

Six Leadership Styles

These six leadership styles are described by Daniel Goleman in *Leadership That Gets Results*, which was published in the March-April 2000 edition of Harvard Business Review.

Coercive

“Do what I say.”

This approach can be very effective in a turnaround situation, a natural disaster, or when working with problem employees. But in most situations, coercive leadership inhibits the organization’s flexibility and dampens employees’ motivation.

Pacesetting

“Do as I do.”

A pacesetter leader sets high performance standards and exemplifies them. This type of leader is conscientious, highly motivated, and high-achieving. This style is particularly effective with employees who are self-motivated and highly competent. Other employees may feel overwhelmed by such a leader’s demands for excellence and to resent their tendency to take over a situation.

Authoritative

“Come with me.”

An authoritative leader has passion and vision. They state the overall goal but give people the freedom to choose their own means of achieving it. This style works especially well when a business is adrift. It is less effective when the leader is working with a team of experts who have more experience.

Affiliative

“People come first.”

People and emotions are more important than goals and tasks. Affiliative leaders build strong connections that foster loyalty. This style is particularly useful for building team harmony or increasing morale.

Democratic

“Everyone has a voice.”

By giving workers a voice in decisions, democratic leaders build organizational flexibility, responsibility and help generate fresh ideas. A democratic leader is skilled at increasing collaboration and communication. The democratic leader prefers to help the group make decisions.

Coaching

“Helping people help themselves.”

This style focuses more on personal and professional development of others, than on immediate work. This type of leader usually has a well-developed sense of empathy and self-awareness. It works well when employees are already aware of their weaknesses and want to improve, but less well with those who are resistant to changing their ways.