

# THE BALLAST

THE RIGHT ALTITUDE · GRAVITY SERIES

Your Values Profile

**Jordan Hale**

June 1, 2026

---

## THE READ

Here's what I see, Jordan. You run on excellence — not the kind you put in a performance review, the kind that wakes you up. Your top score isn't close. Excellence at 47 across 8 sections is the spine of everything else. When you succeed, the feeling you enjoy most isn't recognition or relief — it's that you did it better than most people could have (Q31). When you got the hardest feedback of your career, what made it hard wasn't the delivery — it was being told you weren't as good as you thought you were (Q46). That's not vanity. That's identity. The work is how you know who you are.

Wrapped around that spine is a refusal to bend. Courage at 40, Integrity at 28, Conviction at 13 — all sitting in your top 13, all confirming the same thing. You'll raise the ethical concern even when it costs you (Q9). You'll correct the public record even when it undermines you with senior leadership (Q39). You told a respected peer that your insistence on being right is costing you relationships — and your honest reaction was 'that stings, but I've seen what happens when leaders compromise to be liked' (Q37). You'd rather be right than popular, and you know it (Q43). That combination — exceptional output plus unbending principle — is your engine and your blind spot in the same breath.

And here's the line you handed me, the one I keep coming back to: you say you lead by trust, but when it matters most you take the decision back (Q35). You rated your alignment at 8/10, which is honest. But that one sentence is the whole coaching agenda. Under pressure, you narrow focus and go quiet — control what you can, figure it out before anyone sees you struggle (Q44). When a report makes a different call, you feel the flash of 'that's not how I'd do it' before you can override it (Q47). You want to trust others more and do less yourself (Q60) — but the wiring pulls the work back toward you, because the standard is yours and you don't fully believe it'll hold in someone else's hands. That's not a character flaw. It's the cost of being this good. The question is what it's costing the people who'd grow if you let them carry it.

---

## YOUR CORE 5

### 1. Excellence (47)

This is the load-bearing wall. Speed versus quality — you take the time, because cutting quality costs more long-term (Q6). Your best career stretch was defined by output that was undeniable (Q45). When everything's clicking, what's running underneath is standards — you're at your best when the work is undeniable (Q57). Even your creative ideas get held back until they're ready, because half-baked ideas lose credibility (Q56). Excellence for you isn't a target you hit and celebrate — it's a permanent measuring stick you hold against yourself and everyone near you. Colleagues would say you hold people to a standard most wouldn't bother enforcing (Q43). The shadow side lives in Q46 — the hardest feedback was being told you weren't as good as you thought. When your worth is the work, a hit to the work is a hit to you. That's worth watching.

### 2. Courage (40)

Eight sections. This isn't situational bravery — it's a default. You name the problems directly when everyone else is nodding along (Q15). You state your position and defend it in disagreement (Q29). You'll own a bad decision publicly and name what went wrong (Q19). The leader you want to become speaks up more and manages perceptions less (Q60). What's telling is where courage shows its edge — Q36, where you'd go around overruled decision-makers, find allies, and escalate. That's courage past the guardrail. The same trait that makes you the person who says the hard thing in the room is the one that won't let a 'no' from leadership be final when you believe you're right. Useful most

days. Costly on the days you're wrong.

### 3. Achievement (32)

Distinct from Excellence — Excellence is about quality, Achievement is about producing the result and the winning. Two free hours, no one watching, you get ahead on tomorrow's deliverables (Q4). The exhausted team, the major opportunity — you take it, this is what we've been building toward (Q38). Best result ranked first in your big decisions (Q23). What drives your hardest work is the standard first, the win second (Q62) — so it's not raw ambition, it's ambition in service of the standard. But Q16 is the one to sit with: you finished a major project, sacrificed health and relationships to do it, and what you felt first was pride — the quality proves it was worth it. The drive doesn't have a built-in brake. You decide it's worth it after the cost is already paid.

### 4. Integrity (28)

The corner cut bothers you more than getting caught — nobody outside the team would know, and that's exactly the point (Q2). Being seen as someone who just goes along is harder than disagreeing publicly (Q5). The role that contradicts what you believe about leadership — no amount of money changes who you are (Q42). Integrity for you is internal, not reputational — you protect your standards over your reputation (Q26 ranks standards above reputation). What makes this real and not aspirational is Q39: the public correction that costs you credibility with senior leadership, and you do it immediately regardless of cost. You've actually built the muscle of paying for your principles. The watch-out is the same as Courage — when Integrity and certainty fuse, every disagreement becomes a moral one. Not every hill is an ethics hill.

### 5. Independence (26)

You took the autonomy over the visibility without much friction (Q1). Restructure into a team model — you'd keep the autonomy, because you do your best work when you control your own path (Q40). The leader worth following operates independently — you trust them to find their own path (Q61). Under a process you find compliance-driven, you work within it but build workarounds (Q41). This is where the trust line in Q35 lives. You value independence so highly for yourself that delegation feels like handing your own path to someone who hasn't earned your level of control yet. You want to trust others more and do less yourself (Q60) — but Independence is the value quietly arguing against it. The thing you protect most fiercely is your time (Q26). Independence and Excellence team up to make you formidable and to make you a bottleneck.

