
The Main Features Of 6 Leadership Styles

Leadership is a complex social process, rooted in the values, knowledge, skills and ways of thinking of both leaders and followers. This source argues that people tend to think too simply when equating a simple problem to leadership. It is not that a leader just has answers ready for every question. Leaders help us comprehend the situations we are experiencing and help shape our futures to show positive result.

But in order to get these positive results, a leader needs to be able assess and construct difficult situations before they can escalate to problems in the organization. As leadership is not only about guiding, but also about forming a team that is able prevent any incidents, it is a leader's job to make sure that the team performs well together.

A leader can utilize multiple leadership styles to get their preferred result within the organization. These styles also define if an organization utilizes a hierarchical leadership culture or maybe a flatter structure.

Each of these styles have their own advantages and disadvantages, where currently a trend is seen to have start-ups as well as young companies to generally start adapting the flat structure into their organizational culture. This is because it offers a lot of advantages in the new modern world that we live in compared to the old-world style hierarchical style.

The previous source also argues that these different hierarchical structures have instigated the emergence of a new structure called wirearchy "with a dynamic flow of power and authority, based on information, trust, credibility, and a focus on results, enabled by interconnected technology and people".

The source does agree though that as these young companies start to mature and become more multifaceted, they also start to become more hierarchical on the road to growth. It is argued to be almost near to impossible to envision a flat-hierarchical leadership structure in a company that houses thousands of employees. As they evolve into these structures, it becomes clear that these top heavy/middle heavy or hierarchical organizations often lead to bureaucracy making them slow to change and adapt to new situations.

Emphasizing on how leaders should act in a workplace, employees tend to share different opinions on how this can be done most effectively. As leaders are there to help the company reach its maximum performance level, it is imperative for employees to have a positive experience with their leader. Goleman refers to answers as setting strategy, motivate employees, establishing missions and the buildup of culture as the main aspects where a leader should exceed to maximize the growth of its employees. Argued by Muijs this kind of leadership hugely affects the way the organizational structure of a company is being perceived. The way a leader acts around its employees can give a certain drive to the perceiver to enhance its performance as well as becoming a better performer through the utilization of cooperation within the working environment. Muijs also refers to the occurrence of rising importance to a leader which in turn empowers effectiveness of decisions made by the said leader.

Up until recently, nobody had actually quantified available data, to discover what types of leadership are most effective in a way to improve the effectiveness, but recent research performed by a consulting firm called Haygroup have given their input on 6 distinct styles of leadership. Argued by Goleman, each of these 6 styles has their own impact on an organization's economic structure, as well as performance management within the working atmosphere. As a real leader will likely never resort to a singular way of performing his duty, Chen argues that a leader that drives growth and innovation will use multiple styles all at the same time to create a differentiated approach towards the stimulation of its employees.

This stimulation can be accomplished through either; the immediate demand of compliance, the mobilization of people towards a vision, creating harmony and the buildup of emotional bonds, forging of consensus through participation, setting high standards for measurable performance, or the development of people for future reference. Each of this modus operandi relates to one of the 6 leadership styles mentioned by Goleman, which in its place all spring off from different components of emotional intelligence.

By testing the immediate sphere of influence from several executives within its climate, McClelland has refined 6 factors that impact an organization's working environment. These 6 factors define the way a leader acts within its working environment, and all differ in applicability towards the relevant working surroundings. McClelland also suggests that by applying the relevant factors and styles to the situational environment, a leader can not only get better personal results but also empower its employees to thrive. Employees will not need to be micromanaged anymore but will resort to following the "leader" and make wise decisions without being afraid they are not endorsed to do so.

Stated by McClelland and his colleagues, these six factors consist of: it's flexibility, referring to the freedom that has been given to the employees to innovate unfettered by red tape; the level of values that people set; the sense of responsibility to the business; the accuracy when giving performance feedback combined with the aptness of rewards; clarity regarding the organizational mission and values; and last but not least, the scale of commitment towards a common purpose.

The same source has found that each distinct leadership style has its own measurable effect on each aspect of climate. Added to that, Goleman explains the effect of the impact on climate, and has determined that leaders who tend to use the styles that positively affected the climate would have substantially better financial results in terms of –revenue growth, return on sales, efficiency and profitability compared to those opposed. That does not entail that organizational climate is the sole driver of performance, but moreover a positive attribute.

