

COMMUNICATION

Comparing leadership styles

LEVEL

Intermediate (B1)

NUMBER

EN_B1_3123X

LANGUAGE

English



Learning outcomes

- I can read a short blog post about leadership styles and relate it to my own experience.
- I can compare leadership styles with one another and explain when to use each one.



Warm-up

knowledge, management skills, trustworthy, organisational skills, empathetic, clear and concise

1. **Choose** one of the questions below. 2. **Ask** a classmate.

What do you think makes a great leader?



Who is an example of a great leader for you?



Reading

Read this article about Lewin's framework.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying www.lookingatleadership.com. The page title is "Lewin's leadership styles framework". The main content area contains two columns of text. The left column has a blue bracket on its left side, and the right column has a blue bracket on its right side. The text in the left column discusses how leaders often adopt styles they've seen before and asks for approaches to leadership. The text in the right column mentions the framework's origin in the 1930s and introduces the "Authoritarian or autocratic style".

Lewin's leadership styles framework

When we become leaders, many of us adopt a style that is similar to leaders we've worked under in the past. We may try techniques we've heard or read about. If what we do seems to work, chances are we'll continue acting this way. It may even become what we call our own "style" of leadership.

But what approaches to leadership are there? What are some of the benefits and drawbacks of each? Let's take a look at one framework

that was developed in the U.S. back in the 1930s and has proven useful to the present day: Lewin's leadership styles framework.

Authoritarian or autocratic style

Sounds a bit scary, right? An authoritarian or autocratic leader is someone who leads by cracking the whip. They rarely consult their team members and have a tendency to tell them what they want and exactly how to do it. They work decisively and deliver results fast!



Reading

Read this article about Lewin's framework.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying www.lookingatleadership.com. The page title is "Lewin's leadership styles framework". The content is divided into two columns. The left column has a blue bracket on its left side and contains two sections: "Democratic or participative style" and "Delegating or 'laissez-faire' style". The right column contains two paragraphs: "meaning the leader allows his or her team members to decide how to do their work. The leader is hardly involved at all!" and "Which leadership styles have you had experience with at work? Which style do you prefer? Should a leader adopt just one of these styles or use a combination of them?". A blue bracket is on the left of the second paragraph in the right column. At the bottom of the right column, it says "Sound off in the comments below!".

Lewin's leadership styles framework

Democratic or participative style

As the name suggests, a democratic style-leader will involve their team members in the decision-making process. Although the leader will still have the final say, everyone's voice counts for something.

Delegating or "laissez-faire" style

"Laissez-faire" (*LESS-say fair*) means "let do" in French and this describes this style fairly well. We could also describe it as very hands-off,

meaning the leader allows his or her team members to decide how to do their work. The leader is hardly involved at all!

Which leadership styles have you had experience with at work? Which style do you prefer? Should a leader adopt just one of these styles or use a combination of them?

Sound off in the comments below!



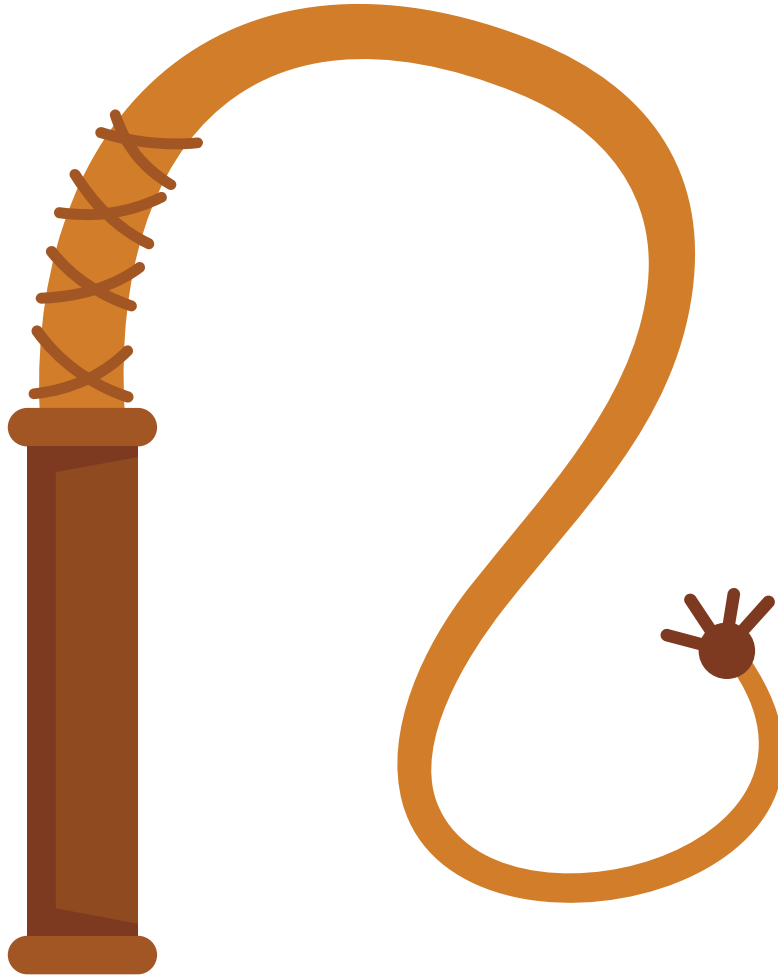
Discuss

in **breakout rooms** or **together** as a class.

