

Leading with Style and Focus



...a better way to manage

the
happy
manager

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HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

Leading with Style and Focus

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How to be a Better Manager...

Leading with Style and Focus is one of a series of practical, thought-provoking guides, designed to help you deal with a wide range of management ideas, activities and situations. Whether you are a new manager, or one who wants to hone or develop existing skills, we're sure you'll find something valuable in any of these guides.

This series of e-guides is published by Apex Leadership Ltd. The guides have been developed by a team of professional managers, consultants and educators. The full range of titles is available from [Apex Leadership Ltd](#), or from [the Happy Manager.com](#). Use these guides to benefit from our wealth of management expertise. Let us help you find: **a better way to manage...**"

Phil Higson & Anthony Sturgess
Directors, Apex Leadership Ltd

Using the guides

Each guide contains information, insight and inspiration on essential management topics. The best way to use the guides is to read through each section in turn, ensuring you pause for reflection wherever you see the "Consider..." points. Be sure to answer any questions posed, wherever they appear - they are there for a reason!

Consider ...

Tools ...

Finally, work through the tools. These have been designed to help you use and develop the advice given in the guide.

Tool 1 is the summary checklist. This both summarizes the contents of guide, and gives you actions to take to ensure you use it!

[Tool 1](#)

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Effective leadership for results

Management is fairly simple to define. It's about getting a job done with the people you manage. It needs skills such as the ability to plan, organise, budget communicate etc. But to get sustained results you also need leadership.

What is a leader? And what do you need to focus on to lead your team to achieve results?

This guide discusses some key ideas about leadership so that you can:

- specify the results you need;
- play to the strengths within the team you lead;
- focus your leadership style to support people and get results;
- align the efforts of your team to focus on achieving its goals;
- make the most of external factors.

Consider ...

A number of people have tried to define leadership:

'Leaders are people who are followed.' (Maureen Guirdham).

It's a short, succinct definition which hits the nail on the head.

Leadership guru John Adair adds some elaboration in his definition:

'Leadership involves focusing the efforts of a group of people towards a common goal and enabling them to work together as a team.'

What makes a good leader? Style and focus!

What is meant by leadership style? To some degree your own personal style, or way of doing things reflects who you are as a person. However most people are also capable of adapting their behaviour to the context and situation they are in. This may sound complex initially, but in reality we often actually adapt our approach to different situations quite naturally. It's when you can't, or won't be flexible that problems often occur.

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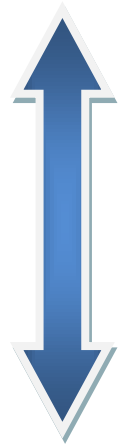
Adapting your leadership style

Situations, teams and people change, so you need to ensure you regularly review the way you lead. You may need to adapt your leadership style to suit the situation, and to the knowledge, experience and the individual needs of each person in your team.

More inexperienced team members may benefit from a hands-on management style, where they are directed and coached. However, this style is unlikely to suit or satisfy experienced people, who will probably benefit from more independence and empowerment.

It's best to think of leadership styles in terms of a continuum. For example:

- **A directing style:** This involves a leader giving instructions and expecting the team to carry out the tasks. Through urgency, or lack of skills in a team, there may be little discussion involved. The leadership focus is more on getting the job done, as directed.
- **A collaborating style:** Although the leader defines roles and tasks, and takes decisions, this is done in a way which involves people in the decision-making process. The leader is regularly in contact, and available for support.
- **An empowering style:** This is the opposite of a directing approach. It can be used with very experienced or capable teams, or for simple or routine tasks. It leaves the team to take responsibility and develop ownership. Little support is required.



There is no one correct style, for use on every occasion. Effective leaders are able to influence performance by switching between styles, depending on the situation.

Consider ...

What's your preferred style? Do you consider a situation and then adapt your style?

Can you identify occasions when you have adapted your style to meet the needs of team members?

Refer to tool 2 for some guidance on identifying your own leadership style.

