Approach 1/5: Let's put this to work...

→ Your goal as a team leader is twofold: to make sure that you interact/communicate effectively on a bilateral basis, and to foster effective communication throughout the team, as a group and amongst members.

→ Creating awareness for diversity and how it can impact team dynamics, allows you to be more sensitive to the potential issues arising from diversity. Based on this you can remove roadblocks in your team and proactively facilitate diversity to turn this aspect into a key strength of your team.

→ This tool includes three steps to "reflect and understand", "consider impact", and "actively address" diversity in your team.

→ You can work through these steps in a sequence. If you are observing specific challenges in your team's interactions, you map those in "consider impact" and then move back to "reflect and understand" to explore possible reasons and then define steps to "actively address".
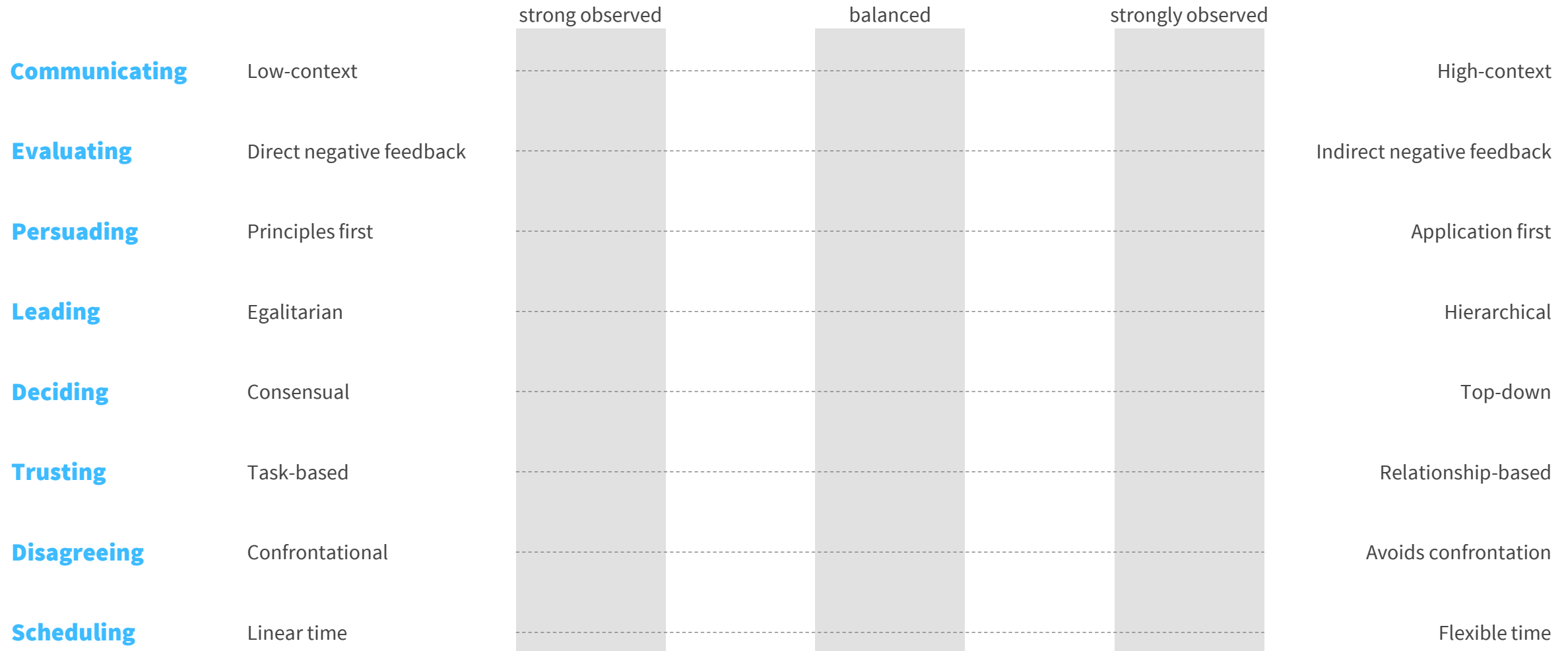
Approach 2/5: Reflect on and understand diversity

Your tasks for reflect and understand	Thinking questions	Your notes
Diverse (cultural) backgrounds What are the main commonalities/differences in your team stemming from culture/heritage?	→ Do the members of your team have "shared" backgrounds in terms of cultures or heritage? → What other common factors, e.g., education can you see that might foster a natural alignment in thinking/action? → If not the whole team, do smaller groups share similar backgrounds in relation to the above? What and how extensive are such "overlaps", respectively the differences?	*Example*
Diverse personalities What are the key commonalities/differences possibly stemming from the personalities of the people on your team?	→ Looking at the personalities in your team, what are shared dispositions/values? → How do team members exhibit similarities/differ in their behavior (how they communicate, argue, make decisions, go the extra mile, build trust, care about formalities)?	*Example*

Approach 3/5: Map your team

Be aware to use this tool as a reflection tool to deconstruct und understand social interactions in a team. This is not to qualify people.

		strong observed	balanced	strongly observed	
Communicating	Low-context				High-context
Evaluating	Direct negative feedback				Indirect negative feedback
Persuading	Principles first				Application first
Leading	Egalitarian				Hierarchical
Deciding	Consensual				Top-down
Trusting	Task-based				Relationship-based
Disagreeing	Confrontational				Avoids confrontation
Scheduling	Linear time				Flexible time

Source: Erin Meyer (2014) The Culture Map - Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business, Public Affairs Books – you can also find further resources on www.erinmeyer.com

Approach 4/5: Consider the impact on team dynamics

Your tasks for **considering the impact**	Thinking questions	Your notes
Possible roadblocks What are the challenges in team interactions stemming from diversity? How can things go wrong?	→ Consider situations, when your team is challenged due to misunderstandings, makes poor decisions, acts ineffectively, members are not engaged. → Can you identify triggers/patterns in the underlying interactions that link to the considerations before? → How do these relate to external circumstances, the topics on the agenda, or the members interacting?	*Example*
Key enablers How does its diversity help your team to achieve better results?	→ Consider situations, when your team communicates very effectively, makes the best decisions, acts most effectively, all team members are highly engaged. → Can you identify triggers/patterns in the underlying interactions that link to the considerations before? → How do these relate to external circumstances, the topics on the agenda, or the members interacting?	*Example*

Approach 5/5: Unlocking the potential of diversity

Your tasks for **actively address**	Strategies to consider	Your notes
React when you hit a roadblock What should you look for in team dynamics in order to react when necessary?	→ Does everybody have "understanding" (let me summarize; if I would paraphrase)? → Are arguments clear to everyone (can you elaborate on your thinking; can you explain how do you come to this conclusion)? → Do all members contribute to the discussion (Can I hear some other opinions; who would take a different perspective; let's go around the table to hear everyone)? → Are Tensions at a professional level (do people get offended; rules in team setting, follow-up in 1:1)?	*Example*
Facilitate proactively What can you do proactively to better facilitate team interaction using the team's diversity?	→ Built relationships in the team to foster trust and feeling of psychological safety. Develop explicit rules to establish a common way to interact/communicate. → Create transparency how you want decisions to be made, how much input you want from team members. → Encourage dissenting opinions, get to constructive feedback and critical views through focused questions (one positive, one aspect to improve). → Intentionally ask for specific perspectives. Ask people to take different views. Ask members to lead meetings.	*Example*