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|  | **GST 224**  **LEADERSHIP SKILLS** |
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**LESSON 5**

**Personality Style and Leadership**

The Personality Matrix

Scientists have tried to categorize human behaviors for centuries. There are several models, but we adopt that developed by Eileen Russo. She uses to dimension of personality: expressiveness and assertiveness to come up with four basic personality styles.

1. Direct = Low Expressiveness + High Assertiveness

2. Systematic = Low Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness

3. Spirited = High Expressiveness + High Assertiveness

4. Considerate = High Expressiveness + Low Assertiveness

**1. Direct personality style**: People with direct personality style like to be in charge. They like to take control and get to work – and they will work hard. They look for results. Are driven to succeed, and are often competitive. They have strong focus and are pragmatic in their outlook. They are assertive, decisive, and have strong opinions. They are not afraid to speak their minds or to make tough decisions. They do not want to analyze things to death – they want to get in, get it done, and get on to the next assignment.

For other personality styles, direct styles can come off as overbearing, impatient, stubborn, and autocratic. They may appear as if they don’t want other people’s input, particularly if it is something that could slow them down from getting the job done. They may not take the time to listen to others or eel that they need to explain anything to anyone else. They sometimes put results ahead of other people’s feelings.

***Tips for leading a person with a direct personality style***

* Get to the point quickly – don’t bore them with lots of background information
* Appeal to their sense of wanting to have excellent results if you need to make a change
* Give them chances to excel and compete when possible
* Communicate in short, direct sentences with a specific request or call to action
* Don’t promise what you are not certain to deliver
* Don’t give or ask for information about personal issues unless they initiate it
* Tell the truth – don’t sugar-coat it

**2. Spirited personality style**: People with spirited personality style are the dreamers of the group. They generate enthusiasm and excitement about an assignment. They are persuasive, visionary, and passionate about whatever they are working on. They prefer to multitask in order to avoid getting bored or stymied. They are not afraid to take risks and can often convince others to do the same. They are great at getting an assignment started, but not always that great at getting the assignment finished. It is difficult to keep their attention on one thing for long since they prefer to do multiple things at once. Time management may be a problem for spirited people as they may have a problem determining exactly how long a project will take to complete and so they can tend to commit to more work than they are truly capable of doing.

For other personality styles that are not expressive by nature, communicating with a spirited personality style can be difficult. They love to entertain others with their emotion-rich tales which other personality styles may find uninteresting or even annoying.

***Tips for leading a person with a spirited personality style***

* Give them time for brainstorming and let them express their ideas freely
* Praise them in front of other people
* Show an interest in their ideas even if you have to direct them to the practical
* Understand that they may exaggerate
* Establish timetables with specific steps so your expectations are clear
* Provide discipline by making it clear what will happen if they succeed and if they fail
* Challenge them to break down their ‘big ideas’ into specific outcomes and steps

**3. Systematic personality style**: People with the systematic personality style are the analysts of the group. They are willing and able to research deeply, and they make decisions based on findings rather than on feelings. They excel at identifying and managing details, and are logical. They are consistent, rational, precise, and are usually much disciplined. They are patient and deliberate in their work style. They are usually business-oriented and not normally apt to share things about themselves on a personal level. They like predictable processes and love stick to the book, and expect others to do the same. They value fairness and playing by the rules.

However, systematics can sometimes have a hard time making decisions because of the overload of information they have compiled. They want more time for more details, and may focus on a part instead of on the whole. They may fear change and upsets in their usual routine. They do not do well with conflict, as they tend to prefer avoidance rather than confrontation.

For other personality styles, particularly those who are expressive, systematic personality style may come across as cold and uninterested. They don’t recognize when rules need to be bent or exceptions to rules and policies. They often shut down communication as a way of dealing with discomfort or disappointment.

***Tips for leading a person with a systematic personality style***

* Focus on facts instead of opinions or feelings
* Give logical reasons for what you want them to do
* Give them time to check facts and reflect on what they learn
* Be organized and prepared when you meet with them
* Avoid personal topics in your interactions
* Set timeframes around when analysis should be done and execution begins
* When conflict arises, don’t focus of personalities and feelings

**3. Considerate personality style**: People with the considerate personality style are the altruists in the group. They are natural team workers, preferring to work with and support others than to work alone. They are excellent listeners, and seek to connect with others on a personal level. If there is conflict of any kind, they will work to mediate it. They are natural counselors, and enjoy helping others. They encourage others to brainstorm and speak their minds.

However, considerate personality style won’t always stand up for themselves, or point out mistakes that others might have made. They will worry more about other people’s feelings in decision-making rather than the facts because they can be overly emotional.

For other personality styles, it is easy to take advantage of the considerate personality style. They will often agree to take on more than their share of work in an assignment so as to make others happy.

***Tips for leading a person with a considerate personality style***

* Give them opportunities to help others with assignments or learning new tasks
* Help them identify achievable goals to stretch for
* Let them know that you appreciate their help and team work
* Express a sincere interest in their feelings, thoughts, and personal life
* Foster trust in your relationship with them
* Encourage them to ask questions and share their genuine opinion
* Monitor their workload to be sure they haven’t taken on more work than they should

**The golden rule:** Treat others the way that you would like to be treated.

**The Platinum rule:** Treat others the way that they would like to be treated.

Successful leaders understand and employ the platinum rule. The problem with the golden rule is that it assumes that everyone wants to be treated in the same way. People have different personality traits. Hence, it is better to treat people the way he/she would want to be treated.

**Understanding relationships through the Johari window**

Leaders and followers are bound to relate with each other. Communication is key and the Johari window model can help people to better understand their communication with others.

The Johari widow identified four quadrants that represent four combinations.

1. *Open Space*: Known to you and known to others

2. *Blind Spot*: Unknown to you but known to others

3. *Hidden Area*: Known to you but unknown to others

4. *Unknown Area*: unknown to you and unknown to others

Individuals in the group should improve understanding based on disclosure, self-disclosure, and feedbacks.