Leadership Styles Questionnaire

Introduction

This self-assessment exercise will help you to identify your preferred style(s) of leadership.

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in the questionnaire, which will take you around 20 minutes to complete. Most people can and should use a range of styles. Look to see which style you tend to prefer and draw on most often. Then consider if you are using a wide enough range of styles to suit the different people and situations you will face at work.

As well as completing it yourself, you might like to ask people who know you well to give you feedback; for instance, your manager, former manager, peers or other team members.

Scoring Criteria

In each of the 12 sections of this questionnaire, distribute 10 points across the four statements, giving the most points to statements that best describe your approach and behaviour:

Statements	Scoring Example 1	Scoring Example 2	Scoring Example 3
Statement (a)	1	0	9
Statement (b)	2	2	0
Statement (c)	3	2	1
Statement (d)	4	6	0

Questionnaire Statements

Section	Statement	Score

1.   Decision-Making

(a)   I make decisions and announce them so that people can act on them

(b)   I like to make the decisions and explain them to others so that they know how and why I made them.

(c)   I ask others for their comments before making decisions.

(d)   I set clear parameters within which people are allowed to make their own decisions.

Section	Statement	Score

2.   Sharing Information

(a)   I tell people what they need to know to get on with their job

(b)   I keep people informed and take time to explain background and context.

(c)   I leave room to answer group/team members' questions openly and honestly.

(d)   I make available all information, apart from that which is personally or commercially sensitive.

3.   Delegation

(a)   I provide regular guidance and supervision to other members of a group or team I lead.

(b)   I delegate occasionally, with clear guidance to group/team members.

(c)   I delegate regularly, to individuals having consulted with them.

(d)   I like to give individuals complete freedom to make decisions about their area of work.

4.   Degree of Autonomy

(a)   I closely supervise how people in my group/team go about their work.

(b)   I point out how people should go about their work and explain the thinking behind my suggestions.

(c)   I encourage people to think about how to go about their work and discuss it with me.

(d)   I set objectives, but let people decide for themselves how they will achieve them.

5.   Standards of Work

(a)   I lay down the standards I expect to be achieved.

(b)   I explain why standards have been set as they are.

Section	Statement	Score
(c)	I communicate standards, but allow individuals to have their say.	
(d)	I allow others to identify appropriate standards in their job roles.	

6. Management of Change

(a)	When change is forced on me, I tell people exactly how we are going to respond to it.	
(b)	I take the initiative in response to change and try to explain the reasons for change.	
(c)	In responding to change, I ask team members for their ideas.	
(d)	I expect others to come up with suggestions for handling change in their role or areas of work.	

7. Response to Mistakes and Errors

(a)	When mistakes occur, I find out who is responsible and provide them with advice on how to avoid in the future.	
(b)	My main concern when mistakes occur is that people understand why and how they came about.	
(c)	When mistakes occur, I ask people how they would do things differently if the same situation happened again.	
(d)	I do not mind some mistakes and expect people to use them as genuine learning opportunities.	

8. Attitude to Risk-Taking

(a)	I try to operate in a way which removes all risk.	
(b)	I guide people on what level of risk I am prepared to tolerate and explain this to others.	
(c)	I am prepared to allow others to take reasonable risks, provided we have discussed the implications in advance.	
(d)	I am happy to let individuals decide on an aceptable level of risk in their work or project.	

9. **Approach to Conflict**

(a) I have a low tolerance for conflict and try to actively avoid and prevent it within a group/team.

(b) Where conflict occurs, I intervene to sort it out quickly.

(c) I feel reasonably relaxed about conflict, provided I have the situation under control.

(d) I am comfortable with and even encourage, constructive tension, provided it leads to positive outcomes.

10. **Developing People**

(a) I draw up development opportunities ftor group members that I think they will benefit from.

(b) I identify development opportunities for individual group members and encourage them to take them up.

(c) I discuss development opportunities with people and invite feedback before taking a joint decision on going forward.

(d) It is the responsibility of individual team members to identify development opportunities and put the necessary arrangeinities in place, with my support.

11. **Communication**

(a) I tell group/team members what they need to know through a range of communication channels.

(b) When communicating, I am concerned about passing on information, and explaining what I think it means for the group.

(c) I communicate by sharing information and I also make a point of building in opportunities for feedback.

(d) I believe in genuine, two-way communication and I actively encourage group members to inform me, question uncertainities and challenge my opinions.

12. **Availability**

(a)   I prefer key issues to be raised with me formally or at meetings so that I can oversee any decisions.

(b)   People can arrange to raise anything with me, formally or informally and I'll explain what I thik the response should be.

(c)   Group members know I will make time for them and help them if they are dealing with an issue that is important or urgent.

(d)   I actively encourage people to sort out problems for themselves, without having to consult me.

Summary Sheet

Copy over the scores you have allocated for the 28 statements onto the the grid below and then total each column.

Q.	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
Total				
	Tell	**Sell**	**Consult**	**Empower**

The column with highest total score will likely be your preferred leadership style. A description of each of the four leadership styles is given overleaf.

Interpretation

The four styles assessed by the questionnaire are based broadly on the seminal Tannenbaum and Schmidt Leadership Continuum[1] and are described below:

a)   Tell

Your approach to leadership tends to be directive. You like to be in control and you guide and oversee others' work. Generally, you are less interested in other people's ideas because you believe that, with your experience, you know best. You dislike unexpected change or anything which might interfere with the harmonious running of your domain. You might be well organised and trusted but it is clear to all who is in charge.

b)   Sell

You generally like to be in control of your team and direct the way they go about things. However, you like to explain the reasons why you do things and would prefer the agreement of your team. You are quite risk averse and careful about what you communicate and delegate, however, will answer reasonable questions. You may also be inspiring, with a strong sense of vision that can motivate others to follow your direction.

c)   Consult

Your leadership style is participative and based on asking people's opinions. You are genuinely interested in what they have to say and you use good ideas, but you believe that, ultimately, it is your responsibility to decide what is going to happen. You like to let your team know that they have a degree of autonomy and at the same time, you want to support them with opportunities to contribute and develop.

d)   Empower

You lead by allowing your people as much freedom as they can handle. You lay down clear parameters and expect them to organise themselves and operate without referring everything to you. You are happy to debate most things openly and to tolerate dissent. You delegate decision-making as a matter of course and look for opportunities for their long-term progression.

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[1] R Tannenbaum and W H Schmidt, 'How to Choose a Leadership Pattern', *Harvard Business Review* (March–April 1958).