

# Leadership style

A **leadership style** is a leader's style of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. There are many different leadership styles proposed by various authors, that can be exhibited by leaders in the political, business or other fields. Studies on leadership style are conducted in the military field, expressing an approach that stresses a holistic view of leadership, including how a leader's physical presence determines how others perceive that leader. The factors of physical presence are military bearing, physical fitness, confidence, and resilience. The leader's intellectual capacity helps to conceptualize solutions and acquire knowledge to do the job. A leader's conceptual abilities apply agility, judgment, innovation, interpersonal tact, and domain knowledge. Domain knowledge encompasses tactical and technical knowledge as well as cultural and geopolitical awareness.<sup>[1]</sup> Daniel Goleman (2000) in his article "Leadership that Gets Results" talks about six styles of leadership.<sup>[2]</sup>

## 1 Authoritarian

The **authoritarian** leadership style keeps main emphasis on the distinction of the authoritarian leader and their followers. These types of leaders make sure to only create a distinct professional relationship. Direct supervision is what they believe to be key in maintaining a successful environment and follower ship. Authoritarian leadership styles often follow the vision of those that are in control, and may not necessarily be compatible with those that are being led. Authoritarian leaders have a focus on efficiency, as other styles, such as a democratic style, may be seen as a hindrance on progress.

Examples of authoritarian leadership: a police officer directing traffic, a teacher ordering a student to do his or her assignment, and a supervisor instructing a subordinate to clean a workstation. All of these positions require a distinct set of characteristics that give the leader the position to get things in order or get a point across. Authoritarian Traits: sets goals individually, engages primarily in one-way and downward communication, controls discussion with followers, and dominate interaction.

Several studies have confirmed a relationship between bullying, on the one hand, and an autocratic leadership and an authoritarian way of settling conflicts or dealing with disagreements, on the other. An authoritarian style of leadership may create a climate of fear, where there is little or no room for dialogue and where complaining

may be considered futile.<sup>[3]</sup>

## 2 Paternalistic

The way a paternalistic leader works is by acting as a father figure by taking care of their subordinates as a parent would. In this style of leadership the leader supplies complete concern for her followers or workers. In return she receives the complete trust and loyalty of his people. Workers under this style of leader are expected to become totally committed to what the leader believes and will not strive off and work independently. The relationship between these co-workers and leader are extremely solid. The workers are expected to stay with a company for a longer period of time because of the loyalty and trust. Not only do they treat each other like family inside the work force, but outside too. These workers are able to go to each other with any problems they have regarding something because they believe in what they say is going to truly help them.<sup>[4]</sup>

One of the downsides to a paternalistic leader is that the leader could start to play favorites in decisions. This leader would include the workers more apt to follow and start to exclude the ones who were less loyal. In today's market paternalism is more difficult to come by according to Padavic and Earnest who wrote "business dimensional and Organizational Counseling." They believe this because there have become more lay-offs and stronger unionization. This affects paternalistic leaders because the co-workers may not believe that their jobs are 100% ensured. When this happens, workers begin to look for bigger and better job opportunities instead of staying at one company for a longer period of time. Because of this, the leader may be thinking that you could be leaving and not fully believe you when you tell them something about a job opportunity. This could put the workers and leader at risk for a bad situation.<sup>[4]</sup>

According to B. M. Bass who wrote *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*, workers who follow paternalistic leadership also have better organization skills. The leader encourages organization because they allow the workers to complete tasks so that they can stay on top of their work. The workers complete tasks this boosts self-confidence and it makes them work harder to reach a goal and exceed the goal to prove to their boss they are working hard. Having this style of leadership can also help implement a reward system. This system will allow their workers to work even better because there is some-

thing for them at the end of the tunnel. While doing this they will also be able to accomplish more work in a set time frame.<sup>[4]</sup>

### 3 Democratic

The democratic leadership style consists of the leader sharing the decision-making abilities with group members by promoting the interests of the group members and by practicing social equality.<sup>[5]</sup>

The boundaries of democratic participation tend to be circumscribed by the organization or the group needs and the instrumental value of people's attributes (skills, attitudes, etc.). The democratic style encompasses the notion that everyone, by virtue of their human status, should play a part in the group's decisions. However, the democratic style of leadership still requires guidance and control by a specific leader. The democratic style demands the leader to make decisions on who should be called upon within the group and who is given the right to participate in, make and vote on decisions.<sup>[6]</sup> Traits of a Good Leader compiled by the Santa Clara University and the Tom Peters Group:

- **Honest** – Display sincerity, integrity, and candor in all your actions. Deceptive behavior will not inspire trust.
- **Competent** – Base your actions on reason and moral principles. Do not make decisions based on childlike emotional desires or feelings.
- **Forward-looking** – Set goals and have a vision of the future. The vision must be owned throughout the organization. Effective leaders envision what they want and how to get it. They habitually pick priorities stemming from their basic values.
- **Inspiring** – Display confidence in all that you do. By showing endurance in mental, physical, and spiritual stamina, you will inspire others to reach for new heights. Take charge when necessary.
- **Intelligent** – Read, study, and seek challenging assignments.
- **Fair-minded** – Show fair treatment to all people. Prejudice is the enemy of justice. Display empathy by being sensitive to the feelings, values, interests, and well-being of others.
- **Broad-minded** – Seek out diversity.
- **Courageous** – Have the perseverance to accomplish a goal, regardless of the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Display a confident calmness when under stress.
- **Straightforward** – Use sound judgment to make a good decisions at the right time.
- **Imaginative** – Make timely and appropriate changes in your thinking, plans, and methods. Show creativity by thinking of new and better goals, ideas, and solutions to problems. Be innovative!

