



## Leadership Test

Just how good a leader are you? Many think they are effective as a leader but in reality their staff dislike them and resent doing what they are asked to do.

Test your own skills here. Simply answer each question and score according to the guide in the question.

|   |   | Score |
|---|---|-------|
| 1 | How many times do you talk to each of your direct reports in a day?<br>1 = only once or twice<br>2 = usually between 1 and 3 times<br>3 = more than 4 depending on the current work they are doing                            |       |
| 2 | I have the final say over decisions made within my group<br>1 = Absolutely<br>2 = Most of the time<br>3 = I let group members make their own decisions  |       |
| 3 | I consider suggestions made by others in the group<br>1 = never<br>2 = most of the time<br>3 = always   |       |
| 4 | I tell group members what to do, how to do it and when I want it done<br>1 = All of the time<br>2 = Occasionally<br>3 = Rarely  |       |
| 5 | If a group member makes a mistake they are reprimanded or punished.<br>1 = Absolutely<br>2 = Almost never. Group members can resolve problems on their own.<br>3 = Rarely. Mistakes are a sign that a new strategy is needed. |       |
| 6 | I carefully watch group members to be sure they are performing tasks properly<br>2 = Somewhat. I offer guidance if it is needed.<br>1 = Always<br>3 = Never. Group members know more about their job than I do.               |       |
| 7 | Group members need clear rewards and punishments in order to complete tasks and meet goals  |       |



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|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
|    | <p>1 = Agree<br/>         2 = Somewhat agree. They also need to feel involved and committed to the process.<br/>         3 = Disagree. Group members should establish their own goals and objectives.</p>  |  |
| 8  | <p>Group members are motivated by a need for security<br/>         1 = Yes<br/>         2 = Somewhat<br/>         3 = No</p>   |  |
| 9  | <p>I accept input from group members<br/>         2 = Yes, but I have the final say over all decisions.<br/>         1 = Never. I don't have time to worry about other people's ideas.<br/>         3 = Absolutely. I allow group members to guide the decision-making process.</p>  |  |
| 10 | <p>I ask for advice from group members when things go wrong<br/>         1 = No<br/>         3 = Yes, and I let group members resolve problems on their own.<br/>         2 = Often. I want input from group members when resolving problems.</p>  |  |
| 11 | <p>I want group members to feel involved and relevant in the decision-making process.<br/>         2 = Much of the time<br/>         3 = All of the time<br/>         1 = Never</p>  |  |
| 12 | <p>When there are problems in the group I work with group members to arrive at a reasonable resolution.<br/>         3 = Always. Group members should work together to fix the problem.<br/>         2 = Oftentimes. Group members should offer suggestions.<br/>         1 = Never. I will decide how to fix the problem.</p> |  |
| 13 | <p>I want to help group members fulfil their potential<br/>         1 = not really<br/>         2 = occasionally<br/>         3 = absolutely</p>   |  |
| 14 | <p>I prefer when discussions are made through group consensus<br/>         1 = never<br/>         2 = occasionally<br/>         3 = never</p>  |  |
| 15 | <p>Big decisions should have the approval of the majority of the group<br/>         1 = Never. Group leaders are in charge of making decisions.<br/>         3 = Always</p>  |  |



|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
|    | 2 = Sometimes. Group members should offer input.   |  |
| 16 | I let group members decide what needs to be done and how to do it<br>1 = never<br>2 = sometimes<br>3 = always  |  |
| 17 | I allow group members to carry out their role with little of my input. They know more about their job than I do.<br>3 = Agree<br>2 = Neutral<br>1 = Disagree |  |
| 18 | I entrust tasks to other group members.<br>3 = Often<br>2 = Most of the time<br>1 = Never  |  |
| 19 | I allow other group members to share my leadership power.<br>1 = No<br>2 = Somewhat<br>3 = Yes   |  |

Now, add up your scores.

How did you do?

20 or under: Your leadership style is Authoritarian

20-40: Your leadership style is Participative

Over 40: Your leadership style is



## **Authoritarian Leadership**

Authoritarian leaders, also called autocratic leaders, provide clear expectations to group members on what should be done, when it should be completed, and how it should be accomplished. These leaders make decisions without input from group members. Authoritarian leadership is best used in situations when there is little time for group decision-making or when the leader is the one best equipped to solve the problem or give directions.

Overuse of an authoritarian style can be construed as bossy and controlling. Worst-case examples of this style can be seen when leaders utilize bullying techniques such as yelling, abusing power, or demeaning group members.

Authoritarian leadership involves absolute, authoritarian control over a group.

### **Characteristics of Authoritarian Leadership**

Some of the primary characteristics of authoritarian leadership include:

- Little or no input from group members
- Leaders make the decisions
- Group leaders dictate all the work methods and processes
- Group members are rarely trusted with decisions or important tasks

### **Benefits of Authoritarian Leadership**

Authoritarian leadership can be beneficial in some instances, such as when decisions need to be made quickly without consulting with a large group of people. Some projects require strong leadership in order to get things accomplished quickly and efficiently.

