type is **very low** compared to the other favorable ratings for this factor from all other units/organizations that completed a

DEOCS. When applicable, this alert icon appears in the dashboard inside the "Protective Factors – Favorable Ratings" heading; click on the icon to see if *Transformational Leadership* for a specified leader type is listed in the table. The alert icon may also appear in the *Transformational Leadership* sections of the PDF reports. To identify whether your *Transformational Leadership* ratings receive an alert, cut-off scores were created by rank-ordering all favorable ratings for this factor. Separate cut-off scores were used for the unit/organization leader and the senior enlisted leader. If your favorable rating for *Transformational Leadership* for the unit/organization leader and/or the senior enlisted leader is below the cut-off score, this icon will appear in your report. There are unique cut-off scores for each factor. Because of this, you may notice that some of the factors for which you have an alert have very different ratings. For more information on how these alerts are created, please see the "Data Overview" in the Quick Links menu of the DEOCS dashboard.

How are my unit's/organization's ratings created?

Transformational Leadership ratings for the Unit/Organization Leader and the Senior NCO/Senior Enlisted Leader are created by combining responses to three questions from a five-point *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree* scale, as shown in the example below.

Transformational Leadership Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
My unit's commander communicates a clear and motivating vision of the future.	3% (2)	1% (1)	26% (21)	42% (34)	28% (23)	100% (81)
My unit's commander supports and encourages the professional development of people in my unit.	1% (1)	1% (1)	16% (13)	40% (32)	42% (34)	100% (81)
My unit's commander encourages people in my unit to think about problems in new ways.	2% (2)	1% (1)	31% (27)	33% (28)	33% (28)	100% (86)
	Non-Transformational Leadership		Neutral	Transformational Leadership		Total responses 248
	(2+1+1+1+2+1) / 248 = **3%**		(21+13+ 27) / 248 = **25%**	(34+23+32+34+28+28) / 248 = **72%**		

The table above displays the percentage of responses (and number of responses in parentheses) for each question across the five response options (*Strongly Disagree*, *Disagree*, *Neither Agree nor Disagree*, *Agree*, and *Strongly Agree*). For the first question, two participants selected *Strongly Disagree*; this represents 3% of participants that responded to this question (2 / 81 = .025 or 3%).

Note that percentages are calculated out of the total number of participants responding to that question and not the total number of participants taking the survey. Participants can skip questions, so you may notice that total responses to questions vary. In the above example, 81 people responded to the first question so all percentages in this row use 81 as the denominator. 86 people responded to the third question, so all percentages in this row use 86 as the denominator. In addition, factor ratings may not always add to 100% due to rounding.

- The **unfavorable** rating, named **Non-Transformational Leadership**, is a combination of all responses of *Strongly Disagree* and *Disagree* from **all three** questions in the *Transformational Leadership* scale.
    - For this example, two people strongly disagreed with the first question, while one disagreed. In addition, one person strongly disagreed with the second question and one disagreed, two people strongly disagreed with the third question and one disagreed. In total, 8 responses were either *Strongly Disagree* or *Disagree* to these three questions (2+1+1+1+2+1 = 8).
    - To produce an overall score for **Non-Transformational Leadership** representing unfavorable reactions to these three questions, the total number of responses (8) is divided by the total number of people who responded to all of the *Transformational Leadership* questions. 81 people responded to

the first question, 81 the second, and 86 the third for a total of 248 responses to all three questions. **This produces a Non-Transformational Leadership rating of 3% (8 / 248 = .0323).**

- To create the **Neutral** rating, the same process above is followed, except the score is created from only one response option. The *Neither Agree nor Disagree* responses are added from the three questions.
  - For this example, there are 61 *Neither Agree nor Disagree* responses across all three questions (21+13+27 = 61). This total is divided by the total number of responses to all of the questions (61 / 248 = .2460). **This rounds to a Neutral rating of 25%.**

- To create the **favorable** rating, named **Transformational Leadership**, the *Strongly Agree* and *Agree* responses are combined.
  - For this example, that is 34+23+32+34+28+28 = 179 total responses of either *Strongly Agree* or *Agree*. This total is divided by the total number of responses to all of the questions (179 / 248 = .7218). **This rounds to a Transformational Leadership rating of 72%.**

How do I know if my factor ratings are good or bad?

The DEOCS team is working on a data-driven approach that will help you understand what a rating means for an organization's likelihood of positive or negative outcomes. In the meantime, we recommend using the following strategies to help put your *Transformational Leadership* ratings into context and understand whether actions should be taken to address low favorable ratings:

1. If applicable, review the information in the alert icon to see if your *Transformational Leadership* ratings for the unit/organization leader and/or the senior enlisted leader are called out. This icon would appear in the dashboard and in the PDF reports if your unit's/organization's favorable rating for *Transformational Leadership* for the specified leader type is very low compared to all other units/organizations that completed a DEOCS. You should consider taking action to raise this rating.

2. Look at the Item Summary table on the *Transformational Leadership* details page for each leader type to understand which questions may be driving your favorable ratings. This factor is created from three questions, so for each leader type compare the percentage of participants who selected *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* to each question. If there are questions that have a lower percentage of participants who selected *Strongly Agree* or *Agree*, these questions are driving a lower favorable ratings and could help you pinpoint more specific actions to increase your favorable ratings for *Transformational Leadership*.

3. Examine the bar graphs showing the overall favorable rating for *Transformational Leadership* for each leader type and the favorable ratings by various demographic groups. Look at each group's rating in relation to the overall unit/organization rating. If any groups have particularly low favorable ratings for *Transformational Leadership*, this could help you plan actions to increase your favorable rating within areas of your organization.

4. If applicable, review your *Transformational Leadership* favorable rating trends over time for each leader type. You can view these trends by clicking on this icon in the dashboard; they also appear as a table in the PDF reports. Take note if your ratings are

going down over time. You may need to take action to reverse this trend.

Factor Improvement Tools for Transformational Leadership

The following resources may be useful as you make plans or take action to improve your *Transformational Leadership* ratings. Each resource listing contains a description, a link, and the relevant audience. Some resources may be more appropriate for the commander/leader, unit/organization personnel, survey administrators, or the Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW); the relevant audience advises which group may benefit from use of the recommended resource.

- **Transforming Future Air Force Leaders of Tomorrow.** Describes the theory and practice of leadership styles, including transformational.
  https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/ASPJ/journals/Volume-31_Issue-3/F-Arenas.pdf
  Audience: Commander/Leader, unit personnel, survey admin, IPPW

Scientific Research References on Transformational Leadership

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3. Suliman, M., Aljezawi, M., Almansi, S., Musa, A., Alazam, M., & Ta'an, W. F. (2020). Effect of nurse managers' leadership styles on predicted nurse turnover. Nursing management (Harrow, London, England: 1994), 27(5), 20–25.

4. Smith, T. D., Eldridge, F., & DeJoy, D. M. (2016). Safety-specific transformational and passive leadership influences on firefighter safety climate perceptions and safety behavior outcomes. Safety Science, 86, 92–97.

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6. Bass, B.M., Avolio, B.J., Jung, D.I., & Berson, Y. (2003). Predicting unit performance by assessing transformational and transactional leadership. Journal of Applied Psychology, 88(2), 207-218.

7. Weberg D. (2010). Transformational leadership and staff retention: an evidence review with implications for healthcare systems. Nursing administration quarterly, 34(3), 246–258. https://doi.org/10.1097/NAQ.0b013e3181e70298