Kurt Lewin identified three main types of leadership: authoritarian, participative, and delegative.

Authoritarian leaders, also known as autocratic leaders, provide clear expectations for what needs to be done, when it should be done, and how it should be done. There is also a clear division between the leader and the followers. Authoritarian leaders make decisions independently with little or no input from the rest of the group.

Researchers found that decision-making was less creative under authoritarian leadership. Lewin also found that it is more difficult to move from an authoritarian style to a democratic style than vice versa. Abuse of this style is usually viewed as controlling, bossy, and dictatorial.

Authoritarian leadership is best applied to situations where there is little time for group decision-making or where the leader is the most knowledgeable member of the group.

Lewin’s study found that participative leadership, also known as democratic leadership, is generally the most effective leadership style. Democratic leaders offer guidance to group members, but they also participate in the group and allow input from other group members. In Lewin’s study, children in this group were less productive than the members of the authoritarian group, but their contributions were of a much higher quality.

Participative leaders encourage group members to participate, but retain the final say over the decision-making process. Group members feel engaged in the process and are more motivated and creative.

Researchers found that children under delegative leadership, also known as laissez-fair leadership, were the least productive of all three groups. The children in this group also made more demands on the leader, showed little cooperation and were unable to work independently.

Delegative leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members. While this style can be effective in situations where group members are highly qualified in an area of expertise, it often leads to poorly defined roles and a lack of motivation.

* "The autocratic-authoritarian cluster encompasses being arbitrary, controlling, power-oriented, coercive, punitive, and close-minded. The cluster has often been described in pejorative terms. Stripped of negatives (emphasized by so many social scientists), it means taking full and sole responsibility for decision and control of followers' performance. Autocrats stress obedience, loyalty, strict adherence to roles. They make and enforce the rules. They see that decision are carried out. Powerful autocratic leaders throughout history have often been praised for their ability to develop reliable and devoted followers and to act as the principal authority figures in establishing and maintaining order."  
  (Bass & Bass, 2008)
* "The democratic or egalitarian leadership cluster reflects concern about the followers in many different ways. Leadership is considerate, democratic, consultative and participative, employee-centered, concerned with people, concerned with maintenance of good working relations, supportive and oriented toward facilitating interaction, relationship oriented, and oriented toward group decision making."  
  (Bass & Bass, 2008)

Another view purports five different leadership styles

## Laissez-Faire

A laissez-faire leader lacks direct supervision of employees and fails to provide regular feedback to those under his supervision. Highly experienced and trained employees requiring little supervision fall under the laissez-faire leadership style. However, not all employees possess those characteristics. This leadership style hinders the production of employees needing supervision. The laissez-faire style produces no leadership or supervision efforts from managers, which can lead to poor production, lack of control and increasing costs.

## Autocratic

The autocratic leadership style allows managers to make decisions alone without the input of others. Managers possess total authority and impose their will on employees. No one challenges the decisions of autocratic leaders. Countries such as Cuba and North Korea operate under the autocratic leadership style. This leadership style benefits employees who require close supervision. Creative employees who thrive in group functions detest this leadership style.

## Participative

Often called the democratic leadership style, participative leadership values the input of team members and peers, but the responsibility of making the final decision rests with the participative leader. Participative leadership boosts employee morale because employees make contributions to the decision-making process. It causes them to feel as if their opinions matter. When a company needs to make changes within the organization, the participative leadership style helps employees accept changes easily because they play a role in the process. This style meets challenges when companies need to make a decision in a short period.

## Transactional

Managers using the transactional leadership style receive certain tasks to perform and provide rewards or punishments to team members based on performance results. Managers and team members set predetermined goals together, and employees agree to follow the direction and leadership of the manager to accomplish those goals. The manager possesses power to review results and train or correct employees when team members fail to meet goals. Employees receive rewards, such as bonuses, when they accomplish goals.

## Transformational

The transformational leadership style depends on high levels of communication from management to meet goals. Leaders motivate employees and enhance productivity and efficiency through communication and high visibility. This style of leadership requires the involvement of management to meet goals. Leaders focus on the big picture within an organization and delegate smaller tasks to the team to accomplish goals.

Another view lists 19 different leadership styles.

**The Autocratic Leadership Style**

One leadership style dimension has to do with control and one’s perception of how much control one should give to people. For example, the laissez faire style implies low control, the autocratic style is high in control while the participative one lies somewhere in between. Kurt Lewin called these control styles: authoritative, participative (democratic) or delegative (Laissez Faire).

Partly, your style choice on the control dimension is a matter of personal choice. The style has its advocates, but it is falling out of favor due to the many weaknesses of autocratic leadership.

Some people have argued that the style is popular with today’s CEO’s, who have much in common with feudal lords of Medieval Europe. These CEOs are simply control freaks who want a “firm hand on the helm” and will not tolerate difference of opinions.

**The Coaching** Style Of Leadership

A great coach is definitely a leader who also possess a unique gifts ability to teach and train.

**Cross-Cultural Leadership**

Not all individuals can adapt to the leadership styles expected in a different culture whether that culture is organizational or national. In fact, there is some evidence that American and Asian Leadership Styles are very different, primarily due to cultural factors.

**Emergent Leadership**

 Contrary to the belief of many, groups don’t automatically accept a new “boss” as leader. Emergent leadership is what you must do when one taking over a new group.

