
Leadership is a process

Lets share. learn and lead

INFLUENCING STYLES

- This questionnaire is for you to keep. It is your description of how you use your skills to influence others.
- **Directions**
- Each situation in the questionnaire starts with an incomplete sentence followed by six different endings.

INFLUENCING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

- For each situation, distribute a total of 10 points among those endings which you think best describe your behaviour at work. These points can be distributed among all endings *or* all given to one or two endings.
- Please use all 10 points. Do not use more than 10 points or fewer than 10 points. When you have finished allocating points to each situation, then transfer the points to the table on page 6.

INFLUENCING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

- For example:
- Situation: In trying to influence another person I have to be aware that I don't:
 - a) 4
 - b) 0
 - c) 1
 - d) 1
 - e) 3
 - f) 1
- This is a questionnaire, not a test. Feel free to change any of your answers until you are satisfied with them.

INFLUENCING STYLES QUESTIONNAIRE

- Name one person whose style is similar to yours
- Name one person whose style is just the opposite of yours
- Who is it easier to work with. A or B

INFLUENCING STYLES

Reason

Vision

Assertiveness

Leverage

Bargaining

Friendly Persuasion

Reason

- This style is an appeal to rationality and logic.
- It is characterised by the use of facts, statistics, data and evidence.
- It appeals to the intellect rather than to the emotions.
- There is an assumption of impartiality and objectivity and a belief that the proposal stands on its own merits.
- This can lead to a sense that the argument is irretrievable and the conclusion irresistible.
- Fact is preferred to opinion.
- When opinion is expressed it is supported with well-reasoned argument.

Benefits

- As a style, Reason can generate
 1. a sense of safety and certainty,
 2. confidence about the outcome,
 3. minimising risk through thorough and objective analysis.
- It is hard data
- It makes the future predictable and more certain. (Well researched arguments are reassuring).
- **Individuals using this style are likely to be regarded as reliable, safe, feet on the ground and predictable.**

Reason: Drawbacks

- Based on facts and logic, it usually fails to anticipate resistance based on emotion and feelings
- this approach can be seen as unrealistic, naïve simplistic, dogmatic but rarely enough to persuade on its own.
- Also, Reason by its very nature, is based on vertical thinking and can limit opportunities for generating novel and creative ideas.
- If used to undermine and belittle other people's positions it can lead to hostility and mistrust. **This can lead to other people being excluded from a contribution and, in turn, to increased resistance or withdrawal of commitment.**
- Equally important, this may prevent the development of improved arguments and better ideas.

Vision

- Vision paints an exciting picture of the future.
- It emphasises the beneficial outcomes of the proposal or change in terms of common purpose, shared objectives, i.e. it is good for all of us.
- it does this by appealing to emotions, aspirations and beliefs.
- It mobilises energy, enthusiasm and commitment for the common good.
- It is characterised by vivid language, it paints verbal pictures, it is pacey and energetic in expression.
- It draws in everyone to a shared vision of how the future could be; it is essentially future-oriented.

Benefits

- Vision can mobilise energy and commitment; both are important for successful implementation of change.
- It engenders pride in belonging.
- There is a sense of confidence which comes from being part of a group pursuing a common goal.
- It turns wishes into action and opportunities into reality.

As a style it is seen as active and achieving.

Vision : Drawbacks

- Vision is an appeal to the emotions, and as such risks alienating those who are rooted in logic and fact.
- Its emotionality means that it is not concerned with clarity or precision and it risks difference interpretations and expectations, and hence misunderstandings.
- Expectations may be raised and not met, leading to feelings of betrayal.
- It may be seen as 'hot air' and untested against objective criteria
- It can be fragile, and is highly dependent for its persuasiveness on the charismatic individual.
- If you remove the individual, the proposal's credibility may disappear. Vision can trade on fears as well as on hopes; it can manipulate individuals or groups on the basis of fear and mobilise them in pursuit of doubtful or illegal objectives.

Such an approach may be discarded as 'superficial'.

Leverage

- Leverage as an influencing style is an appeal to higher authority or to the support of important and influential groups or individuals in order to **add weight to one's position**.
- It is a way of giving oneself an advantage by pointing to the support of 'people who matter'
- That support can either be real and active, or be more distant and something of a politically astute calculated guess.
- As a style, it presumes a political awareness of and sensitivity to the sources of power which are significant to the proposal.
- It also means managing one's own credibility as someone worth supporting and sponsoring.
- If the support is being actively cultivated, Leverage will also be characterized by networks of contacts at different levels and in different parts of the organization.

