

Complete the self-assessment to better understand your management style and strengths.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT 9.1

How would you respond to the following statements? Choose one of the alternative responses or just fill in the blanks. Then discuss your responses with classmates.

1. [From the head of your division] "I've heard some disturbing rumors about the way you treat our customers."
  - a. "That's ridiculous."
  - b. "You can't believe everything you hear."
  - c. "Could you please be more specific?"
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
2. [From a coworker] "I'm terribly afraid that the mistake I made on the Harris contract means that the boss is going to transfer me to the end of the world."
  - a. "That's stupid. He hates Harris."
  - b. "You shouldn't be so worried. He'll get over it."
  - c. "So you're worried that your position may be in jeopardy?"
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
3. [From your subordinates] "We really think that we deserve more money for doing this job."
  - a. "That's silly. You're really not worth what we're paying you now."
  - b. "You know that the company won't give us any more money."
  - c. "Why don't we sit down and think through our salary structure together?"
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
4. [From a member of the executive board] "I want to see all the information we have on the new construction project, and I want it in my office in one hour."
  - a. "That's none of your business."
  - b. "That's impossible. I'll need at least three hours to get it together."
  - c. "It will be very difficult for me to get it together that quickly. But could we set an appointment for later this afternoon?"
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
5. [From a citizen] "Can you tell me who to talk with about a junk car that I'd like to have removed from the vacant lot next door?"
  - a. "That's not my department."
  - b. "Ask the secretary over there."
  - c. "That would be the public works department. Let me show you where they are located."
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Other messages, especially in organizations, are *intentionally* ambiguous. Managers may be *strategically ambiguous* for several reasons.<sup>1</sup> They may face multiple and conflicting goals; they may be in fast changing situations; have difficult and complicated relationships; or be threatened. In cases like these, some degree of ambiguity might be necessary because of the particular circumstances of the communicator.