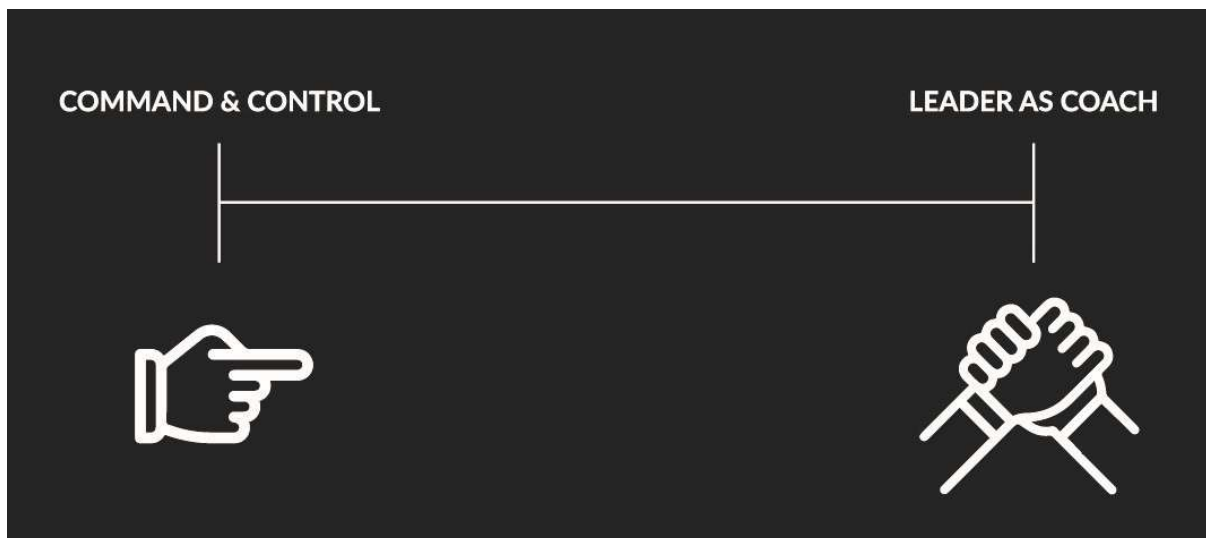


Leadership – Different Leadership Styles

Rapid changes to business models and disruption to jobs and organisations from events and trends such as COVID-19, Artificial Intelligence and automation are our reality. The impact business has on their communities, and the environment, mean leaders have a much more challenging job than at any time in recent memory. Leaders need to learn faster and better, and organisations need to adapt and innovate in new, faster ways.

A coach and a coaching style of leadership will help when a leader can't have all the answers - surrounded by unprecedented change, unpredictability and complexity. Gone are the days when it was possible to know everything and when you could teach and instruct others on how to do it.



There is a continuum of leadership styles. Daniel Goleman described six of them in "Leadership That Gets Results" (<https://hbr.org/2000/03/leadership-that-gets-results>), and your self-coaching journey would not be complete without an awareness of the other approaches. Goleman says that professionals should ask which method best addresses the demands of a particular situation.

Situational awareness and context are crucial for getting the best results.



Each works best in particular circumstances, and like any over-used strength, some have severe negative implications for team and organisational culture as they overly focus on short-termism at the expense of the future.

1 - The Coercive Style

This "do what I say" approach can be potent in a turnaround situation, to jump-start fast-paced change, during a crisis, or when working with a problem employee. The coercive style is an extreme version of command and control leadership.

In most situations, coercive leadership inhibits the team and organisation; it reduces flexibility and adaptability and hurts employee motivation. It is easily misused, so be cautious as it is the least effective in most situations.

2 - The Pacesetting style

This leader sets high-performance standards, focusing on performance and achieving goals. Obsessive about doing things better and faster, this leader leads by example and asks the same of everyone around them. Use the pacesetting style when you need to get high-quality results from a self-motivated, competent team, quickly.

"Do as I do, now."

While this can be a successful style, the negative effect on teams can include burnout, exhaustion and high staff turnover. Many employees will feel overwhelmed by the pacesetter's demands for excellence, and morale and motivation falls. Like the coercive approach, it can be useful but should be used sparingly. Overusing this style can lead you along the path to becoming a micromanager.

3 - The Democratic Style

A democratic leader builds trust, respect and commitment by spending time getting people's ideas and buy-in. They aim to forge consensus through participation.

"What do you think?"

This style is best used when you need to get your team on board with an idea, or you need your team's input. The democratic leadership style shouldn't be used with people who are inexperienced, lack

competence or aren't well informed about the particular situation. This style has its drawbacks and risks, including endless meetings where ideas are ruminated over. The consensus is often impossible to achieve, and democratic leaders may use this approach to put off making crucial decisions.

4 - The Visionary Style

This type of leader takes a "come with me" approach by stating the overall goal but allowing people the freedom to choose their means. Vibrant enthusiasm, clear and inspirational visions are the hallmarks of this style. The visionary leader helps motivate people by making clear to them how they and their work fits into the broader organisation and increases commitment to the goals and strategy. It works best when a business is adrift.

This style is likely to have less impact when a leader is working with a team of experts or peers who are more experienced; as it may bring out their cynical side leading to the leader being viewed as out-of-touch with their clients, their teams and their reality.

5 - The Affiliative Style

This leadership style revolves around people, "people come first." This style connects people, encourages inclusion and resolving conflict. The affiliative leader strives to keep their teams happy and to create harmony among them. To use this approach, you must value the emotions of others and put a high value on their emotional needs.

Affiliative leadership is broadly effective, a good all-weather approach. Still, it is particularly impactful when trying to increase team harmony, reducing internal conflict between teams, improve communication, or repair broken trust.

6 - The Coaching Style

Coaching is about creating change, often to help an individual, group or team to improve their performance in some way. The coaching leader uses communication skills, reflective learning, and structured problem-solving to help bring about the desired changes. In the face of rapid, disruptive change, leaders can't be expected to have all the answers. This style facilitates problem-solving and encourages personal and team development aligned with the organisation's goals.

Coaching leaders excel at empowering; they give employees challenging tasks, even if that means the task won't be accomplished quickly. In other words, these leaders are willing to put up with short-term difficulties to invest in the future.

The coaching style works well in many business situations, but a prerequisite is that people are aware of the need to change and willing to invest. This approach will make less headway when employees, for whatever reason, are resistant to learning and changing their ways.

Comparison table – Six Styles of Leadership

COMMAND & CONTROL						LEADER AS COACH
Coercive	Pacesetting	Democratic	Visionary	Affiliative	Coaching	
<i>“Do what I say.”</i>	<i>“Do as I do, now.”</i>	<i>“What do you think?”</i>	<i>“Come with me.”</i>	<i>“People come first.”</i>	<i>“Try this.”</i>	
Lecture/instruct, demands immediate compliance.	Sets high standards for performance.	Forges consensus through participation.	Mobilises people towards a compelling vision.	Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds.	Develops people and teams to solve issues.	
Best for during a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround or deal with a difficult employee.	When quick results are desired from a motivated and competent team.	To build buy-in, or to get input from valuable and knowledgeable employees.	For when a new vision or clarity of direction is required.	To increase harmony, reduce internal conflict, or repair broken trust.	To develop solutions when leaders can't be expected to have all the answers.	
Focus is on the here and now						Invest for the future

To achieve the best results, do not rely on only one leadership style. Use different ones seamlessly depending on the business situation. Use the right tool for the right job to increase your impact as a leader.

