

Leadership Styles



The Key to leadership is...a combination of things! While there is no one magical manual to being a good leader, student leadership positions are a great way to learn what works and maybe even make a few small mistakes along the way. Don't be afraid to try out new styles when appropriate. Good management is not necessarily good leadership!

The following is an overview of various leadership styles and when each one may or may not be appropriate. The most seasoned leaders are able to change between the various styles fluidly, but that takes years of practice.

STYLE:	DESCRIPTION	WHEN TO USE	Benefits & Disadvantages
Bureaucratic	Structured and follows procedures as they have already been established. Does not explore new ways of problem solving. Completes all steps as described in manual.	Usually seen in banks, public institutions, hospitals, and government.	-Can increase quality -increase security -decrease corruption -frustrating for innovative and experienced leaders
Charismatic (Transformational)	Infuses energy and excitement into team members. Usually committed for the long run and tries to gain employee buy in	-Seen when there is a lack of purpose or followership -Mergers and business acquisitions	-Employees buy too much into the leader and not their own abilities
Autocratic	Does not ask followers for input. The leader has all the knowledge/skills to make decisions and	-Short on time and only the leader has the information -Well motivated staff	-Can often be confused with bossing people around. Make sure language is still encouraging and

	does not include staff even if it is beneficial		supportive -Your best people usually resent this style
Participative (democratic)	-The leader includes followers in decision making process of how and what you want to do -Leader maintains final decision making authority but elicits guidance from group members	-Use when both leader and follower have information to contribute	-Can be viewed as weakness by some employees -Generally increases quality of decisions
Delegative (free reign)	-Leader allows employees to make decisions	-Followers have the knowledge and skills to analyze the situation, determine what needs done, and how to do it -Use mostly when leader has complete trust and confidence in followers	-Must recognize employees who successfully complete tasks or coach those who were challenged
Servant Leadership	-Describes a leader who may or may not be formally recognized but still facilitates a team's goal accomplishment -The servant leader is more of an instrument than a commanding voice	-Use when follower engagement is higher	-Helps convey the team's values -Tends to be slower -Does not compete well with more aggressive leadership styles

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