---

#### SUPPORTING 5

### Accountability (26)

This one modifies the shadow stuff in a good direction. When something goes wrong and you're partly responsible, your honest first instinct — before you decide what to do — is that you need to own it immediately (Q32). You'd propose the improvement and own the original mistake (Q12). You own bad calls publicly (Q19). Here's why it matters: Accountability is the counterweight to the part of you that pulls decisions back and goes quiet under pressure (Q44). You don't hide from your own failures — you hide while you fix them. The growth edge is letting people see the struggle in progress, not just the owned outcome after.

### Conviction (13)

Six sections at a relatively low score tells you Conviction is everywhere but rarely the loudest voice — it's the steady undertone. You don't owe forgiveness to anyone who hasn't earned it (Q59). Forgiveness requires they understand what they did so it won't repeat (Q48). The leaders you admire stand for something and don't bend (Q24). This is where Conviction complicates the Core 5 — it hardens Courage and Integrity from flexible principles into fixed positions. Conviction is what turns 'I disagree' into 'I'm right and I'll go around you' (Q36). It's also what makes you trustworthy. Same trait, two outcomes — depends entirely on whether you're actually right that day.

## Honesty (16)

You tell the truth clearly and directly even to someone you respect whose work isn't good (Q10). You acknowledge the struggling colleague in the room because pretending nothing's happening isn't fair (Q53). Honesty pairs cleanly with Courage and Integrity — but it's the thing that occasionally costs you on the relationship side. The peer in Q37 was telling you your insistence on being right is costing relationships, and Honesty is part of why. You'll deliver the true thing before you've fully calibrated whether the person can hear it yet. Truth on time is a gift. Truth on your timeline is sometimes a hammer.

## Trust (16)

Here's the most interesting tension in your whole profile. Trust scores well — you notice character and whether you can trust a new person almost first (Q27), the top trigger for leaving is not trusting leadership (Q28). You value trust. And yet Q35 — your own words — you lead by trust until it matters, then take the decision back. The data says you care about trust deeply and struggle to extend it under pressure. That's not hypocrisy, it's the gap between what you value and what your Independence and Excellence will allow when the stakes rise. This is the supporting value that points straight at your development edge.

## Legacy (14)

Ten years out, what matters most is building something meaningful that outlasts you (Q49). The high-risk role — the legacy weighs heaviest, would this be the thing I'm remembered for (Q58). You'll fight to protect a ritual because traditions carry culture (Q50). Legacy is the value that could pull you out of the bottleneck — if what you want to be remembered for is something that outlasts you, it has to run without you. Built into your own stated ambition is the argument for letting go. Legacy and Independence are quietly at war: one wants something self-sustaining, the other wants to keep its hands on the wheel.

---

### THE SHADOW VALUES

#### Influence / Authority (17) — POWER

POWER is your fourth-hottest cluster at 69, and it shows up in a specific way. Influence at 17, Authority at 10, Recognition at 7, Legacy at 14 — that's a consistent pull toward shaping how things work and being seen to matter. Q8 is the cleanest tell: what would make you stay in a role is a promotion or significant title change. Q21 — passed over for a high-profile assignment — your mind goes to whether you need to advocate harder for yourself. You'd say it's about the work, and mostly it is. But there's a thread that wants the position, the title, the standing. The Uncomfortable section partly confirms it — Q33, you stayed silent once because it wasn't worth the political cost, which means you do track political cost even though you'd rather not. The question is whether this value is serving your leadership or running it.

#### Pride (11) — IDENTITY

Pride is where Excellence becomes about you rather than the work. Q16 — you sacrificed health and relationships and felt pride first, because the quality proves it was worth it. Q31 — the success feeling you enjoy most is that you did it better than most people could have. That's the comparison built into the satisfaction. Q46 — the hardest feedback was being told you weren't as good as you thought. Pride didn't surface loudly in the early sections because you read it as standards — but the Uncomfortable answers expose it. Standards point at the work. Pride points at you. When a report does it differently, you feel the flash before you can override it (Q47) — that flash is Pride, not Excellence, because the result wasn't wrong, just not yours. The question is whether this value is serving your leadership or running it.

