

Leadership Styles

Exploring how different approaches to leadership influences people and performance.

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Using the
Leadership Styles
Workbook

Every leader has a natural way of doing things, a preferred balance between directing, involving and supporting others.

Understanding your leadership style helps you recognise when your natural style may not be the best way to influence the people you're leading or for the situation you're in.

This lesson helps you explore:

- Your preferred approach to leadership.
- How different styles suit different people and situations.
- How you can flex your style for greater impact and ease.

These are my reflections

.....

on ___ /___ /_____

What Are Leadership Styles?

Leadership style describes how you lead - the tone, energy and level of control you bring to your interactions.

Classic models describe broad categories as:

- **Autocratic**: directive, clear, decisive, top-down leadership.
- **Laissez-Faire**: hands-off, trusting the person's/team's autonomy.
- **Democratic**: participative, consultative, shared decision-making.

In highly regulated environments, a fourth common style is:

- **Bureaucratic**: doing it "by the book", according to regulations.

In many work environments, all these styles can be seen.
The challenge is knowing which approach fits best the personal and situational context.

- **Autocratic leadership** styles can provide clear direction, facilitate fast action and potentially generate rapid results. They can be useful when working with inexperienced staff or in urgent situations. They will feel rigid if overused.
- **Laissez-faire leadership** styles can provide lots of freedom. Great for confident, capable team members and development of independence. Can feel like abandonment if used too early.
- **Democratic leadership** styles encourage participation and shared decision-making, they build buy-in. Can be slow or inefficient with less experienced/less confident teams.
- **Bureaucratic leadership** styles which follow rules and procedures are essential in regulated environments. Can stifle creativity if used excessively or allow a weaker leader to "hide behind" rules.

On the next page, reflect on styles you've seen and used.

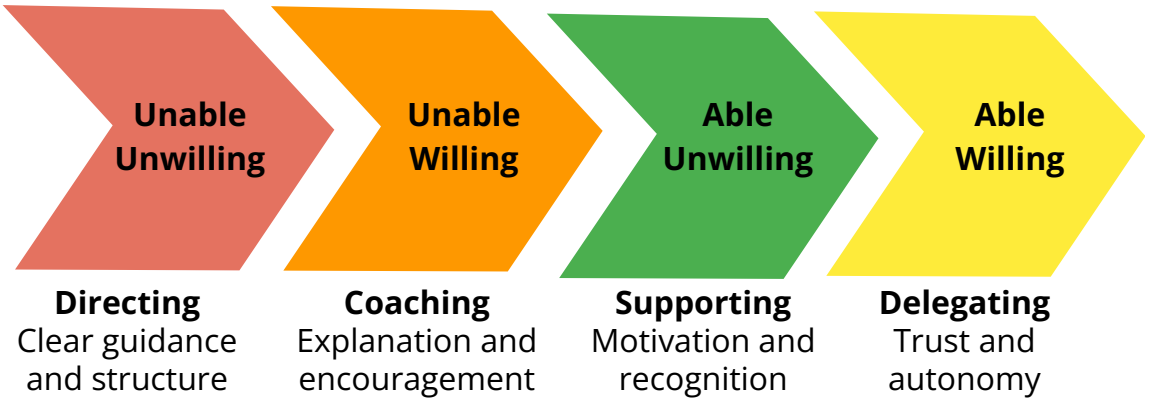
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Hersey & Blanchard Situational Leadership model

This simple model suggests that effective leaders adapt their style according to the levels of skill/competence and the degree of confidence/commitment of their team members.

Ask yourself: Are they willing? Are they able?



Reflections:

Think of a situation where you led others, formally or informally.

- What did your leadership look like?
- What was the situation - who was involved?
- How much direction or involvement did you give?
- Did your leadership reflect your natural style or was it a conscious response to the people or situation?
- What worked well? What could have been different?

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Reflecting on my leadership

Good leadership is situational, it flexes with context without feeling “random”. Too much direction can feel controlling; too little can create confusion. Leadership can be judged by what you create - the practical output and the relationships you build.

Thinking of the situations where you exert leadership:

- Which style feels most natural for you?
- Which situations stretch or challenge that preference?
- Does your team need more support, structure or autonomy?



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Reflecting on my leadership

Leadership style isn't just behaviour - what you do - it's also about the energy you bring - how you do it.

Do you lead with calm confidence or urgency, do people sense inspiration or empathy, judgement or acceptance?

As you explore your leadership identity, ask:

- What energy do I bring into meetings and supervision?
- How do I want people to feel after interacting with me?
- What blend of competence and warmth best reflects the leader and the person I want to be?



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Reflecting on my leadership

Choose a current project or supervision relationship.

Think of the people involved, their degrees of experience or skill, their sense of security or confidence, their developmental needs for belonging or autonomy...

- Who needs direction and structure?
- Who benefits from coaching and discussion?
- Who thrives with autonomy or may need more belonging?
- How can I adapt my style to better support individuals or develop my chosen group culture?



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Putting Leadership Together

There are many different leadership styles possible.
Some people simply do "what comes naturally".
Other people consciously choose a style that fits the person/situation.
Being flexible is not being inauthentic, it's choosing the best tool for the job,

Use your common sense.
Experiment and find what works for you and your people.

What have you learned about leadership styles?



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WANT MORE?



This workbook offers insights into different leadership styles that you might use in group or one-to-one meetings.

Most leaders use these styles, blended with their natural approaches to support their intentions and bring clarity to their communication.

They offer possible structures and are not intended to kill intuition or spontaneity.

Where will you start?

I hope this content has been useful.
If you know you need more, do reach out to me. I'd love to hear from you.

You can always explore the other resources on my website.

MargaretCollins.com/

Resources

Let me know how you get on!

Margaret

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