[Tool 2](#)

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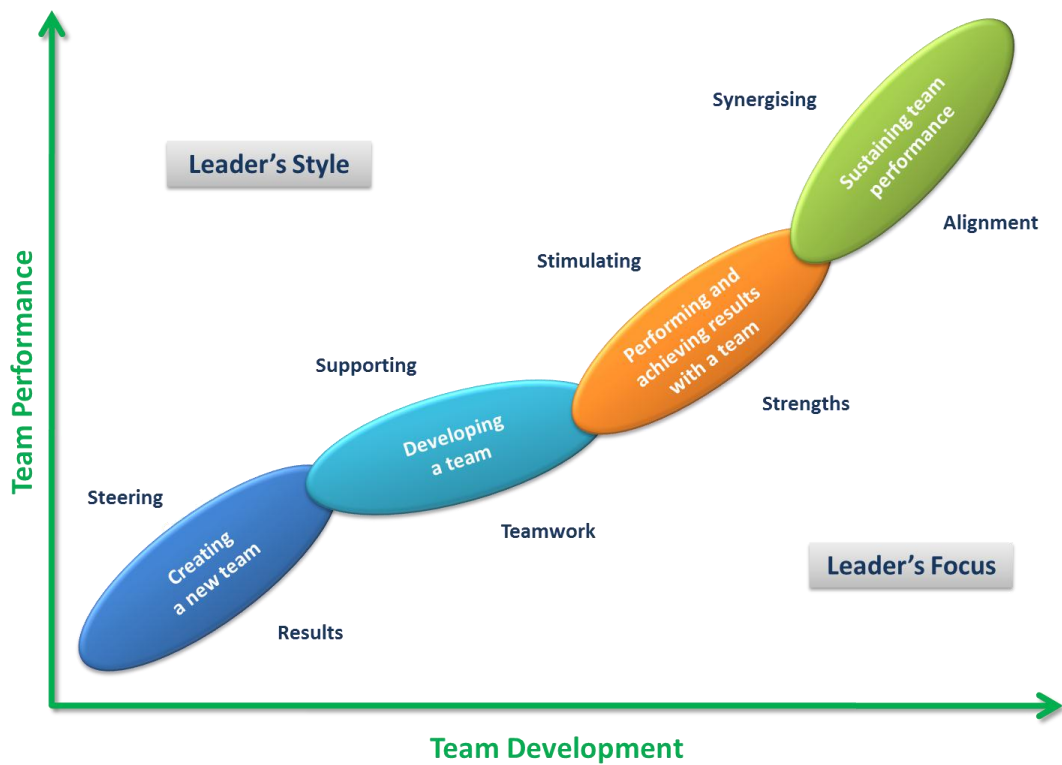
What can you do?

The first thing to do is for the team leader to assess the team's current situation. Next, in order to apply an appropriate leadership style, you need to know what style the situation requires.

Different leadership styles are needed for different stages of team development and each stage requires a particular focus of attention in order to help the team develop.

Below are four leadership styles, applied to the four basic team stages, followed by an explanation for each:

- The leadership styles are shown linked to each team development stage.
- The focus for leadership and team attention is also clearly positioned for each stage of a team's development.



[Tool 3](#)

Refer to tool 3 for some guidance on identifying leadership style needs.

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Join the conversation: bookmark the Happy Manager blog.

(www.the-happy-manager.com/blog) And leave any comments, suggestions or examples of your own experiences for the benefit of other readers.

Titles available:

How to be a Happy Manager
Have a Good Workday
How to Build a Happy Workplace
Workstyle, Lifestyle

Build a Better Team
Team Building Exercises
Team Health Check
The Problems with Teams
Why is Teamwork Important?

Leadership Essentials
Defining Leadership
Leading with Style and Focus
Leading Insights

Transformational Change
Sustaining Change
Making Change Personal

It's All About Performance
15 Performance Management Tips
Managing Performance and Potential
Performance Management Skills
Performance Management Toolkit
Conducting a Performance Review
Manage Your Own Performance
Motivating Performance

Managing for Strength to Strength
Managers Make the Difference
Re-defining Middle Management
Do More with Less
Managing Time and Priority
Extreme Thinking: Unlocking Creativity
SMART Goals, SHARP Goals
Making Better Decisions
What's the Problem?

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