

# THE NO-DOZE LEADERSHIP STYLES CLASS

## Typical goals of a leadership styles class:

- Increase students' self-awareness of their default leadership styles.
- Inform students that different leadership styles are valid and that each has strengths and weaknesses.
- Help students appreciate leadership styles other than their own and understand how to lead people with different needs.
- Develop the habit of students giving each other feedback.

## When to teach a leadership styles class:

According to group development theory, our students should be busy "forming" for the first few days of a course. This means they are typically working hard to fit in, rather than just being their true selves. This is normal and healthy.

Molly Doran suggests waiting until the group's honeymoon is over to do an activity like "No-Doze." The better people know each other, the better the information the exercise produces. Additionally, folks need to have had a few chances to lead, so they can apply the categories to real experiences rather than to the type of leader they might like to be.

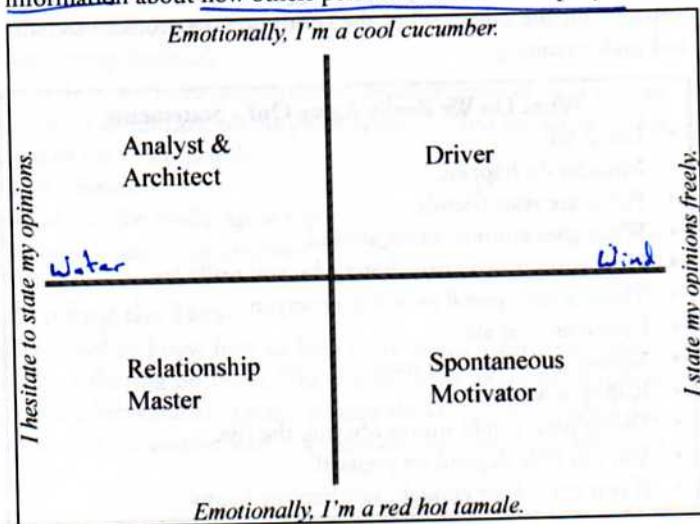
### STEPS

1. Outline a long continuum line with two ends defined thus:

- The extreme left is "water" (or some funny name like "marshmallow" or "amoeba").
  - "I don't often voice strong opinions, particularly if I think it will cause hurt or be a waste of time. I put others before myself pretty consistently. I'm very flexible. You probably don't really know where I stand on issues, or what I think about you, unless you ask very directly. It's hard for me to state my own needs."
- The extreme right is "wind" (or "gun slinger" or "pit bull").
  - "I state my opinion and take stands easily. People know exactly what I think, feel and want. I'm an open book and you don't even have to read the words because I tell them to you, especially if you try to cross one of my lines. Fight or flight? Let's get real—I stay right here and tell it like it is. I don't have a problem saying "my way or the highway" if need be."

2. Students (and instructors, if you choose) place themselves anywhere on the continuum where they view themselves. Hint: call the precise middle out of bounds.

3. Ask the students if they are willing to give and receive some information about how others perceive their leadership style.



If they answer no, skip this step and simply do the exercise as they see themselves. If the answer is yes, ask those who want to, one at a time, to step out of the line and move people to where they see them on the continuum. Then step back into their last place in line and have someone else take a turn. It generally works best if people don't feel they need to justify why they moved anyone yet. Use silence or a few words like "I'm going to put you here."

4. After those who want to have taken their turn moving people, tell everyone to go back to standing in their place of choice.

5. Now, without moving from their place in this left/right line, have people move themselves along a second, up and down continuum with the far ends defined so:

- The top is "cool cucumber/ emotionally cool/ Zen Master." "I am calm and rational, and I do not get flustered about anything. I even have difficulty getting excited about things most people think are neat and exciting. My emotions are a glassy pond."
- The bottom is "hot tamale/ emotionally hot." "I tell people how I feel about everything. I am angry about social injustice. I cry at sad movies. My emotions are extremely active the perfect storm."

These refer to how the person feels they are internally. People can then move individuals to how they "see" them.

6. At this point everyone will be standing in one of four quadrants: Try to explain the continuums in a non-judgmental way or else everyone will be on top of each other in the middle.

7. Explanation of Styles

- Talk about strengths, weaknesses and functions of each quadrant.
- Some people have more than one favorite style. Ask them to discuss why and when they change styles.
- Ask students to go to the quadrant that is the hardest for them to be in and talk about this.
- As an instructor, it is important to let students know what your dominant style is (or have them place you). Demonstrate that instructors have different style preferences too, but may change depending on events, the student group, and their role in the instructor team.
- If someone is way out in the corner of a quadrant, it indicates, at least according to this exercise, they are heavily oriented to one style. What are the benefits and drawbacks to this?
- What happens in a group if there is no one representing a style? Does a group need all four styles?

8. Developing Yourself As a Leader. One goal of developing yourself as a leader is to be aware of your preferred quadrants and your less comfortable ones. You must know your strengths and work on your weaknesses. People need to lead with a style that fits them, fits the situation, and fits the group. Let everyone return to their main quadrant and begin the discussion part of the class. Let each group discuss a few questions, and ask them to report back to the whole group:

- What is it like to lead from their place?
- Which other leadership styles are easiest for them to follow, and which ones are hardest?

## ARCHITECTS & ANALYSTS

*Emphasize meaning and conceptual functions.*

- + information and opinion seekers
  - + good at analysis and process observation
  - + prefer to make decisions based on facts
  - + prefer as much information as possible before deciding
  - + can come out with totally off-the-wall solutions that work
  - + translate feelings and experiences into ideas
  - can be slow in making decisions or dogged in the facts
  - can happily leave most decisions to others and focus on only one decision
  - have to watch out for non-involvement or unrealistic ideas if they get into their world
- If a leader has this style, honor their need for information while also requesting they tell you how they will decide or delegate, and when.

