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Management Style and Working Style

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# Management Style

A manager who walks the talk, cares about and develops their team members builds loyalty. Getting into the trenches with your team members and showing them, you care matters. You will be a role model for others who will aim to emulate your management style. What you do and say matters, your words and actions will influence people’s thoughts and actions.

## Management models

Before getting into developing a management style, you need to learn a little about different management models or paradigms of leadership.

1. The first is the **‘Traditional leadership model’** also known as the directive or command and control structure, first conceived in the Industrial Revolution of the 1800s, it was refined after WW2. It is the conventional way of managing organisation’s around the world today. It has the following features.

* There is a hierarchy of employees.
* An organisational chart with a manager at the head.
* A senior executive or board holds power.
* Leaders often rule with compulsion, force, control and secrecy.
* Managers are often viewed as intimidating people.
* Managers’ jobs are to plan, organise staff, direct and control.
* Managers command respect through seniority and years of service.
* All efforts are directed at achieving results as evidence of success.
* Managers do not always welcome new ideas and can be unaware of changes and problems.
* Tend to have frequent turnover among their team.
* The manager sets expectations for employees who need to meet goals, but the manager receives the reward for achieving them.

1. The second is the **‘Transformational leadership model’**; its features are.

* Managers motivate staff to do more than they originally intended, and more than they thought possible.
* Set more challenging expectations.
* Typically achieve higher performance.
* Inspire their staff with challenge and persuasion.
* Are intellectually stimulating, expanding staff’s use of their abilities.
* Are individually considerate, supporting staff, mentoring and coaching.
* Are admired, respected, and trusted.
* Encourage creativity.
* Create new learning opportunities with a supportive climate.
* Recognise individual differences in terms of needs and desires.
* Accept individual differences (e.g., some staff receive more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still others more task structure).
* Delegate tasks as a means of developing staff.

1. The third is the **‘Management and Teams management model’**.

The Management and Teams management model views management and leadership as similarly defined, as concepts that are transposable and inseparable. Together, leading (visionary) and managing (task-orientation) form a framework of skills and behaviours that are necessary to drive great Teams. It has the following features.

* It is based on the Transformational leadership model.
* It emphasises people leadership skills.
* It introduces formal management methods and techniques.
* It trains all levels of management (not just senior executives) on how to manage and lead.
* It builds great teams.
* It provides a pathway and environment, allowing organisations to move from the Traditional to the Transformational management model gradually.
* It is driven by the new millennial workforce, who are vocal about what they want their workplace to look like. Millennials will not accept the old-style methods of the Traditional model.
* It acknowledges that employees are demanding higher levels of job satisfaction and managers who are open and honest and who value their employees’ contributions. These employees want to be recognised for their efforts, work in a collaborative environment and have a say in how the workplace is managed.

People leave managers, not companies

## Management Style

A Management Style is a description of the way you act and how others can expect you to react in a given situation. It is something you should be proud of and that you are happy to declare to anyone who asks. It is something you can explain to your team members, use on a resume or at a job interview to describe who you are professionally.

Great managers use a management style that motivates others to do more than they thought possible. The style sets challenging expectations for their staff, and typically these managers achieve higher performance outcomes. They manage people as individuals, identifying and developing their talents. They are supportive, provide mentoring and are role models who are respected and trusted.

Learning how to change your current management style and accepting that you need to change your ways of managing and relating to people is essential.

A great Management Style is composed of management qualities and people leadership qualities. These qualities are complementary and inexorably linked to each other, they:

* Directly affect a manager’s confidence.
* Improves a manager’s and the team’s morale and retention.
* Change the way a manager thinks and acts, which helps with the implementation of new organisational changes. Managers, in turn, are better able to convey the need for change to staff.

“The goal of management training is to increase productivity of all employees by motivating and educating managers. As manager confidence increases, so can the ability of the manager to implement company strategies, mitigate internal conflict and train subordinates to perform better”. -Jeffrey Glen.

