



Spotlight on Leadership Styles



The leadership style you choose to use (and yes, to a great extent, it is an active choice you can make) has a direct impact on the result you achieve. It is what makes you memorable to others and fulfilled within yourself

Rebecca Hourston (2013)

What Is A Leadership Style?

A leadership style is the way a leader relates to others, how they provide direction, how they implement and monitor plans, and how they motivate their teams and their organisation.

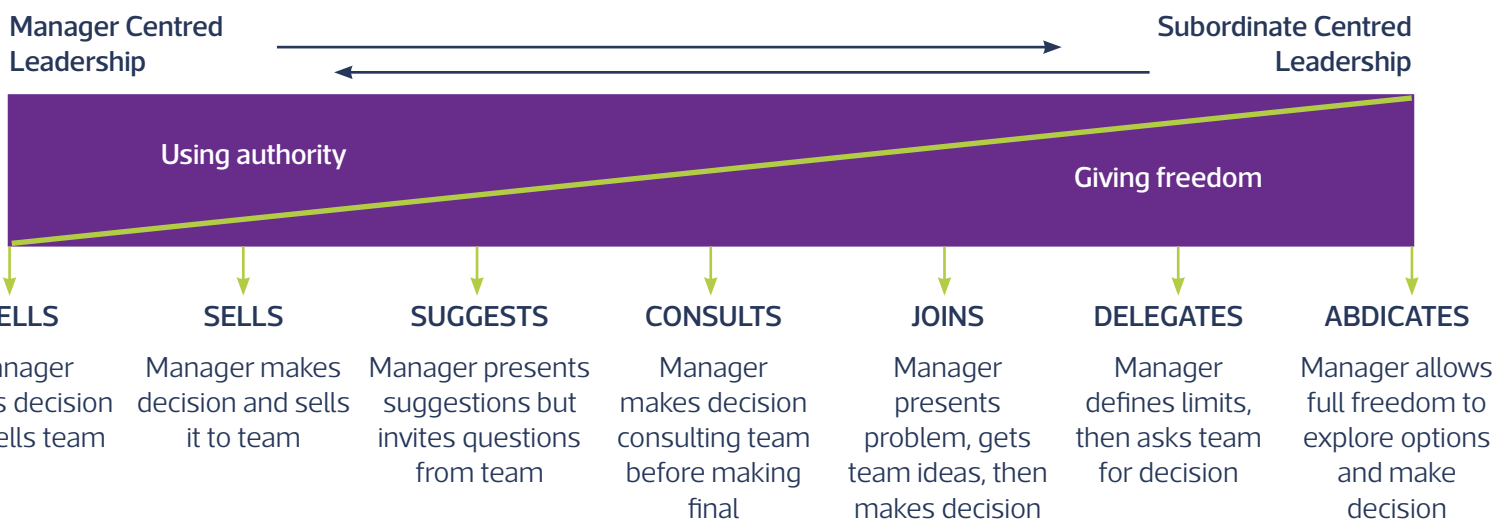
Kurt Lewin carried out the first major study of leadership styles in 1939, and his classification of leadership styles into Autocratic, Participative (or Democratic), and Laissez-Faire was extremely influential and is still used today. Brief descriptions of the styles identified by Lewin are included in the final section 'Leadership Styles'.

Using Different Leadership Styles

Tannenbaum, R and Schmidt, W (1958) saw leadership as a continuum, and recognised that the most appropriate leadership style at any time depended upon a variety of factors, such as the leader's personality and the situation they faced.

Your leadership style should therefore reflect the situation you find yourself in ('Situational Leadership') rather than your personal preference.

An effective leader practises gradually widening the number of styles they can use. Your team will not see this as inconsistent, especially if you explain the reason for your approach and style at the time.



LEADERSHIP STYLES

Style	What it is	Advantages and Disadvantages	Underlying Personality Characteristics Needed
Coercive	"Do as I say, or else!"	De-motivates and alienates staff. Use in an emergency only	Driven to achieve. Rather ruthless
Autocratic/ Commanding	"I'm the boss, and you do as I say"	De-motivates staff if used continually	Driven to achieve. Self- control needed
Pace-setting	"Keep going, push harder! We can do this!"	Can Inspire staff, but exhausts and demotivates them if used all the time.	Conscientious, driven to achieve, takes initiative
Authoritative/ Visionary	"Come with me!"	When a new direction is needed, and staff trust and have confidence in you	Self -confident, empathic, can communicate own vision of future
Persuasive	"This is what I've decided, and this is why it's right"	Good for when staff are not capable or willing to make a decision themselves.	Self-confident, good communication skills
Consultative	"Tell me what you think, then I'll consider it and make a decision"	Good when staff have information you need, but not the capability or willingness to make the decision themselves	Self- confident, good active listening skills
Democratic/ Consensual	"We'll vote on it"	When staff having their say (democratic) or buying-in (consensual) is important for the execution of the decision	Works well in a team, good communication skills
Laissez-faire	"Do what you think"	Good when staff have the capability and willingness to take decisions, but may lead some to question your own necessity if used continually!	Charismatic, self-confident
Affiliative	"People come first"	Good for healing rifts, or reassuring people in stressful situations	Empathic, disciplined, good communication skills
Coaching	"Try this"	Improves staff performance	Patient, empathic

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