### Some Effects on the Group

Architects and analysts are often in the minority but their function is essential. If a group doesn't pay attention to this area, it will miss out on significant learning that comes from observation and analysis. The group may also be missing important process steps or other ways to view a situation. Too much of this style in a group may stall movement because the discussion, laissez-faire attitude and analysis allows opportunities to pass.

## DRIVERS

*Emphasize action and directing.*

- + information and opinion givers
  - + decision making is easy for them
  - + often the keepers of the vision in a group
  - + great at taking a stand, being direct and making things happen
  - + usually not too shaken by critical feedback
  - often will urge "let's decide" as indecision can drive them crazy
  - will sometimes decide without input from others and step on toes
  - make mistakes when moving too quickly without adequate info
  - can come across as too impersonal and lose connection with their group
  - have to be careful not to "over-lead"
- If a leader has this style, be as direct as possible when dealing with them. Bring problems and opinions to them: they expect this.

### Some Effects on the Group

If a group does not have drivers, they must pick up driver functions or they can fail to meet far-reaching goals. Mature drivers are non-reactionary individuals with much ability in the other quadrants, and they help ground a group. When this style is not mature, there may be too much individuality or structure. Turf battles or a lack of member autonomy and collaboration ensue.

## RELATIONSHIP MASTERS

*Emphasize caring.*

- + excellent at building and sustaining community
  - + work well on a team
  - + great at building rapport, consensus, commitment and seeking feedback
  - + support, praise, and feel concern
  - + display high regard for others' wishes, viewpoints and actions
  - may not take an unpopular stance if it puts a relationship at risk
  - can put so much emphasis on relationship that tasks and decision-making fall behind
  - can forget or downplay their own needs, to their detriment
- If a leader has this style, you may need to ask them to be more specific in outlining their expectations. Encourage critical feedback from them and tell them when you want to know what they think and want.

### Some Effects on the Group

You cannot have too much caring and respect as part of your capacity—it is the glue that's essential for a group to function. As a leader, it is powerful when combined with other quadrant functions. If it is the only style a group has, the group may not take enough risks or make enough decisions to move forward significantly. The group may also avoid conflict to the extent that there is lack of depth in genuine connection and innovation.

## SPONTANEOUS MOTIVATORS

*Emphasize emotional stimulation.*

- + often voice their ideas and supply passion to follow those ideas; energizers
  - + great at motivating people as they possess a sense of mission or vision
  - + good at energetic dialogues with other group members
  - can be emotionally bound to their ideas; objectivity can be their biggest challenge
  - can create a highly emotionally charged climate if they put too much emphasis on challenging others and confronting assumptions
- If a leader has this style, know your own position and don't be afraid to voice it. Ask them to give concrete examples to back up their viewpoints.

### Some Effects on the Group

Spontaneous motivators are often light bulbs. Groups need this function to sparkle, create, prod, stir the pot and impassion. A group without this style may be functional, but somewhat lack-luster. When mature people with this style choose to be detached and monitor their emotional involvement, this is highly effective. If too much of this style is present in a leader, or if they are not mature, a group can be overly reactive or so impassioned about their ideals that they lose touch with other realities. Interestingly, many charismatic leaders and cult leaders come from this quadrant.

**Try out a variation:** Consider describing differences in leadership styles using some other approach. Peterson (2004) suggests the following continuums:

- **Equality vs. Hierarchy:** Equality leaders like self-direction, flexibility in their roles in a group, freedom to challenge the opinion of those in power, making exceptions and bending rules. Hierarchy leaders want to know who is in charge, believe that people in different roles should behave differently and follow different rules, respect and avoid challenging authority, and enforce guidelines.

- **Diplomatic vs. Direct:** Diplomatic leaders focus on both what is said and how it is said, discreetly avoid conflicts, express concerns tactfully, and count on their listener to interpret their meaning. Direct leaders are more concerned about what is said than how it is said, communicate straightforwardly, openly confront issues, and leave little open to interpretation.

- **Group Oriented vs. Individual Oriented:** Group oriented leaders prefer to cooperate towards group goals, make decisions as a group, put their group before individuals, conform to social norms, and feel loyalty to their group. Individual oriented leaders focusing on themselves (their needs, growth, tasks, etc.), being a non-conformist when necessary, using personal guidelines in personal situations, and taking individual initiative.

- **Cautious vs. Risk-taking:** Cautious leaders collect information before making decisions, focus more on the past, avoid taking unnecessary risks, prefer rules and guidelines, stick to proven ways of solving problems and are not inclined to change plans at the last minute. Risk-taking leaders make decisions quickly with little information, focus on the present and future, change quickly without fear of risks, like to do new things in new ways, and are comfortable with changing plans at the last minute.

### Coaching Students On Self-Awareness

Leaders should also strive for competence on personal and social levels. Here are ideas for coaching your students:

- Self-awareness is how well you read your emotions and recognize their impact. It's the accuracy of your self-evaluation and knowing the extent of your self-confidence.
- Self-management is emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative and optimism.
- Social awareness is empathy, organizational awareness and service.
- Relationship management is inspirational leadership, vision, conflict management, bond building, teamwork and collaboration.

Ask students to think of a successful experience and the emotions they felt and perceived in others, and then have them think of a not-so-successful experience and its emotions. Suggest they reflect on the structure, roles, responsibilities and expectations that led to the positive experience. Coach students to consciously choose to drive their emotions in positive directions.

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