

# 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 the questionnaire, rate all the statements and score each statement based on the following criteria:

Scoring Criteria	Rating
This statement is <b>least</b> like me	1
This statement is next least like me	2
This statement is next most like me	3
This statement is <b>most</b> like me	4

## Questionnaire Statements

Statement	Score
<b>1. Decision-Making</b>	
(a) I like to make decisions and keep others well informed about them.	
(b) I make the decisions and announce how and why I made them.	
(c) I ask my team for their comments before making decisions.	
(d) I set clear parameters within which my people are allowed to make their own decisions.	

Statement	Score
<b>2. Sharing Information</b>	
(a) I tell people what I think they need to know, on a regular basis.	
(b) I keep people informed and take time to explain background and context.	
(c) I leave room to answer team members' questions openly and honestly.	
(d) I make available all information, apart from that which is personally or commercially sensitive.	
<b>3. Delegation</b>	
(a) As a general rule, I do not delegate.	
(b) I delegate occasionally, but when I do I follow up carefully.	
(c) I delegate regularly, to individuals who have demonstrated that they can handle it.	
(d) I use delegation as a means of developing new skills in my people.	
<b>4. Degree of Autonomy</b>	
(a) I am closely in control of how people in my team go about their work.	
(b) I suggest 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 agree it with me.	
(d) I set objectives, but let people decide themselves how they will achieve them.	
<b>5. Standards of Work</b>	
(a) I lay down the standards I expect to be achieved.	
(b) I explain why standards have been set as they are.	
(c) I communicate standards, but allow individuals to have their say.	

Statement	Score
(d) I help my team to identify appropriate standards for their jobs.	
<b>6. Management of Change</b>	
(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 my people to come up with suggestions for handling change situations.	
<b>7. Response to Mistakes and Errors</b>	
(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, so long as people use them as genuine learning opportunities.	
<b>8. Attitude to Risk-Taking</b>	
(a) I try to operate in a way which removes all possible risk.	
(b) I only take carefully calculated risks.	
(c) I am prepared to take reasonable risks, provided I am sure that the team has agreed a contingency plan.	
(d) I am happy to let the team decide on an acceptable level of risk in any project so long as they commit to realising potential benefits.	

**9. Approach to Conflict**

- (a) I try to prevent conflict in any of my dealings. 

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

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

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- (d) I comfortable with and even encourage, constructive tension, provided it leads to new ideas. 

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**10. Developing People**

- (a) I identify development opportunities for individuals in my team and share these with them. 

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- (b) I identify development opportunities for individuals in my team, highlighting the benefits for them and the team. 

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- (c) I suggest development opportunities but invite feedback before we reach a joint decision. 

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

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**11. Communication**

- (a) I tell my team what they need to know, either verbally or through written communications. 

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

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- (c) Communication is about getting information across accurately, but I also make a point of building in feedback from receivers. 

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

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**12. Availability**

- (a) I prefer issues to be raised with me in writing or at formal meetings.
- (b) My people can arrange to raise anything with me, and I'll explain where I am coming from on that issue.
- (c) My people know I will make time for them, if their issue is important or urgent.
- (d) I try to operate an 'open door' policy at all times.


**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				
<b>Total</b>				
	<b>Tell</b>	<b>Sell</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Empower</b>

The column with highest total score will 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<sup>1</sup> and are described below:

**a) Tell**

Your approach to leadership tends to be autocratic. You like to be in control and you issue instructions and directives. Generally, you are less interested in other people's ideas because you believe that, with your experience, you know best. You dislike change, risks or anything which might interfere with the harmonious running of your patch.

**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, careful about to whom you communicate and delegate, but will answer reasonable questions.

**c) Consult**

Your leadership style is 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 but expect them to reorganise 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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<sup>1</sup> R Tannenbaum and W H Schmidt, 'How to Choose a Leadership Pattern', *Harvard Business Review* (March–April 1958).