Have you ever worked with a group of students or co-workers on a project that got derailed by poor organization, a lack of leadership, and an inability to set deadlines? If so, chances are that your grade or job performance suffered as a result. In such situations, a strong leader who utilizes an authoritarian style can take charge of the group, assign tasks to different members, and establish solid deadlines for projects to be finished.

In situations that are particularly stressful, such as during military conflicts, group members may actually prefer an authoritarian style. It allows members of the group to focus on performing specific tasks



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without worrying about making complex decisions. This also allows group members to become highly skilled at performing certain duties, which can be beneficial to the group.

### **Downsides of Authoritarian Leadership**

While authoritarian leadership can be beneficial at times, there are also many instances where this leadership style can be problematic. People who abuse an authoritarian leadership style are often viewed as bossy, controlling, and dictatorial, which can lead to resentment among group members.

Because authoritarian leaders make decisions without consulting the group, people in the group may dislike that they are unable to contribute ideas. Researchers have also found that authoritarian leadership often results in a lack of creative solutions to problems, which can ultimately hurt the performance of the group.

While authoritarian leadership does have some potential pitfalls, leaders can learn to use elements of this style wisely. For example, an authoritarian style can be used effectively in situations where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group or has access to information that other members of the group do not.



## **Participative Leadership**

Participative leaders, also called democratic leaders, accept input from one or more group members when making decisions and solving problems, but the leader retains the final say when choices are made. Group members tend to be encouraged and motivated by this style of leadership. This style of leadership often leads to more effective and accurate decisions, since no leader can be an expert in all areas. Input from group members with specialized knowledge and expertise creates a more complete basis for decision-making.

Everyone is given the opportunity to participate, ideas are exchanged freely, and discussion is encouraged. While the participative process tends to focus on group equality and the free flow of ideas, the lead of the group is still there to offer guidance and control.

The participative leader is charged with deciding who is in the group and who gets to contribute to the decisions that are made.

Researchers have found that the participative leadership style is one of the most effective and leads to higher productivity, better contributions from group members, and increased group morale.

### **Characteristics of Participative Leadership**

Some of the primary characteristics of participative leadership include:

Group members are encouraged to share ideas and opinions, even though the leader retains the final say over decisions.

Members of the group feel more engaged in the process.

Creativity is encouraged and rewarded.

Researchers suggest that good participative leaders possess specific traits that include:

- Honesty
- Intelligence
- Courage
- Creativity
- Competence
- Fairness

Strong participative leaders inspire trust among followers. They are sincere and base their decisions on their morals and values. Followers tend to feel inspired to take action and contribute to the group. Good



leaders also tend to seek out diverse opinions and do not try to silence dissenting voices or those that offer a less popular point of view.

### **Benefits of Participative Leadership**

Because group members are encouraged to share their thoughts, participative leadership can lead to better ideas and more creative solutions to problems. Group members also feel more involved and committed to projects, making them more likely to care about the end results. Research on leadership styles has also shown that participative leadership leads to higher productivity among group members.

### **Downsides of Participative Leadership**

While participative leadership has been described as the most effective leadership style, it does have some potential downsides. In situations where roles are unclear or time is of the essence, participative leadership can lead to communication failures and uncompleted projects. In some cases, group members may not have the necessary knowledge or expertise to make quality contributions to the decision-making process.

Participative leadership works best in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. It is also important to have plenty of time to allow people to contribute, develop a plan and then vote on the best course of action.



## **Delegative Leadership**

Delegative leaders, also called Laissez-faire leaders, hand the power to the group members.

Very little guidance from leaders

Complete freedom for followers to make decisions

Leaders provide the tools and resources needed

Group members are expected to solve problems on their own

Benefits of Delegative Leadership

Delegative leadership can be effective in situations where group members are highly skilled, motivated, and capable of working on their own. Since these group members are experts and have the knowledge and skills to work independently, they are capable of accomplishing tasks with very little guidance.

This autonomy can be freeing to some group members and help them feel more satisfied with their work. The delegative style can be used in situations where followers have a high-level of passion and intrinsic motivation for their work.

While the conventional term for this style is 'delegative' and implies a completely hands-off approach, many leaders still remain open and available to group members for consultation and feedback.

### **Downsides of Delegative Leadership**

Delegative leadership is not ideal in situations where group members lack the knowledge or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions.

Some people are not good at setting their own deadlines, managing their own projects, and solving problems on their own. In such situations, projects can go off-track and deadlines can be missed when team members do not get enough guidance or feedback from leaders.

Delegative leaders are often seen as uninvolved and withdrawn, which can lead to a lack of cohesiveness within the group. Since the leader seems unconcerned with what is happening, followers sometimes pick up on this and express less care and concern for the project.

If group members are unfamiliar with the task or the process needed to accomplish the task, leaders are better off taking a more hands-on approach. Eventually, as followers acquire more expertise, leaders might



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then switch back to a more delegative approach that gives group members more freedom to work independently.

Remember, the ***most effective leaders*** will use a different style depending on the situation; for example:

Use an *authoritarian style* if a group member lacks knowledge about a certain procedure.

Use a *participative style* with group members who understand the objectives and their role in the task.

Use a *delegative style* if the group member knows more than you do about the task.