⏱ **20 MIN READ**

What's Your Leadership Style?

Learn About the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Way You Like to Lead

When we lead for the first time, we might adopt a style of leadership that we've experienced from someone else, or that we've heard or read about. If it seems to work, we'll likely stick with it – in effect, it becomes "our" style.

But there are many approaches available to us, and a good leader is able to adapt their style according to the situation and the people involved.

This quiz will help you to identify the style that you naturally lean toward, and introduce you to alternative approaches that you might find it helpful to develop, and the occasions when they may be appropriate.

We've based our questions on psychologist **Kurt Lewin's Leadership Styles Framework** – a model developed in the 1930s that is still popular and useful today.

What's Your Leadership Style?

Instructions

For each question, complete the statement by choosing one of the three options: A, B or C. Please answer according to how you would behave **in reality**, rather than how you think you **should behave**. When you're finished, please click the "Calculate My Total" button at the bottom of the test, and go on to read the guidance that follows.

Your last quiz results are shown.
You last completed this quiz on July 04, 2022, at 9:43.

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12 Statements to Answer	**A**	**B**	**C**
1 If there is serious conflict within my team: A. I remind everyone that we have goals to meet. B. I bring my people together so that we can talk it through. C. I let them work by themselves so that they don't have to bother one another.	○	◉	○
2 I trust my team members: A. Very much. B. A fair amount. C. Not at all.	○	◉	○
3 Some of my people are highly skilled and motivated. They: A. Can be set free to weave their magic. B. Often hold creative planning sessions with me. C. Are subject to the same workplace strategies and processes as everyone else.	○	◉	○
4 The best way for me to ensure that my team meets its goals is to: A. Lead from the front. B. Encourage participation from everyone. C. Delegate often and widely.	○	◉	○
5 We have an eight-hour deadline for a project that I think requires 16 hours, so I: A. Relay the deadline and let everyone get on with it. They know what they're doing. B. Ask my team members what they feel is the fastest way to complete it. C. Issue instructions and deadlines to each team member.	○	◉	○
6 Poor performance should be: A. Punished, so that it doesn't happen again. B. Talked through with the individual, so that we can learn. C. Left. It will work itself out.	○	◉	○
7 I need to develop and apply a new social media strategy, so I: A. Draw up the strategy myself and then			

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12 Statements to Answer

		A	B	C
8	I like to: A. Let my team make the decisions. B. Make a decision but not until my team has had input. C. Make a decision but not until I have told the team my rationale.	○	◉	○
9	I have a new starter in my team, so I: A. Let them discover the best way of working. B. Invite them into team collaborative meetings. C. Sit with them until they understand the processes and the quality that I expect.	○	◉	○
10	I think that great leaders: A. Know best. That's why they're leaders. B. Are humble and understand that a team works best collectively. C. Give their team members plenty of space to let them get on.	○	◉	○
11	When asked whether I like to serve my team, I: A. Am not sure. B. Say yes, wholeheartedly. C. Frown.	○	◉	○
12	I notice that a member of my team is demotivated, so I: A. Closely manage each of their tasks to ensure that they are following procedures correctly. B. Make an extra effort to ensure that they are involved in team discussions. C. Back off, as they probably needs some space.	○	◉	○

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Score Comment

12-20   You most commonly adopt an authoritarian or autocratic leadership style. You rarely consult your team members and, instead, tend to tell them what you want, when you want it, and how you want it done.

This style works well in a crisis, when a task must be completed quickly. However, you'll likely demoralize, demotivate and aggravate people if you use it all the time. This can translate into high absenteeism and turnover rates. You'll also miss out on a wealth of ideas, thereby stifling innovation and creativity. Read more below.

21-27   You lean toward a democratic or participative style of leadership. You tend to set the parameters for the work and have the final say on decisions, but you actively involve your team members in the process.

This style can build trust between you and your people, as they'll likely feel engaged and valued. But it's not great in a high-pressure situation that requires a fast turnaround, as it will slow you down. And, if you dislike disagreement or conflict, you might struggle with how people respond to consultation. Read more below.

28-36   Your default leadership style is probably delegating or "laissez faire." You give your team members free rein in how they work toward their goals.

This is an ideal approach when your people are highly skilled and motivated, and when you're working with contractors and freelancers who you trust. But if a team member is inexperienced or untrustworthy, or if you lose sight of what's going on, this approach can backfire catastrophically. Read more below.