### Management qualities

(Keywords are highlighted)

* Are **action-oriented**, are the allocation and control of **resources** (human, material and financial) to achieve objectives.
* Exist to **plan, organise** and **coordinate**.
* Execute specific areas within their **responsibilities** and **accountabilities**.
* Achieve business **goals.**
* Formulate and enforce **policies** to achieve business goals.
* Set individual **performance goals**.
* Focus on the **short term.**

### People Leadership qualities

(Keywords are highlighted)

* + The leader is motivated by improving the **well-being** of people.
* The leadership style is marked by **transparency**, telling employees about organisational changes. (In an employee survey, management transparency was the number one factor contributing to employee job satisfaction.)
* **Shares information** with employees, **empowers** everyone and **increases collaboration**. In that same survey, teams and collaboration were placed as the top attributes that employees felt about their peers.
* Facilitates **open information,** ensuring that ideas flow more freely across all levels of an organisation.
* Values **sharing and service** over the old values of exclusion, control, and self-interest. (In another survey it was found that employee **trust** greatly impacts engagement, workplace happiness, work quality, and employee retention.)

“Progressive leadership models often seek to abolish class systems common to traditional leadership models. This means that everyone, regardless of rank or position, is subject to the same rules of behaviour, processes for getting things done, and reward systems.” Stewardship, Block.

### People Leadership qualities – another perspective

(Keywords are highlighted)

* Managers **motivate** others to do more than they originally intended and often, even more than they thought possible. They set more **challenging expectations.**
* Staff seek to identify with and **emulate** their manager.
* The manager inspires team members with challenge and persuasion, providing meaning and understanding. The leader is **intellectually stimulating**, expanding staff members use of their abilities. The leader is individually considerate, supporting staff**, mentoring and coaching**.
* **Admired, respected, and trusted** and have high standards of ethical and moral conduct.
* Managers who stimulate their staff’s efforts to be **innovative and creative** by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. **Creativity** is encouraged.
* There is **no public criticism** of individual staff members mistakes.
* They pay special attention to each **individual’s needs** for achievement.
* Manager’s behaviour demonstrates acceptance of **individual differences** (e.g., some employees receive more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still others more task structure.)
* Managers who **delegate** tasks as a means of **developing their staff.** Delegated tasks are monitored to see if the staff need additional direction or **support** and to assess progress; ideally, staff members do not feel they are being checked upon.
* Managers who create clearly communicated **expectations** that staff members want to meet and demonstrates a **commitment to goals and the shared vision or common goal.**
* Managers who **solicit new ideas** and creative problem solutions from staff members, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. Staff members are encouraged to **try new approaches**, and their **ideas are not criticised** because they differ from the leaders’ ideas.
* Managers who **develop staff members to successively** **higher levels of potential**. New learning opportunities are created, along with a supportive climate.
* Managers who practise ‘**management by walking around’** their workplaces. **Interactions with staff members are personalised** (e.g., the manager remembers previous conversations, is aware of individual concerns, and sees the individual as a whole person rather than as just an employee). The individually considerate leader **listens effectively**.
* They build self-organising, **great teams**.

## Developing a great Management Style

Developing a great Management Style is perfect for managers as it provides an opportunity to learn an executive management technique. Many companies only invest in management training for senior executives (i.e. leadership development), so this is an opportunity to learn as they do.

### Example of a great Management Style

“I am an enthusiastic manager who is open and honest, fair and reasonable, someone who mentors, motivates and develops people to become professional in their chosen field.”

This could be explained to team members and colleagues as.

* An enthusiastic manager - I am optimistic, inspire teamwork and organise, plan, delegate and set goals.
* Open - I am approachable, always available and receptive to new ideas and ways of thinking.
* Honest - I am truthful, direct and believe it’s not what I say but rather how I say it.
* Fair and reasonable - I consider both sides of a debate or argument and aim to make a decision that is best suited to the majority view or organisational aspirations.
* Mentors motivate and develop - I mentor people to become professional, I am supportive, I like to motivate people and develop their talents.