As opposed to the financial results, Shanker, Bhanugopan, van der Heijden, & Farrell argue that the positive organizational culture has a more empowered effect on innovation as it stimulates employees to not be troubled by the red tape that prohibits them from innovating on their own ideas. As well as being able to work collaboratively together with manager and other parties to come up with the most effective innovation that can lead to organizational growth.

As typically executives tend to apply 6 styles of leadership, the study has shown that 2 of these styles impacted the school in a negative way. The other 4 are considered to have a consistently positive effect on the school.

What is important for leaders is to be able to adapt the relevant styles to the climate that they want to empower within the company culture.

Directive style

One of the oldest styles in the book is the directive style, which as the name implies, focuses on the coercive method in employee relations. By using tactics to make sure that employees adhere to their exact commands, the directive style is mainly focused on crisis management these days. The reason it should not be applied anymore to everyday businesses lies within different reasons.

The main reason is the morale reasoning. If a leader tends to force his decisions through a directive order, people tend to become scared as subordinates do not want to become the bearer of bad news. Resulting in a tendency where people rather keep new ideas to themselves, then to explore the possibilities by bringing them up to the leader in charge. People become afraid that their ideas will be shot down anyway. This affects the general flexibility of a person as well.

Argued by Goleman is that this will also attribute to the loss of responsibility within the employee pool. People will become afraid to act on their own, and will lose all sense of ownership and accountability of performance in their work.

The directive style also creates a damaging effect on the rewards system. As not everyone is solely focused on earning money for a job well done, many people find it more rewarding to be complemented or acknowledged for a job well done. This tends to stimulate the motivation of employees, as without the motivation employees are seen to not be included in the shared mission of a company to drive growth and accomplish targets. This can be seen as an attribute to a leader's biggest failure, as it alienates people from their own job, leaving them with questions as to how any of their involvement matters.

Visionary Style

The visionary style is formed around a long-term direction strategy. In its distinctiveness this style completely relies on the leader's unique perspective towards the business. It is expressed by Westley & Mintzberg that this style is most effective when there is guidance needed in times when the company is failing to live up to its own vision and mission.

This style is not only recommended in these situations but is arguably one of the best styles that a respectable leader can adapt. By setting a vision for the organization that you are running and working towards this vision in a collaborative manner together with the other employees, a leader is able to maximize commitment to an organizations goals and strategies. Because the leader in said cases is a visionary, he should be able to motivate people while guiding them to a collaborative goal. They make people understand as to why their responsibilities matter to the organization. This can also be seen as a non-monetary reward which stimulates the motivation of employees. so much. This can drive innovation as people will be more open to share their ideas, and collaboratively come up with solutions to complications.

When a company tends to fall adrift, Westley & Mintzberg argue that leaders who utilize the

authoritative style seem to be able to perform the most effective turn-around.

Affiliative Style

With the affiliative style the main objective finds itself within the personal relationships that are being built by the leader. As a leader that follows this leadership style tries to spend most of his time cultivating relationships with the employees, it tends to happen that performance related rearwards get overpowered by personal characteristics. As asserted by Garrick this is related to the objective of promoting harmony and avoiding conflict in a person within the work environment. Goleman does point out in this situation, that even though this brings a team together, poor performance could go unchecked because of this.

As opposed to the directive style, this style focuses upon the establishment of positive relationships which is seen to be very beneficial to the boosting of morale and the solidification of team building. A leader can exhibit these performances through reflecting on its employees with positive feedback together with several other imperial factors. These occasions lead to a better morale within the team, as well as creating trust and loyalty.

On many occasions one will see this style to collaborate with the visionary style to avoid stressful occasions. By promoting empowerment of the employees and making them feel good, a leader is creating opportunity for him to be followed, which can be used to resolve conflicts in a more effective approach.

This style is arguably one of the better methods for groups or organizations, however it can also lead to employees showing poor performance. This might not always get picked up, and a leader is then giving more attention to value its employees and their emotions than the organizations responsibilities and goals, which can cause risk for the bottom line of a business.