

Styles of Leadership Influence Committee Effectiveness  
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As an extension agent or specialist, each of us is called upon to provide leadership for specific committees, programs and other educational activities. Today we want to examine several styles or types of leadership and discuss the impact that each may have upon the effective functioning of our advisory committees and our relationships with other client groups and extension education colleagues.

What is leadership? It is generally described as a learned behavioral skill which includes the ability to help others achieve their potential as individuals and as a part of a team. An effective advisory or other committee results from the type of leadership which encourages individual members to grow personally and to become a functional member of a team effort.

For a leader to be effective, he has to have a very well developed range of behaviors and must be able to communicate and work well with many kinds of personalities. There are several leadership roles or styles from which a person may choose. As stated above leadership is a learned behavioral skill. This suggests that one can systematically work toward developing the style of leadership which he chooses.

Have you looked in a mirror lately? What --in relation to how you function in a leadership role with other people-- did you see? How do you relate to people working with or for you? Are you satisfied with these relationships? Are there some aspects of these relationships that you would like to alter?

It has been said that "a leader is what his self image allows him to be." What is your self image? How can it be modified? Does it need to be modified?

Someone else has said "it is only by obtaining accurate readings of our behavior that we can correctly modify it to be effective in motivating others."

Before we examine the styles of leadership, let's take a short look in that mirror --in the form of a short exercise.

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The kind of leader you are is most likely shown by the column in which you have the most checks. Add up the checks in each column. Place totals in spaces provided.

While each person is likely to have some characteristics or attitudes that fall in all three columns, most will tend to fall into one of the three broad classes. If you recognize your own style, you can either take positive action to change your style or you can select motivational programs and techniques best suited to your style.

If most of your checks fall in the first of the three columns on the quiz, you tend to be a controlling leader. The second column indicates a manipulative style. The third column indicates an activator.

#### CONTROLLER

The controlling leader depends upon power to get the job done. He exerts pressure on those under him and believes that what he gets from his team is directly related to the pressure he applies. If the leader is to exert pressure, he must have the authority to do so delegated to him.

He in turn can delegate both authority and responsibility; but, in the case of a controller, he only delegates responsibility for tasks or activities, never authority for decision-making. He feels that if he delegates decision-making he will lose his position in the power pyramid, and would not be able to continue to get proper responses from his team.

If the controlling leader uses power will skill, knowledge, honesty and humanitarianism, he or she can be reasonably successful. He will never, though, get superlative performance.

If the team member respects and trusts the leader, his frustrations are usually held to an acceptable level. He can, after all, have the last word by such actions as absenteeism, tardiness, non-performance, loafing, etc.

The controller needs to constantly question as to whether he or she is using power to accomplish organizational objectives or simply to feed their own ego.

What are some of the advantages to the controlling style of leadership?

- 1) Maximum control, coordination, orderliness and conformity.
- 2) Simple to administer and understand. It is easier to punish and reward than to train, explain and lead toward involvement.
- 3) It gives more immediate results.
- 4) It can be used on a large number of people at the same time.
- 5) It is excellent to get specific changes in action.
- 6) It is satisfying to the ego.

How about disadvantages?

- 1) Risk of serious and increasing retaliation.
- 2) It can only control and change actions, not attitudes or beliefs.
- 3) It brings forth no more output than can be brought about by pressure.
- 4) When pressure is lifted, accomplishment may cease or diminish.
- 5) True potential of subordinate never realized.

In spite of its shortcomings and pitfalls, the controlling leader is the most common, and until other styles of learned, is perhaps most effective.

#### MANIPULATIVE

The manipulative leader uses the team members and their psychological needs to accomplish what will be of benefit to himself and the organization rather than considering the effect he may have on the individuals.

His motives are never allowed to be known. He uses his co-workers' weaknesses to his own advantage.

The manipulative leader is always thinking "make them think its their own idea" or "make them think I'm sincere." He will play one person against another.

Using the manipulative style is loaded with danger. If the leader is really good, he may get away with the game for the greater part of the time. If he is discovered, reaction may be violent. In this case everyone is being played for a sucker and few people like to play that role.

It is the worst of all styles, working most successfully with the least able groups. Chances of success diminish as the groups improve in sophistication.

Are there any comments in support of the manipulative style or additional points that should be brought out against this style of leadership?

#### ACTIVATOR

The activator uses leadership, guidance, and encouragement in attempting to obtain the results he wants to achieve. He knows that his job is to close the can do-will do gap. He asks two fundamental questions about each of his subordinates:

- 1) Shall I keep him?
- 2) How can I help him do the job?

His answer to the first question will be based on his best judgment as to whether the team member is suited to the job or can be trained to perform the job and on whether he is or can be adapted to fit into the team. If his answer is NO, he will have to ask how he can find a suitable replacement.

