

New Leader Fears Questionnaire

Here's a synthesis of [20 common fears/issues new leaders present with](#), grounded in the evidence-based leadership research (Burns, Bass, Clutterbuck, Treviño, Harrison, Amundsen, Kouzes & Posner) and similar scholarship. These are grouped into [five thematic categories](#) so you can notice the patterns and their theoretical roots. On a scale of 1-5, please rate where you feel you identify with these constructs/statements, where:

1	2	3	4	5
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER DISAGREE OR AGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

1 Identity & Self-Perception Fears.

(Links to Kouzes & Posner's credibility work, Amundsen's self-leadership, and Imposter Syndrome literature)

	RATING
1. Imposter Syndrome – "I'm not good enough to lead; they'll find out I'm a fraud."	
2. Never Led Before – I have No past leadership role to draw on for confidence.	
3. Never Been Formally Trained in Leadership – I fear of "not knowing the rules."	
4. Fear of Being Judged – I Worry that every decision is scrutinised by peers and superiors.	
5. Fear of Losing Authenticity – Concern that adopting a leadership persona will make me seem fake	

2 Skills & Capability Gaps

(Bass's transformational leadership competencies, Clutterbuck's mentoring research)

	RATING
6. Difficult Conversations – I May Avoid conflict, performance feedback, or tough calls.	
7. Delegation Anxiety – I Fear that handing work over will lead to mistakes or loss of control.	
8. Decision Paralysis – I worry about making the "wrong" decisions and damaging my credibility	
9. Time Management Overload – I may Feel buried in tasks with no space for strategic thinking	
10. Lack of Coaching Skills – I am Unsure how to grow and empower the team members effectively	

1

STRONGLY DISAGREE

2

DISAGREE

3

NEITHER DISAGREE OR
AGREE

4

AGREE

5

STRONGLY AGREE

3 Relationship & Team Dynamics Concerns

(Burns's transformational leadership, Harrison's interpersonal dynamics)

RATING

11. Leading Former Peers – I may struggle with navigating the shift from “colleague” to “boss.”

12. Building Trust – I am unsure how to earn respect quickly in a new role.

13. Managing Resistance – I worry about handling pushback from experienced or senior team members.

14. Fear of Not Being Liked – I may overcompensate to maintain harmony at the expense of accountability

15. Cultural & Diversity Sensitivity – I Fear of making mistakes in inclusive leadership.

4 Ethics & Organisational Politics

(Treviño's ethical leadership, Burns's moral leadership)

RATING

16. Navigating Organisational Politics – I am unsure how to balance integrity with political realities.

17. Ethical Dilemmas – I worry about being pressured to compromise on values

18. Hidden Agendas & Power Plays – I Fear being blindsided by stakeholders.

5 Change & Performance Pressures

(Kouzes & Posner's challenge-the-process, Bass's change leadership)

RATING

19. Fear of Leading Change – I am anxious about mobilising people through uncertainty.

20. Performance Pressure – I Feel the weight of delivering results quickly to “prove” capability.

Notes