#### The Crusader Pattern (0) — PRINCIPLE

Courage, Integrity, and Conviction are all in your top 13. Pride and Authority both sit in your top 15. That combination has a name, and you need to hear it plainly. The Crusader is the principled leader who can't tell the difference between

a hill worth dying on and a Tuesday. Q36 is the flare — overruled by leadership on an ethical call, you go around the decision-makers, find allies, escalate. Q37 — told your insistence on being right is costing relationships, your reaction is 'I've seen what happens when leaders compromise to be liked.' Notice what that does — it reframes the relationship cost as proof you're right. The feedback can't land because being right is the identity. Here's the hard part: principled leaders almost never see their own rigidity, because it's dressed as integrity every time. You scored your alignment at 8 and named the trust gap yourself (Q35) — so you're more self-aware than most. But self-awareness about the trust thing isn't the same as catching the Crusader in the moment. The question for you isn't whether your principles are real — they are. It's whether every disagreement needs to become one. The question is whether this value is serving your leadership or running it.

---

## THE TENSIONS

You run on Excellence and Courage at the top, and just underneath sit Independence and Accountability. Here's the negotiation that lives inside you. Excellence says the work has to be undeniable — you'd rather take the time than cut the corner (Q6), you refine ideas until they're ready (Q56), and your hardest feedback was being told you weren't as good as you thought (Q46). Independence says you do your best work when you control your own path — you took the autonomy role over visibility (Q1), you'd keep the autonomy over collaboration (Q40), and the leader worth following is the one who operates independently (Q61). Put those two together and you get a man who holds an impossibly high bar and trusts almost no one to clear it but himself. That's the cost. Q44 named it plainly — under pressure you narrow focus and go quiet, figuring it out before anyone sees you struggle. And Q60 named the fix you already know: you said you'd trust others more and do less yourself.

---

## ALIGNMENT

Self-rated: 8/10

You rated yourself an 8. Your answers say it's closer to a 6 — and you already know why, because you wrote it down. Q35: 'I tell people I lead by trust, but when it matters most I take the decision back.' That single sentence is the gap between the leader you describe and the one who operates when the stakes climb. Trust scores well for you (16 points, 5 sections) — you notice it first in new people (Q27), and losing it is your top trigger to leave (Q28). But Independence and Excellence override it the moment something matters. The compression is on Trust and on the people around you. The cost isn't your results — the results are real. The cost is that your team learns the trust is conditional, and conditional trust isn't trust. They start performing for the moment you reach back in. You've built something good enough that the 8 feels true. The half-point you're missing is the part you can't delegate your way out of.

---

## THE MIRROR

In the first sections, your answers painted a portrait of a principled operator. You raise the ethical issue even when it costs you (Q9). You correct the public record immediately regardless of credibility (Q39). You own failure publicly before you do anything else (Q19, Q32). You tell the truth clearly to someone you respect even when the work is bad (Q10). That's a man who has organized his entire identity around being right in the way that matters most — doing the right thing, not the convenient one. Then the Crusader questions arrived. Q36: when you're overruled on ethical grounds, you go around the decision-makers, find allies, and escalate. Q37: when a

respected peer tells you your insistence on being right is costing relationships, your first reaction is that it stings — but you've seen what happens when leaders compromise to be liked. Read that again. Someone you respect handed you a mirror, and your reflex was to explain why the mirror was wrong. That's the pattern. Courage, Integrity, and Conviction all sit in your top thirteen, and Pride and Authority sit right alongside them in your top fifteen. Principled leaders rarely see their own rigidity — the conviction that makes you trustworthy is the same thing that lets you reframe every relationship cost as a price worth paying. Here's the part that's harder. You said you'd rather be right than popular and you hold people to a standard most wouldn't bother enforcing (Q43). You feel a flash of irritation when someone junior is partially right (Q20), and a flash of 'that's not how I'd do it' when a report does something different but not wrong (Q47). Those flashes aren't standards. They're the place where Excellence stops protecting the work and starts protecting your sense of being the one who knows. The peer who told you it's costing relationships wasn't asking you to compromise your principles. They were telling you that you can't always tell the difference anymore between defending what's right and defending yourself.

---

### THE QUESTION

When you take the decision back at the moment it matters most — the thing you named in Q35 — are you protecting the quality of the outcome, or protecting the version of yourself that needs to be the one who got it right?

---

### YOUR 30-DAY PRACTICE

Every week, pick one decision that mattered — one where the stakes were real and your instinct was to take it back or override a report's call. Hand it fully to someone on your team and do not reach back in. Then write down two things: what you were afraid would happen, and what actually happened. Do this for four weeks. You're not collecting wins — you're collecting evidence about the gap between your fear and reality, because right now you're operating on the fear without ever testing it.

### WHAT'S GOING TO RESIST

The narrative will arrive fast and it will sound like wisdom. It'll say: this particular decision is too important to delegate — trust is fine in general but the stakes here are different. That's the exact sentence from Q35, dressed up as judgment. You'll also hear the Q37 voice — 'I've seen what happens when leaders compromise.' Notice that this practice doesn't ask you to lower a standard or compromise a principle. It asks you to let someone else carry one decision while you watch. If that feels like lowering the bar, that's the tell — it means Excellence and being-the-one-who-knows have fused, and you can't yet separate the standard from your need to be its sole keeper.

— Don