Activator style is not soft or lack of supervision. It is the most demanding style of leadership. If done well, it cannot only bring out the best in the individuals who are being supervised; but, it can also be a most satisfying experience for the leader.

To be a successful activator leader, you must believe:

- 1) Power flows both upward and downward in an organization.
- 2) Most people want to do the right thing.
- 3) People have much more ability than they are now releasing.
- 4) The teacher must serve subordinates and is primarily responsible for their success or failure.
- 5) He must help rather than force his subordinate to achieve.
- 6) When authority, responsibility and accountability are shared, there will be greater achievement.

Activator leadership takes more effort and patience. If time becomes a critical factor, the leader can always fall back on authority.

How is activator leadership implemented or put into effect?

- 1) Problems are recognized either by the leader or the team member.
- 2) The team member takes responsibility for considering solutions with the help of the leader.
- 3) The leader and the team member consider the consequences of alternative solutions.
- 4) The team member selects a solution that the leader can accept (not necessarily the one he would like to see, but probably the best he can expect to get).
- 5) Group member tries to implement the solution with the leader supporting him in every way.
- 6) The group member finds the solution acceptable and adopts it or unacceptable and rejects it.

The team member groups and builds upon his successes in finding solutions to problems and the leader develops greater confidence in him and tends to delegate to him more responsibility and authority as he becomes more able to handle it. Delegating authority does not guarantee success. The leader must be sure that the team member had the ability and is ready to accept the authority and is trained to use it properly.

Some questions that the activator leader must ask in deciding when and what authority to delegate are:

- 1) What do I do now that my team can do as well or better than I?
- 2) Are my team members able to make some of the decisions, within the framework of this job, that I am now making?
- 3) What are the costs and risks of their involvement in decision making and goal setting?

- 4) Am I ready to share responsibility and authority with those working under me?
- 5) As those working for me grow, what training is necessary for them to do their best?

The shift from a controlling style of leadership to an activator style takes time as you attempt to train your workers to recognize your new image, to master the steps in the change yourself, and to allow them to respond to their new operating style.

Move gradually, don't do an abrupt about-face.

If most of your answers to the previous set of questions are negative, then perhaps you are so firmly controlling that you should not try to change. You might be likely to turn into a manipulative style leader with disastrous results. In this case, it would probably be better to try to add some humanitarianism, honesty, and understanding to your controlling style and get along with a somewhat lower performance rate in the long run.

Regardless of his style, those working under him will judge the leader's performance.

How would those working with you answer the following questions?

- 1) Is he aware of me?
- 2) Can I turn to him for help?
- 3) Will he listen to me?
- 4) Will he try to help me solve this problem?
- 5) Does he respect me as a human being?

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THE HUMAN EQUATION - ITS MANAGEMENT AND VALUE

NOTE: Check the area that is close to your idea of what is going on in the business you work in. The text refers to businesses, but it also applies to any organization or group. This is for your own use, so be honest. Don't study the question, but check the answer which is close to your first thought.

QUESTIONS:

	SYSTEM 1	X	SYSTEM 2	X	SYSTEM 3	X
1. The trust shown in team members.	Little		Some		Complete	
2. Members feel free that they can talk freely to their leader.	Not much		Sometimes		Nearly always	
3. Team ideas are asked for and used.	Sometimes		Whenever desired		Nearly always	
4. Members take responsibility and carry out the job themselves.	Very seldom		Sometimes		Nearly always	
5. Members must be watched all the time to make sure a good job is done.	Most of the time		Sometimes		Very seldom	
6. People are naturally lazy and careless about their work.	Mostly		Somewhat		Seldom	
1. Most of the time the leader uses fear, threats and punishment to get work done.	Often		Sometimes		Almost never	
2. Members are allowed to help set their own work goals.	Never		Very seldom		Often	
3. Members work mostly for reward rather than to see a good job done.	Nearly always		Mostly		Seldom	
4. Members feel good when they do their part in reaching a goal set by the leader.	Mostly at top		Top & middle		At all levels	
1. Information on how the business is doing is given to members.	Very little		Little		A great deal	
2. What is the direction of information flow?	Downward		Caution		Openness	
3. Downward communication is received with	Mistrust		Caution		Openness	
4. Upward communication is	Often wrong		Changed for leader		Correct	
5. Upward communication from members is asked for by the leader	Hardly ever		Whenever convenient or useful		Nearly always	
1. How well does the leader know his team?	Not well at all		Only things he wants to		Well informed	
2. Where does the information used in deciding to change work conditions come from?	Leader		Leader and assistants		From all persons	
3. Do the leaders include the group in deciding what to do?	Almost never		When convenient		Fully	
4. Is the group told how well they are doing?	Whenever something is wrong		When needed for prodding		On a regular basis	
5. Are members reminded of goals and asked to help set goals?	Seldom		When useful to leader		Fully include everyone	
TOTAL CHECKS						