# Bring It On Life! A willingness to learn challenge





Everyone feels nervous when faced with new challenges, whether it's your first day on the job or your first kiss; learning new skills (like learning to drive) or leaving school; or standing up to give a speech or mihi in front of a group.

It might be the first time you have to take a leadership role, like captain of the netball team or leader at a youth group, or perhaps the first time you cook the hangi without your dad around to guide you.

What attitude do you have when you face a challenge or new opportunity? Do you see these as a chance to learn and get ahead in life — or do you shy away, thinking there's a risk you'll fail?

Below are a few questions to help you see if there's a pattern in the way you approach new things. Choose the answer that is closest to what you would do in that situation.

#### **QUESTIONS**

| Q1: Your mates are going to the tree-top high rope challenge course. They'd like you to go with them, but you've never done it before and feel nervous about it. What do you do?   |
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| a) Go and give it a try. What's the harm?  |
| <ul> <li>b) Tell them you'll go even though you haven't done it before, so you'd like<br/>their help and understanding.</li> </ul>   |
| <ul> <li>c) Go with your mates, but make up an excuse about why you can't do the<br/>ropes once you get there.</li> </ul>  |
| d) Make up an excuse and not go so your mates can't see how nervous<br>you are.  |
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| <ul> <li>Q2: You have been asked to coach one of the junior rugby teams. You have played rugby for years but have never done any coaching. What do you do?</li> <li>a) Say yes and dive right in; you will learn as you go!</li> <li>b) Say you will do it if the head coach will mentor you.</li> <li>c) Put it off, saying you'll be ready next year.</li> <li>d) Say 'no thanks' because you don't think you have the skills to do the job.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul> <li>Q3: Your boss has asked you to strip wallpaper before a wall can be plastered and repainted. You have never stripped wallpaper before. What do you do?</li> <li>a) Tell your boss that you don't know how but are keen to learn if he can show you how to do it.</li> <li>b) Say yes, then watch what the others are doing so you can copy them.</li> <li>c) Find a mate at work who knows how to do it and swap jobs with them.</li> <li>d) Make up an excuse why you can't do it so your boss can't criticise you.</li> </ul> |

| Q4: You have been stacking shelves in the painting section at Bunnings over the last few weeks. You think the display is all wrong because customers can never find what they are looking for. You have got some ideas on how this could be improved. What do you do?  |
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| <ul> <li>a) Make a time to speak with the boss. Tell her that you think the shelves could<br/>be arranged better and offer to do it.</li> </ul>  |
| b) Suggest your idea to the person responsible for arranging the displays.   |
| <ul> <li>c) Get a friend to share your idea with the boss because you're worried she'll be<br/>angry or laugh at you.</li> </ul>   |
| On Nothing. You think your idea is probably stupid anyway.   |
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| Q5: You have just started working on the coffee machine at the café after finishing your barista course. You get good feedback on your coffees. The boss and the customers seem to like you. All is sweet. How do you feel about this?   |
| <ul><li>a) Happy that you are making a good start but keen to do even better.</li></ul>  |
| b) Pleased that at least there are no problems and that everyone is happy.   |
| c) Suspicious that everyone is just being nice because you're new.   |
| O d) Wondering how long it can last before you make your first screw up.   |
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| Q8: You have been offered a promotion at work that would mean taking on more responsibility. You would have to attend several training courses (at no cost to you) to develop the skills you'll need for the new role. You would have to fly to Sydney on your own for one of these courses. You: |
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| <ul> <li>a) Say yes because you see that this will be a chance for you to build your<br/>career and earn more money for your whanau.</li> </ul>   |
| b) Say yes and ask for a mentor to help you build the skills you need.  |
| c) Say you are not ready for a promotion but you might be next year.  |
| d) Say no because you're worried you won't do a good job and will look silly.   |

#### RESULTS

Now take a few moments to look back over your answers. Do you notice any patterns in the way you responded to these questions?

### If you answered with mostly As and Bs

Ka pai. You usually show a willingness to learn when you face challenges and opportunities. You know that the only way to develop any skill is to try something new — because growth only happens outside of your comfort zone.

You are not afraid to ask for support when you need it, and you pay attention to what other people who already have these skills are doing so that you can learn from them.

You also accept all feedback because you know skills take time and practice to master and everyone has to start somewhere. You understand making mistakes or not doing things perfectly is part of the process of developing a skill. You know that it's your courage to try new things, and the effort you put in, that will show your boss that you're committed to the job.

## If you answered with mostly C's and D's

You're interested in opportunities to learn and develop; you might just lack the confidence to try something new and be worried that people will judge you if you don't get it right the first time.

All people, even successful people, have a voice inside their head telling them they can't or shouldn't try something new in case they make a fool of themselves. But these people know that we aren't born with skills; we have to develop them.

We all had to learn how to walk, talk, sing, dance, do a haka or play an instrument. This is the same at work. We have to develop the skills we need to do the job, and the trick is to turn down the volume on that voice so it's not so loud.

Next time you hear it, remind yourself that you have learned thousands of skills already, so you do have what it takes to nail it. And when someone chooses you to take on a new challenge or opportunity, remember that they've chosen you for a good reason. Whatever happens, it's the courage and commitment you show every day that shows your boss you're a good employee.