Research has found that this leadership style is one of the most effective and creates higher productivity, better contributions from group members and increased group morale. Democratic leadership can lead to better ideas and more creative solutions to problems because group members are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas. While democratic leadership is one of the most effective leadership styles, it does have some potential downsides. In situations where roles are unclear or time is of the essence, democratic leadership can lead to communication failures and uncompleted projects. Democratic leadership works best in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. It is also important to have plenty of time to allow people to contribute, develop a plan and then vote on the best course of action.<sup>[7]</sup>

### 4 Laissez-faire

The laissez-faire leadership style is where all the rights and power to make decisions is fully given to the worker. This was first described by Lewin, Lippitt, and White in 1939, along with the autocratic leadership and the democratic leadership styles.<sup>[8]</sup>

Laissez-faire leaders allow followers to have complete freedom to make decisions concerning the completion of their work. It allows followers a self-rule, while at the same time offering guidance and support when requested. The laissez-faire leader using guided freedom provides the followers with all materials necessary to accomplish their goals, but does not directly participate in decision making unless the followers request their assistance.<sup>[9]</sup>

This is an effective style to use when:

- Followers are highly skilled, experienced, and educated.
- Followers have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own.
- Outside experts, such as staff specialists or consultants are being used.
- Followers are trustworthy and experienced.

This style should *not* be used when:

- The leader cannot or will not provide regular feedback to their followers.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 5 Transactional

Main article: [Transactional leadership](#)

Transactional leaders focus their leadership on motivating followers through a system of rewards and punishments. There are two factors which form the basis for this system, Contingent Reward and management-by-exception.

- Contingent reward provides rewards, materialistic or psychological, for effort and recognizes good performance.
- Management-by-exception allows the leader to maintain the status quo. The leader intervenes when subordinates do not meet acceptable performance levels and initiates corrective action to improve performance. Management by exception helps reduce the workload of managers being that they are only called-in when workers deviate from course.

This type of leader identifies the needs of their followers and gives rewards to satisfy those needs in exchange of certain level of performance.

Transactional leaders focus on increasing the efficiency of established routines and procedures. They are more concerned with following existing rules than with making changes to the organization.

A transactional leader establishes and standardizes practices that will help the organization reach:

- Maturity
- Goal-setting
- Efficiency of operation
- Increasing productivity.

### 5.1 Effect on work teams

Survey done by Jun Liu, Xiaoyu Liu and Xianju Zeng on the correlation of transactional leadership and how innovations can be affected by team emotions. The research was composed of 90 work teams, with a total of 460 members and 90 team leaders. The study found that there is a relationship between emotions, labor behavior and transactional leadership that affect for the team. Depending on the level of emotions of the team; this can affect the transactional leader in a positive or negative way. Transactional leaders work better in teams where there is a lower level of emotions going into the project. This is because individuals are able to

- Think freely when setting their emotions aside from their work.

- Have all of their focus on the given task.

A transactional leader is:

1. Negatively affected when the emotional level is high.
2. Positively affected when the emotional level is low.

Transactional leadership presents a form of strategic leadership that is important for the organizations development. Transactional leadership is essential for team innovativeness.

## 6 Transformational

A **transformational leader** is a type of person in which the leader is not limited by his or her followers' perception.<sup>[10]</sup> The main objective is to work to *change* or *transform* his or her followers' *needs* and *redirect* their thinking. Leaders that follow the transformation style of leading, challenge and inspire their followers with a sense of purpose and excitement.<sup>[11]</sup> Transformational leaders also create a vision of what they aspire to be, and communicate this idea to others (their followers). Schultz and Schultz identify three characteristics of a transformational leader:

- Charismatic leadership has a broad field of knowledge, has a self-promoting personality, high/great energy level, and willing to take risk and use irregular strategies in order to stimulate their followers to think independently
- Individualized consideration
- Intellectual stimulation

## 7 See also

- Narcissistic leadership
- Super-team

## 8 Notes

- [1] Headquarters, Department of the Army (2006). "Army Leadership. Competent, Confident, and Agile". FM 6-22. Washington, DC, 12 October 2006 p. 18. Publication available at Army Knowledge Online ([www.us.army.mil](http://www.us.army.mil)) and General Dennis J. Reimer Training and Doctrine Digital Library at ([www.train.army.mil](http://www.train.army.mil)).
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- [6] Woods, A.P. (2010). "Democratic leadership: drawing distinctions with distributed leadership". *International Journal of Leadership in Education*. **7** (1): 3–36.
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- [8] Kevin Wren (15 April 2013). *Social Influences*. Routledge. p. 75. ISBN 978-1-134-66357-6.
- [9] "Styles Of Leadership". Essortment. Retrieved March 16, 2012.
- [10] Compare: Schultz, Duane; Schultz, Sydney Ellen (1998). "Chapter 7: Leadership". *Psychology and Work Today* (10 ed.). Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge (published 2015). ISBN 9781317350804. Retrieved 2016-05-22. Transformational leadership[:] A leadership style in which leaders are not constrained by their followers' perceptions but are free to act to change or transform their followers' views.
- [11] Schultz & Schultz, Duane (2010). *Psychology and work today*. New York: Prentice Hall. pp. 201–202. ISBN 0-205-68358-4.

## 9 References

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