

Student name: _____ Date: _____

List and explain the styles of leadership used by effective leaders.

Objectives:

- A. Define the three styles of leadership.
- B. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of each leadership style.
- C. Match the appropriate leadership style to a team work situation.

MODULE 9C: INFORMATION SHEET

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and complete the student activities at the end.

Introduction

All of the cases below illustrate examples of different types of leaders and leadership styles that one would find in the workplace. Effective leaders match their style of leadership with the right situation. Ineffective leaders are inflexible and do not understand the relationship between leadership style and teamwork.

Cindy decided that the workers under her were not producing enough. She felt they needed some goals, so she spent a few evenings writing some for everyone under her. When she was finished, she handed the goals to the workers and told them they had better meet them or else.

Colin was a boss who tried to have all of his employees like him. He let them make their own decisions - good or bad. He never offered criticism or feedback. He felt it was best that he just stay out of everybody's way.

All the workers knew exactly where they stood with Carmen, the plant manager. She did not like fooling around on the job, and she was hard on people who made careless errors. But she was ready to help when needed, and she always let everyone know exactly what was expected of them. When she had to make

decisions concerning the workers, she asked them to participate and help her.

What is a leader?

Leadership skills are important in the workplace. Leadership skills help everyone work together more successfully to meet objectives. A leader is any person who plans, directs, or guides the activities of others toward a common goal. Such a person is demonstrating leadership skills. By using these skills, a person encourages others to carry out responsibilities and accomplish its goals.

Types of Leaders

The workplace needs good leaders at all levels - not only in top management. Good leaders employ a variety of leadership styles. There are a number of different ways at looking at leadership styles.

One of the most popular is the autocratic /democratic / laissez-faire model. This model sees leadership style in terms of the amount of freedom to make decisions that a leader gives to those he or she is working with.

Autocratic leadership

This style of leadership is task-centered. The most important thing while using an autocratic style of leadership is usually getting a certain task completed. This style of leadership spends less time focusing on explanations and discussions, and more on orders. Sometimes a leader will use an autocratic style to ensure that those he or she is working with realize "they are the boss".

Advantages of an autocratic style include that it gets things done quickly, it can stop a group from making decisions that always affect a minority adversely, it ensures a leader gets listened to (at first), and it can let team members know when their behavior is unacceptable.

Disadvantages are that it can distance team members, it doesn't allow team members to develop by thinking for themselves, and it is often just an "easy option" used instead of spending time working through problems.

Democratic Leadership

This is probably the most commonly used leadership style. Democratic leadership involves working with a group to make sure they make decisions fairly and sensibly. It involves intervention to ensure that everybody has a say and that decisions do get made. The typical image of democratic leadership involves a group sitting in a circle, having a discussion and having a vote.

The advantages of democratic leadership include that everybody gets a say, it transfers power away from the leader to those they are working with, and it gives a feeling of power and control which in turn motivates and develops team members.

The disadvantages include the intervention necessary - which can be the wrong thing to do, and the slightly overused techniques that can turn some team members off.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

The laissez-faire style of leadership can often be used very badly and for that reason often gets a bad name. Laissez-faire is more people than task centered. This leadership style involves leaving a group to make their own decisions - to the extent of not telling them they have to make decisions now. This is the style of a leader who hopes that a group will realize they are doing the wrong thing without telling them.

The advantages of the laissez-faire model are that it can allow a chance to bond in a less formal way, and that leaving team members to make their own decisions can be very successful if they work well together in terms of the ownership and responsibility it gives to team members.

The disadvantages are that often this model leaves team members doing the wrong thing without realizing it, that some individuals can simply dominate, and that if a group disappoints and is reprimanded the effect can be very negative.

When to use each style

Each leadership style is best used at a different time. The autocratic style is the one to use when a group is in danger - as well as at other times. The democratic style can be used very often, almost as a standard leadership style that treats team members as intelligent and responsible. The laissez-faire style is useful at times when it is seen as important to work on people rather than things, and team members are acting maturely enough to be left to their own devices.

Although most leaders tend to use a little bit of each approach depending on the given situation and its need for leadership, the democratic approach should be attempted in most situations. Leadership involves a set of skills that can be learned. Effective leaders are not born; they are made. By examining your own views of leadership, how you respond to the guidance of others, how people interact in groups, and how successful leaders work with people, you can be a more effective leader, and your workplace can be more successful and productive.

By recognizing that leadership is a group function to which all members can contribute, you help to develop a sense of teamwork. Sharing leadership, recognition, satisfaction, and responsibility ensures that all the resources of the team will be used productively.

MODULE 9C: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TO THE STUDENT: Read and study the information sheet above and complete the following activities.

Activity 1: Define each leadership style and list two advantages and two disadvantages of each leadership style.

1. Define "autocratic leadership":

Advantages: 1.

2.

Disadvantages: 1.

2.

2. Define "democratic leadership":

Advantages: 1.

2.

Disadvantages: 1.

2.

3. Define "laissez faire leadership":

Advantages: 1.

2.

Disadvantages: 1.

2.

4. In what type of situation(s) does the autocratic leadership style work best? Why?

5. In what type of situation(s) does the democratic leadership style work best? Why?

6. In what type of situation(s) does the laissez-faire leadership style work best? Why?

Activity 2: Analyze each team work situation and determine which style of leadership would work best for the situation and explain why.

SITUATION 1:

You are assigned as the team leader of a project to inventory and stock a large shipment of auto parts that just arrived at a large retail store. The tasks involved are fairly simple and requires no special expertise. The other team members are relatively new employees and have never worked on this type of team project.

A. What type of leadership style would be best suited for this team project?

B. Explain (in a complete paragraph) why you chose the leadership style you did for this situation.

SITUATION 2:

You have been assigned as the team leader for a special project to inspect and maintain all of the machinery in your shop. This type of team project is very common at your workplace and occurs several times a year. Your team members have worked on this type of project many times.

A. What type of leadership style would be best suited for this team project?

B. Explain (in a complete paragraph) why you chose the leadership style you did for this situation.

SITUATION 3:

You have been assigned to be the team leader on a specialized work project to design new promotional brochures describing the services of your office. Each team member possesses unique skills critical to the completion of certain phases of the project. Each team member will be required to work on their own in order to complete certain parts of the project. You will coordinate the final product of each member.

A. What type of leadership style would be best suited for this team project?

B. Explain in detail why you chose the leadership style you did for this situation.

MODULE 9C: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Career Education and Work

13.3.11. Career Retention and Advancement

- C. Evaluate conflict resolution skills as they relate to the workplace.
 - Constructive criticism
 - Group dynamics
 - Managing/leadership
 - Mediation
 - Negotiation
 - Problem solving

Pennsylvania’s Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)

1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- C. Write persuasive pieces.
 - Include a clearly stated position or opinion.
 - Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence.
 - Develop reader interest.
 - Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.
 - Include a variety of methods to advance the argument or position.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
 - Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish and maintain a single point of view.
- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
 - Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.

- Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
- Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
- Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).