Leadership Style Questionnaire

Adapted from Paul Hersey and Kenneth H Barnard’s

Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description

Imagine you are involved in each of the following situations. Read the description carefully and think about how you would respond, then circle the answer which comes closest to describing what you would do in practice. You can only choose one option for each situation. Think of how you would behave in your current job with your immediate subordinates in each case.

1) Your subordinates have not been responding well to your friendly conversations and concern for their welfare, their performance is poor and getting worse but you do not understand why.

a) Emphasise the rules regarding their conduct and the need to follow standard procedures and to achieve targets.

b) Make yourself available for discussion of their problems without pushing.

c) Talk to them, find out what problems they are facing and set goals.

d) Be careful to stand back for a while until you can see their problem clearly.

2) The performance of the group is improving. You have been making sure they are all aware of their responsibilities and standards.

a) Be friendly but stress responsibilities and standards.

b) Take no particular action just carry on as you have been.

c) Try to make the group feel important and involved.

d) Emphasise the importance of deadlines and tasks.

3) Members of the group have been unable to solve a problem over the past two weeks, though they have been trying to address it. You have normally let them get on with things by themselves. Group performance and team spirit are good.

a) Involve the group and together try to solve the problem.

b) Let them work it out as they have been successful in the past.

c) Act quickly to give them the direction before their failure to solve the problem affects their performance.

d) Encourage the group to work on the problem and be available for discussion.

4) You are considering a major change. You subordinates are performing well but respect the need for change, though as yet they disagree on the details of change.

a) Allow group involvement in developing the change without pushing them.

b) Announce the change vision and implement in a tightly controlled plan.

c) Allow the group to develop and implement their own plan for change.

d) Consult the team but direct the change to your plan.

5) The performance of the team has been falling during recent months. They have not been concerned to meet objectives and have continually needed reminding to finish their tasks, in the past it has helped to redefine people’s goals.

a) Ask the group to rethink their direction and goals.

b) Ask for and incorporate their suggestions but formulate your own plan for meeting objectives.

c) Redefine goals and supervise the change closely.

d) Allow group freedom to set their own goals without pushing them.

6) You stepped into an efficient set up. Your predecessor exercised detailed but rather impersonal supervision, you would like to begin humanising the situation.

a) Do what you can to make the group feel important and involved.

b) Follow the lead of your predecessor by emphasising deadlines and tasks but in your own friendly style.

c) Be careful not to change things too much too soon.

d) Get the group involved in decision-making but watch performance carefully.

7) You are considering changes to the organisation structure. Members of the group have made suggestions about the changes needed. The group is quite flexible in its way of working.

a) Define the new structure yourself and monitor its introduction because you have the most objective view.

b) Ask for group approval to changes you suggest and let them organise implementation.

c) Make changes requested by group members but control implementation yourself as the leader.

d) Leave the group to resolve its problems flexibly without imposing organisational changes.

8) Group performance and morale are good. You feel you are not exercising much direction or control.

a) Leave the group to continue working well.

b) Discuss the situation with the group ask for their views and introduce changes.

c) Take steps to improve your direction and control of the group.

d) Be careful not to upset relationships by giving direction when it is probably not needed.

9) Your superior has appointed you to take over direction of a task force that is far overdue in recommending changes. The group is not clear of its goals attendance at group meetings has been poor and have tended to be used as social gatherings rather than solving problems.

a) Ask the group to set their own goals and wait for their report.

b) Set goals for the group as a whole ask them to pull together continue group meetings

c) Set clear targets for each member of the group and reduce meetings.

d) Use informal group meetings to determine the issues felt by the group.

10) Your subordinates, who are usually able to take responsibility are not responding to your recent redefinition of standards of work.

a) Allow the group to redefine standards of work without pushing them.

b) Redefine standards and supervise carefully.

c) Avoid confrontation on this issue since their work is in any case good.

d) Incorporate group recommendations on new standards but see that these standards are met.

11) You have been promoted to a new position. You predecessor had left the group to get on with their work without much personal involvement over a period of years. The group worked reasonably well and morale is good.

a) Take steps to introduce clearer instructions, job descriptions and instructions.

b) Involve the group in decision-making and recognise the best performers.

c) Discuss past performance of the group and examine the need for change.

d) Continue as your predecessor as they are working reasonably well and you have other priorities.

12) Recent information indicates some problems between members of the group over the last month. They have been a remarkably effective team in the past with a good record of working together toward long term goals and good team morale, they are a very well qualified team.

a) Discuss your ideas to resolve the problem and examine the need for changes.

b) Allow the group to resolve the problem.

c) Act quickly and firmly to get the team back on track.

d) Make yourself available for discussion to support the group in resolving the problem.

Analysing Your Leadership Style

Writers on leadership style have analysed behaviour in two main dimensions:

**Task Behaviour:** The extent to which a leader focuses on the roles, responsibilities and tasks of individuals, by setting clear targets, job descriptions and instructions to control what each person does and how it is done. Such behaviour is also associated with using formal organisation structures and redefinitions to achieve change it also involves giving impersonal direction to the individual.

**Relationship behaviour:** This is the extent to which the leader engages in personal relationships with members of the group, the amount of social and emotional support given to the group as well as the extent of listening, discussion with and for the group and individuals (see Hersey and Blanchard 1972 pp82-83)

The questionnaire can be used to show your style in relation to these dimensions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quadrant 3  High  High relationship  Low Task  Relationship  Behaviour | Quadrant 4  High Task  High Relationship |
| Quadrant 1  Low Relationship  Low Task | Quadrant 2  High Task  Low Relationship |

High

Low

Task Behaviour

Score the questionnaire using the chart on the following page tick each answer you selected in the chart then add up the number of ticks in each column. Now transfer your score in each column to the corresponding quadrant in the diagram above.

But what is a “good” style? It all depends on the situation. So if your scores are all in one or two of the quadrants you need to ask yourself whether it is always right to use your favoured styles. Surely there must be some times when even the most relationship oriented leader needs to consider performance and targets and equally even if you have a very high task/ high relationship style there is a case for sometimes leaving well alone.

So this exercise is not about “good styles” and “bad styles” but about thinking about when to exercise different styles of leadership.

**Score Chart**

**Actions**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | D | A | B | C |
| 2 | B | D | C | A |
| 3 | B | C | D | A |
| 4 | C | B | A | D |
| 5 | A | C | D | B |
| 6 | C | B | A | D |
| 7 | D | A | B | C |
| 8 | A | C | D | B |
| 9 | A | C | D | B |
| 10 | C | B | A | D |
| 11 | D | A | B | C |
| 12 | B | C | D | A |
| **Quadrant** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **Score** |  |  |  |  |