### Consider the following points when crafting your new Management Style

* There is no single, accepted definition of Management or Leadership or the skillsets they comprise.
* There is an operating assumption that anyone can be a Manager.
* The managers/team member relationship is the most important single factor in employee engagement.
* Engaged employees are motivated and supported by their managers, making them more productive.
* Disengaged employees are more likely to be unsupported, causing frustration and disruption.

Limiting your Management Style to one to two sentences makes it easy to remember.

***Continually practising and reciting it to yourself will influence your thoughts, speech and actions and actually change the way you manage.***

## Your Management Style is contagious

The central finding of EI (Emotional Intelligence) research is that emotions are contagious, attitude and energy ‘infect’ a workplace for better or worse. Accordingly, your team members will emulate your management style and, staff will be influenced by it. I was often described as having ‘energy’ that infected everyone around me, it was only because even in the face of adversity, my management style made me remain positive and confident and as a result so did my team members.

Team members will copy the pace you set, the sense of urgency you create, your work habits and arrival and departure times. They will copy your behaviours, your ways of thinking, the way you delegate, how you deliver on commitments and the trust you give.

“The Transformational leader uses charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation to inspire employees to make extraordinary efforts”. Leadership: Good, Better, Best. Bernard M. Bass

# Exercise

## What is your current Management Style?

You do have one, but perhaps you have never thought about it. Think about it now. Use the highlighted keywords in the lists of Management and People Leadership qualities shown above as prompters. It is possible that you may not identify with any or many of the keywords.

The job satisfaction derived from building a great team is nothing short of substantial, it alleviates much of the anxieties and stress that managers often feel and gives you an increased confidence and optimism especially where constant change is involved.

Try to describe your current management style (that is how you relate to people, like delegating or giving direction or even better, how team members/staff would describe the way you manage). Aim to do an honest assessment, none of us is perfect, and this description will not be shared with others unless you chose to do so.

1. Make a list of the Management and People Leadership qualities you currently identify with, if any.
2. Write out in one or two sentences your current management style.

## Craft a new, great Management Style

Now try to describe a new style, again using the highlighted keywords in the lists of Management and People Leadership qualities shown above as prompters.

This time try to describe ***how you would like to manage***, how you would like to be ***viewed and described*** by your team members/staff and your colleagues.

1. Make a list of the desired qualities, focusing more on the People Leadership qualities as against the Management ones.
2. Craft the qualities into a one or two-sentence management style description.
3. You may not get the wording quite right the first time, that doesn’t matter, simply keep reworking it until you’re happy that you have something you are comfortable with.

# Develop a personal Working Style

This is for team members who do not manage staff. In their case a personal Working Style is developed which describes the team members preferred way of working.

A Working Style should include things that are necessary to do their job, for example:

1. Adherence to following process.
2. Following standards.
3. Only undertaking work that has come from official sources.
4. Only going home when all urgent work is completed.
5. Following team rules.
6. Only using the agreed team tools.
7. Other – depending on the specific work situation.

### Example

*I follow process, standards and the team rules. I use Ms-Office and MS-Teams, and I actively try to help my colleagues with their work when required.*

A staff members personal Working Style description gives insight into that staff member, the way they work and how they see their work. It is also an opportunity for the staff members team leader to work with each staff member to modify their Working Style so that it is compatible with what is required to do their job and with other staff member Working Styles.

# Next, do the following steps

### Declare your new style

1. Declare your new Management Style or Working Style to your fellow team members/staff as how you are going to manage or work.

### Practice, practice, practice

As with learning anything new, repetition is the key. It may take a few weeks for your new way of thinking, speaking and acting to kick in, but it will happen, and you will change. Perseverance is required.

Recite your new style before and during meetings and before having a conversation.

As a suggestion, whilst you are practising, pause for a moment before you speak each time, use the pause to recite to yourself your new management style. There is no rule that says we must immediately blurt out a response or answer to someone. Pausing also makes you look and sound more statesmanlike, people will notice it and respect and admire it. Then, speak slowly, aiming to match your words with your new style.

You can test if your new style is working by noticing people’s reactions to your conversations and the observations and comments you make in meetings. Look at their faces for a reaction and also their words in response to what you have said.

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