

Special Management Series

An Introduction to Leadership Styles

This is a series of Training for your
Management TEAM

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Management
Perspective 303 Series

Management - JWO303



An Introduction to Leadership Styles



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- What are the right leadership styles to use in the contact center?
- Do you recognize your style amongst them?
- Could you be encouraged to take yourself out of your comfort zone and step into an alternative role to experience the results it can offer?

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Autocratic- ‘Don’t do as I do, do as I say’

- *‘I know what needs to be done and how I want it done and there is no room for compromise, so I dictate the state of play. I wouldn’t waste time asking my staff for input or ideas, that’s not why they are employed. I never get too close to my staff – that would never do, it could lead to difficult situations. Keep your distance and let them know who’s boss.’*
- **‘Let’s face it, if we are faced with an urgent situation someone would have to take control and make a decision.’**

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Democratic – ‘Let’s work through this together and then I’ll make a decision’

- *‘I like to encourage the team to contribute ideas and solutions because it helps their development, moving them towards a successful future. Without doubt my team is more motivated and creative as a result of their involvement. After discussions I make the decision based on the information facing me. After all, at the end of the day, the buck stops with me.’*
- *‘No one has the monopoly on ideas and when we have the luxury of time on our side it’s a perfect opportunity to see what my staff are made of. They enjoy it.’*

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Laissez-faire - 'You know what you have to do, so get on with it'

- *'I see no point getting involved with what everyone is doing. They know what is expected of them and can do the job quite easily without my input. They are pretty ungrateful, though. Despite the fact that I let them make their own decisions they seem to lack motivation.'*
- *'At the end of the day, these guys know their jobs better than I do. Allowing them to make their own decisions is a form of development. Sometimes their mistakes can be costly but it's not a problem when the project can withstand the mistakes, it's a great learning curve then.'*

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Action Centered Leadership

- John Adair developed the Action Centered Leadership model during the 1960-70s. This model considers the responsibilities towards an individual would include:
- Knowing each individual's strengths and areas for improvement
- Outline to each group player their individual responsibilities and objectives
- Reward with extra responsibility
- Recognize and praise efforts and successes

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Examples of good leadership

- **So who can we look to today as examples of good leadership? Whose books can we take a leaf from? Has anyone made mistakes in today's market that we can learn from?** Two current excellent entrepreneurs spring to mind as demonstrating great leadership skills.
- Julian Richer, founder of the electrical empire Richer Sounds, can demonstrate success through his style of leadership. Likewise John Timpson, Chairman and Chief Executive of Timpson's Ltd., famed for the high-street business of key cutting and shoe repairs. Both believe and live the process of involving their teams (Lewin's Participative Style). Both can boast highly motivated workforces and high levels of customer service – two simple secrets to success.
- I have spoken to employees from both organisations and have heard only positive comments about how their employers lead their businesses. They are motivated to work hard and deliver above expectations for a 'boss' they hold in high esteem. The reason? Because they knew what their respective leaders were aiming to achieve and understood that they were an integral part of the machinery. They took their role of delivering what they believed to be the best route to help resolve a customer issue seriously.

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Here are a few tips to improve leadership

1. Allow employees the authority to resolve a customer service issue

- To place the decision for customer service in the hands of an employee may be deemed risky by some leaders. There are processes and procedures to follow. For other leaders it will seem an obvious and genius route to follow. After all, no two customers are the same, how can any procedure or process settle all issues? Any fear of handing over such authority can be dispelled by the control that the leader should be exercising in the business. Communicate to your team the boundaries within which they can work and monitor to ensure that they are keeping within them.

2. Talk to your staff

- If as a new leader you need to know what is happening in the business, talk to your staff – they generally have the answers and know most about an organization. Feedback from your workforce is paramount.

3. Maintain a strong position

- Maintain a strong position – if leadership is weak, staff become demotivated, which in turn has an effect on customer service resulting in lower profits.

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4. Communicate effectively with your team

- Tell them what your vision is and keep them in touch with it. They need to know their involvement and their responsibilities in terms of achieving your vision. Communicate, communicate and then communicate some more! When you have communicated, check they understand and that goes further than just saying 'Do you understand?', which of course will no doubt be met with the response 'Yes'. Ask them what they have to do and when they have to do it by. Ask them to tell you what your vision is and make sure they are specific responses.

5. Think of you and your team on a bus journey

- You are driving the bus and on board you have your team. It is your job to communicate your destination and your route to your team. Failure to do so means they have no idea why they are on the bus in the first place. The result is they will try and guess, they will study the passing scenery, talk amongst themselves and closely watch your every move, all in pursuit of trying to establish why they are on the bus, where it is going and the route you are following. They will draw their own conclusions, which may well be completely wrong. Based on their own conclusions they may make assumptions about what they are supposed to do on the bus and take irrelevant or unnecessary actions which could cost you time and money as the leader of the bus.

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6. Delegate correctly

- Good leadership is about delegating correctly too. Imagine being the driver of the bus and deciding that you will do the wheel changes and servicing yourself, along with planning any diversions to the route. All this despite the fact that you have qualified engineers, route planners and the ex-workforce of Kwik Fit on board! Delegate and do it effectively so that your team know exactly what their responsibilities are. Set objectives for the delegated work with measurements in place and the achievement of them will no doubt be successful. If it isn't, could it be because your objectives were not clear enough or your checking and monitoring procedures were not sufficient?

7. Mistakes should be regarded as learning curves

- In the event of an unsuccessful mission, what can be learnt from it to ensure success next time? Good delegation leads to highly motivated team members.
- Lead by demonstrating in a positive, energized, and customer-focused way and your flock will follow with enthusiasm, pride and in a highly motivated manner.

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Good Selling !



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