Benefits

- People who use Leverage effectively and actively have high credibility.
- They are seen to be influential because of influential sponsors & supporters.
- People are therefore willing to hitch their wagon to the train, and to give their support to the proposals and ideas.
- Leverage increases and enhances the individual's own power base. As a style it can carry conviction.
- Others tend to be impressed by it as people's decisions are strongly influenced by the political climate.
- Used well, it is astute and avoids the dangers of supporting ideas which run counter to the prevailing political climate.
- It is realistic, quick and immediate, based in the 'here and now', with little need for debate, clarification or justification.

Leverage: Drawbacks

- Given a common perception, that power and politics are 'a bad thing' and to be avoided, those seen to be making use of political support risk being seen in unfavourable terms such as opportunistic, ruthless, manipulative, cocky.
- It is an approach quite likely to lead to others feeling resentment and jealousy because they feel outside the sphere of influence.
- There is always the risk of misjudgement about the reality and extent of the support, i.e. of backing the wrong person or idea.

Assertiveness

- Assertiveness as an influencing style is characterised by the use of clear, straightforward statements about what is needed or wanted, and how to achieve it. Such statements are likely to be brief and to the point. Opposition or debate is not avoided, but nor is it encouraged. It is likely to be dealt with confidently by persistent re-iteration of the influencer's position.
- Individuals who use this style speak with authority and are confident in putting forward ideas and suggestions. They are not dependent on other people's approval. This allows them considerable freedom to stick their necks out and to avoid playing games. They view things in objective terms, rather than judgmental or personal terms.

Assertiveness:Benefits

- The individual using this style is seen as straight.
- Others are clear about his/her position and there is no duplicity and no game playing.
- The issues are stated objectively, with no accusations, and therefore, remain clear.
- This encourages focused debate.
- Important elements of the Assertive style are persistence and determination.
- Not only can this wear down resistance, but it can also enhance the sense of confidence about belief in the proposal.

Assertiveness: Drawbacks

- Persistence in pursuing the original idea can lead to being seen as inflexible, obstinate, dogmatic, autocratic.
- This can leave others feeling that they are not being allowed to contribute or participate, and can lead to withdrawal of support or commitment. The virtue of straightforwardness can become the folly of naivete.
- An individual using this style may well be out-witted and outmanoeuvred by someone adopting a more subtle or closed approach.
- The Assertive style can be seen as giving away all the cards at one go.
- It also risks being seen as insensitive and clumsy, like 'a bull in a china shop'.

Friendly Persuasion

- As an influencing style, Friendly Persuasion is characterised by a readiness to listen to other's proposals and ideas, and to build on their suggestions. People who use this style demonstrate skill in listening actively to, drawing out and responding positively to others.
- There is an emphasis on looking for the positive and recognising, praising and encouraging contribution. There is an openness in debate and an atmosphere of trust and respect

Friendly Persuasion: Benefits

- A positive outcome from this style is an increased commitment to the proposal that comes from people's participation in and contribution to its development. Ideas and debate are likely to flow more easily, because the atmosphere is one of openness, trust and safety rather than defensiveness or competition.
- The outcome may well be a sounder, more innovative or a more significant proposal or idea than originally suggested.
- Such people are likely to be recognised in positive terms as 'builder' both of ideas and of people.

Friendly Persuasion: Drawbacks

- The downside risk is that the concern with building on other people's ideas leads to a failure to get one's own ideas recognised and valued, and hence to lack recognition for a valid contribution.
- There is a risk that the individual is not seen as a success, a winner. The Friendly Persuader's concern may well be the maintenance of harmony to such an extent that conflict is avoided at all costs.
- Difficult issues are not clarified or explored, and the Friendly Persuader can be seen as an avoider or as too soft.

Bargaining

- As a style Bargaining is characterised by the offer of trades, deals, compromises, give and take, concessions in order to reach agreement.
- There can be negative trades, i.e. the potential withholding or withdrawal of something as an attempt to persuade against rejection of the idea.
- Approval, recognition, disapproval, praise, criticism are legitimate topics for bargaining just as much as more tangible elements of a particular proposal.
- For the bargain to be effective, the influencer must be able to deliver what he/she promises. Also what is being traded must be important to the other party.

Benefits

- As a approach, Bargaining allows for and is dependent on flexibility. It is likely to give the other party a sense of influencing and contributing to the final outcome.
- Used well, it takes account of the needs, interests, anxieties, concerns of others involved. It can encourage a sense of reasonableness and fairness

Bargaining : Drawbacks

- Those using Bargaining risk being seen as unprincipled, trying to reach agreement at any price, inept, if the trade doesn't offer the opportunity of something important to the other party, untrustworthy, if the bargainer is judged unlikely to be able to deliver, hostile, if the preponderance of bargains are negative, manipulative, especially if the bargains are tough and hard to resist, confused/confusing, what's really important in this proposal? It is a position of weakness if there is nothing to trade with.