Which leadership style do you prefer? Why?



Have you had experience with any of these three leadership styles before?



An authoritarian leader always **cracks the whip!**

If a leader **cracks the whip**, they use their power to make someone else work very hard.

What's an example of a situation at work where it's acceptable for a boss to **crack the whip**?



Find the definition

Match the words in bold (1-6) with the correct definition (a-f).

1 *several **approaches** to leadership* ^b

2 *to have a **tendency** to do something* ^e

3 *to act **decisively*** ^d

4 *a **hands-off** leader* ^c

5 *to have **the final say*** ^f

6 *to **adopt** a style of leadership* ^a

a to start to use a particular method

b a way of doing or thinking about something, usually a problem or task.

c dealing with people by allowing people to do what they want

d quickly and with confidence

e likely to behave or act in a certain way

f responsibility for making a decision



Complete the sentence

Fill in the gap using the correct word from the red box.

- 1 Many leaders adopt a variety of leadership styles depending on the size and levels of experience of the team.
- 2 If you have a tendency to be very hands-off, you may not give any instructions to your team members at all.
- 3 It can be challenging for democratic leaders to encourage different opinions yet still have the final say on what the team does.
- 4 If used too frequently, an authoritarian approach can end up demotivating and annoying members of the team.
- 5 In a crisis, it's beneficial for any kind of leader to give clear directions to the team and to act as decisively as possible.

approach
tendency
decisively
hands-off
say
adopt

Which leadership style?

1. **Read** the descriptions of four teams. Their manager is not sure how to work best with them.
2. **Discuss**: Which leadership style(s) should the manager adopt?
3. **Does** everyone in your group agree with your ideas?

democratic
Highly creative
team of 3 with
over 10 years
experience.

autocratic
Talented team
of 5 who often
miss their
deadlines.

*In my opinion, the manager of this team
should try to be a more 'democratic'
leader.*

delegating

Large team of
15 remote
workers.

autocratic

Team of 4
highly
motivated
interns.

delegate

*Oh, really? I actually think a more hands-
off approach would work better.*

*I'm not so sure about that. If the manager
is too distant, this team won't know what
they need to do.*

Review: *to do* or *to make*?

1. **Read** the examples. 2. **Answer** the questions below.

A delegating leader lets their team members choose how to **do** their work.

An autocratic leader will **make** decisions decisively.

- Which verb do we use with jobs and tasks?
 - *Do* or *make*?
- Which verb do we use with plans and decisions?
 - *Do* or *make*?



Review: *to do* or *to make*?

Fill in the table with the correct heading:

<i>Communication</i>		<i>Non-specific tasks</i>		<i>Jobs and tasks</i>	<i>Plans and decisions</i>
<i>To do</i>			<i>To make</i>		
<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>do business</i>		<i>do research</i>		<i>make arrangements</i>	<i>make a choice</i>
<i>do a course</i>		<i>do paperwork</i>		<i>make a plan</i>	<i>make a decision</i>
<i>do a job</i>		<i>do a project</i>		<i>make an appointment</i>	<i>make a promise</i>
<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>	<hr/>
<i>do something</i>		<i>do well</i>		<i>make a sound</i>	<i>make a mistake</i>
<i>do nothing</i>		<i>do badly</i>		<i>make a phone call</i>	<i>make a suggestion</i>
<i>do anything</i>		<i>do your best</i>		<i>make an excuse</i>	<i>make a complaint</i>