Do you believe that you can adapt your style? Harvard University professor **Ron Heifetz** and leadership experts **David Rooke and William Torbert** say that you can. So let's look in more depth at Lewin's leadership styles, their strengths and risks, and how you might become more skillful in using them.

Authoritarian, Autocratic Leadership

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But you need to be aware that relying on control and punishment to maintain standards will likely drive people away. Similarly, if you always demand that your team works at top speed, you can end up exhausting everyone.

Instead, you can show respect for team members by providing the rationale for your decisions. And they will more likely comply with your expectations if you take the trouble to explain **Why the Rules Are There** .

You can improve your ability to "lead from the front" by **Planning for a Crisis** , **Thinking on Your Feet** , and **making good decisions under pressure** . But be sure to balance these skills with an awareness of their potential negative impact on creativity, ideas gathering, motivation, and trust within the team.

Being too autocratic can also mean that you'll find it hard to stand back from the detail and take a wider, more strategic view.

Tip:

Did you achieve your leadership role thanks to your technical expertise? If so, you'll likely be used to getting things right, adding value, and having people's respect. But your **soft skills** might be lacking, so don't be afraid to listen and collaborate more.

Democratic, Participative Leadership

With this approach, you set goals, guide team discussions, and make the final decision. But you also acknowledge that your people can have valuable insight into a problem or process, so you **actively consult them** . As a result, you'll likely gain creative input and fresh ideas that you wouldn't have come up with if you were working alone.

You might wonder how to manage differing opinions in the team, once you've invited participation in this way. Your goal is to build a culture in which people can have healthy debates with one another. So:

- Set an example by being open and flexible yourself.

- Make **mutual respect** a priority, to ensure everyone's participation.

- Learn some **Conflict Resolution** skills.

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The Delegating, "Laissez Faire" Leader

"Laissez faire" is a French phrase adopted into English that means, "Let (people) do (as they choose)." It describes a policy of leaving situations to run their own course, without interfering.

By adopting this style of leadership, you empower your team to make decisions and to organize its own processes, with little or no guidance. The danger of this approach is that situations can collapse into chaos if your people have low motivation or poor skills. It **can** work, however, if they are experienced, knowledgeable, confident, creative, and driven, or if deadlines are flexible and processes are simple.

Be in no doubt, though, that as the leader you will still be held accountable for the outcome! So you might want to **organize team decision making** processes to support your people while you take a "hands off" approach. Just be sure to **delegate** the right task to the right person, as a mismatch could mean that the whole team fails.

Avoid becoming too remote, even with a high-performing, highly autonomous team. **Change** can occur at any time in business, so your organization's requirements for your team might shift after your initial brief. If this happens, stay in touch with your people, and communicate clearly and promptly. Remember, you can offer your support without **becoming a micromanager** !

Tip:

Consistently excellent and long-lasting teams tend to have **transformational leaders** . These leaders have high expectations for, and set a fine example to, their people. And they inspire them to reach for the seemingly impossible.

Further Reading:

We have numerous resources on leadership styles and approaches in our Leadership Skills toolkit. You might find the following articles helpful:

- Eric Flamholtz and Yvonne Randle's **Leadership Style Matrix** .

- The Blake-Mouton **Managerial Grid** .

- Robert House's **Path-Goal Theory**

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- Greenleaf's **Servant Leadership** .

- Collins' **Level 5 Leadership** .

Key Points

We all tend toward one leadership style more than another, due to our personal preferences, abilities, role models, and more.

But one approach doesn't fit all scenarios: some situations and people call for a fast, firm, top-down approach, while others flourish with shared responsibilities and the freedom to plan, decide and act.

You and your team will likely perform better if you develop a wide set of styles to apply as appropriate.

Kurt Lewin's model expresses this range of styles in relatively simple terms, from Authoritarian or Autocratic, through Democratic or Participative, to Delegating or "Laissez Faire."

Transformational leadership is the best approach for most situations.

Note:

This assessment has not been validated and is intended for illustrative purposes only. It is just one of many that help you evaluate your abilities in a wide range of important career skills. **Click here** for other self-tests.

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lisachumney 2022-06-23 23:03:18

★★★★★

jpfriends79 2022-06-11 13:32:57

★★★★★

Non Member 2022-06-09 17:20:09

★★★★★

Tanialivi 2022-05-26 02:03:53

★★★★★

janetanne 2022-05-20 02:16:58

★★★★★

Very useful information.

1 2 3 … 39

From **emerald WORKS**

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