Fill in the gaps

Congratulations on your reports and next steps



To: ALL

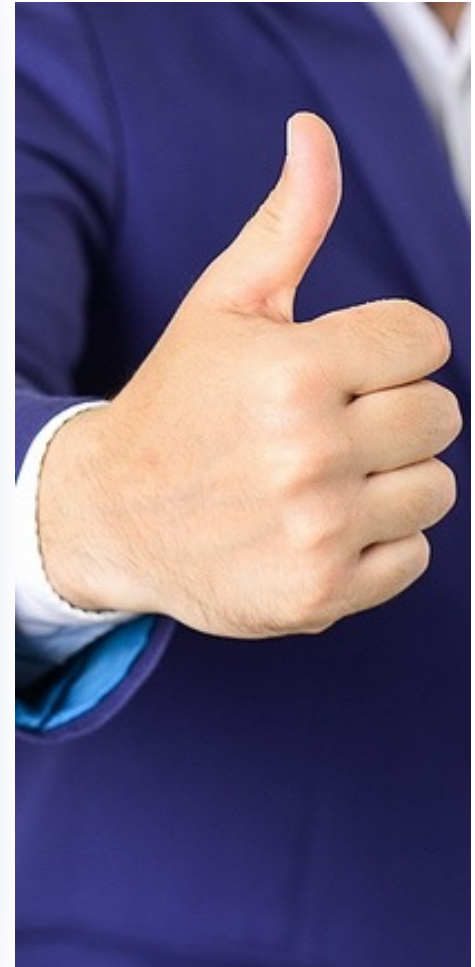
Good morning everyone,

I wanted to congratulate you all on completing the recent project report. You all did (did/made) a really fantastic job on it. I was very happy to see that many of you had also done (done/made) additional research on our competitors. done

As you know, I value providing you with regular and high quality feedback. Although, based on what I read, very few mistakes were made (done/made) in your reports, I would like to have the chance to go over areas of improvement with you individually.

Please check my calendar and go right ahead and make (do/make) an appointment with me to discuss further.

Best regards,
Tim
Head of Sales





Discuss

1. **Read** these two opinions about leadership. 2. **Discuss** your thoughts as a group.

A good leader never makes mistakes.



A bad leader tries to do everything at once.



Discussion

1. **Read** each of the four situations below.
2. **Discuss:** What should the manager do in each one?

1 Your team of four graphic designers all strongly dislike one of the fonts you want to use on the website. The project deadline is in three weeks.

2 Your three interns are very disappointed at the news they may not receive the full-time jobs you previously offered them a week ago.

3 A new company has arrived on the market and is becoming far more popular than yours. Everyone is extremely worried about this new competitor.

4 A member of your team is extremely talented but gets very nervous in team meetings. Two other members of the team have started laughing at him.





End of the lesson

Idiom

to do right by somebody

Meaning: to treat somebody in a way that is right and good.

Example: Good leaders always try to do right by those who work for them.



Additional practice



Match the style with the description

If your team is experienced, knowledgeable and highly creative, this style can be the right choice for them as it gives a large amount of independence and flexibility. There is a danger of the team falling into total chaos if it lacks skill or experience!

This style builds a large amount of trust between leader and team and encourages a variety of ideas and opinions. Some processes may become slower if you involve everyone all of the time. You also need to be able to manage conflict well when differences of opinion appear.



As this style is known for being very demanding, it is useful in a crisis, where clear instructions are needed. If it's used too often, however, this style can be demotivating and tiring for employees, who can end up feeling overworked and excluded from the decision-making.



Authoritarian

Democratic

Delegating





Categorise

Decide if we use **do** or **make** with these words.

**1**

a course

2

an appointment

3

research

4

nothing

5

a plan

6

a mistake

7

well

8

suggestion

9

a promise

to do**to make**



Your leadership style

Talk to a partner about the questions below.

What kind of leader do you think you are or you would be?



Is there anything from other styles of leadership that you would mix with your style?



A company crisis

Read through the scenario below and then **talk to** your classmates about the best style of leadership to use.



- You have had **several complaints** from customers about the marketing your team have been doing for them. They are demanding that you **make improvements** quickly or they will change companies.
- Your team is a mixture of long-time employees and some people who were hired a few months before. You need to make a plan to **improve quickly**.
- What style of leadership would you use in this situation: **authoritarian**, **democratic** or **delegative**? Why?



Answer key

P. 8: 1b, 2e , 3d, 4c, 5f, 6a

P. 9: 1. adopt, 2. tendency, 3. say, 4. approach, 5. decisively

P. 11: jobs and tasks: *do*; plans and decision: *make*

P. 12: to do: jobs and tasks (left above), non-specific tasks (left below)

to make: plans and decisions (right above), communication (right below)

P. 13: 1. did, 2. done, 3. made, 4. make

P. 19: If your team is experienced...: Delegating, This style builds a large amount of trust...: Democratic, As this style is known for being very demanding...: Authoritarian

P. 20: to do: 1, 3, 4, 7

to make: 2, 5, 6, 8, 9



Summary

Describing **leadership styles**:

- Authoritarian or autocratic style
- Democratic or participative style
- Delegating or “laissez-faire” style

Vocabulary to describe **leadership styles**:

- **Authoritarian**: the leader **cracks the whip** and must act **decisively**
- **Democratic**: all team members involved in **decision-making** but leader has the **final say**
- **Delegating**: the leader adopts a **hands-off** approach

Reviewing the use of to **do** and to **make**:

- **Do**: used for **jobs and tasks**, e.g., *do a course*, and **non-specific tasks**, e.g., **do something**
- **Make**: used for **communication**, e.g., *make a phone call*, and **plans and decisions**, e.g., *make an arrangement*



Vocabulary

authoritarian

autocratic

to crack the whip

tendency

decisively

democratic

participative

decision-making

the final say

delegating

hands-off

to adopt

approach to



Notes