**The Exchange Style**

Sometimes known as leader-member exchange, the style involves the exchange of favors between two individuals. An exchange can be hierarchical between the boss and subordinate or occur between two individuals of equal status. For this leadership style to work, you need to know how to develop, maintain and repair relationships.

**The Laissez Faire Leadership Style**

The style is largely a “hands off” view that tends to minimize the amount of direction and face time required. Works well if you have highly trained, highly motivated direct reports.

**Situational Leadership**

Situational Leadership. In the 1950s, management theorists from Ohio State University and the University of Michigan published a series of studies to determine whether leaders should be more task or relationship (people) oriented. The importance of the research cannot be overestimated since leaders tend to have a dominant style; a leadership style they use in a wide variety of situations. Surprisingly, the research discovered that there is no one best style: leaders must adjust their leadership style to the situation as well as to the people being led.

**Hershey and Blanchard’s Model of Situational Leadership**. Going back to the 1970s, the model primarily focuses on the nature of the task as the major variable in choosing your style. In this model, there are four options: telling, selling, participating and delegating.

**Strategic Leadership**

This is practiced by the military services such as the US Army, US Air Force, and many large corporations. It stresses the competitive nature of running an organization and being able to out fox and out wit the competition.

**Team Leadership**

A few years ago, a large corporation decided that supervisors were no longer needed and those in charge were suddenly made “team leaders.” Today, companies have gotten smarter about how to exert effective team leadership, but it still takes leadership to transition a group into a team.

**Facilitative Leadership**

This is a special style that anyone who runs a meeting can employ. Rather than being directive, one using the facilitative leadership style uses a number of indirect communication patterns to help the group reach consensus.

**Leadership Influence Styles**

Here one looks at the behaviors associated how one exercises influence. For example, does the person mostly punish? Do they know how to reward?

**The Participative Leadership Style**

It’s hard to order and demand someone to be creative, perform as a team, solve complex problems, improve quality, and provide outstanding customer service. The participative style presents a happy medium between over controlling (micromanaging) and not being engaged and tends to be seen in organizations that must innovate to prosper.

**Servant Leadership Style**

Some leaders have put the needs of their followers first. For example, the motto of the Los Angeles Police Department, “To Protect and Serve.” reflects this philosophy of service. But one suspects [servant leadership](https://www.butler.edu/volunteer/resources/principles-of-servant-leadership/) are relatively rare in business. It’s hard to imagine a CEO who puts the needs of employees first before the needs of the stockholders and the bankers.

**The Transformational Leadership Style**

The primary focus of the transformational leadership style is to make change happen in:

* + Our Self,
  + Others,
  + Groups, and
  + Organizations

The transformational style requires a number of different skills and is closely associated with two other leadership styles: charismatic and visionary leadership.

**The Charismatic Style**

So do you need the charismatic leadership style? The answer is no. One can be a small cog in the great machine. However, it you want to be a leader, if you want to have followers, if you want to do anything great, you better have it.

Transformational leaders need a bit of charisma. But if you are in a large bureaucratic organization, you can use your authority and the power associated with the position. Indeed, most people in large organizations lack charisma. They are bland personalities, the person you never remember, who has nothing of interest to focus on. They are the people we forget since they can never get anyone excited about what they are doing.

**The Visionary Leadership Style**

The “vision thing” is something all great leaders have. It was seen throughout history in the great ones. For example, Alexander the Great clearly had a vision of how to make an empire work.

Visionary leadership has many different elements to it. Clearly, people with vision are highly motivated. It’s not work to follow a vision — it’s joy. The U.S. founding fathers, the ones who came up with the Constitution, Mother Teresa (a Nobel laureate) and Mahatma Gandhi are just a few who had a great vision.

For those who wish to act on a vision, characteristics include:

• A Direction. One puts forward a desired future and moves followers toward it.

*•* Foresight*.* Typically considered a part of *wisdom*, it is sometimes said that a truly great leader knows something before others do*.*

• One must be right. Or at least perceived to be right.

• It must motivate.If the message cannot energize those hearing it, the would be leader would be better off teaching economics.

It’s surprising how few leaders really have a clear view of what is happening socially or economically in their industry, nation or globally. In one respect, you might say they are blind. Leaders need a vision, but great leadership turns that vision into reality. So remember:

### Transactional Leadership

The approach emphasizes getting things done within the umbrella of the status quo; almost in opposition to the goals of the transformational leadership. It’s considered to be a “by the book” approach in which the person works within the rules. As such, it’s more commonly seen in large, bureaucratic organizations where political considerations are part of daily life.

**Level 5 Leadership**

This term was coined by Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great: Why Some Company’s Make the Leap and Other Don’t*. As Collins says in his book, “We were surprised, shocked really, to discover the types of leadership required for turning a good company into a great one.” What he seems to have found is what *The Economist* calls, “*The Cult of the Faceless Boss*.”

**Primal Leadership Style**

It would seem that just when you have it all sorted out, someone invents a new set of labels. Goleman’s model of leadership is a relatively recent addition to the pantheon of leadership style. In this case, it is Danel Goleman. A psychologist who can write in more scholar English, he was one of the major people who popularized Emotional Intelligence and then followed it up with a book called “Primal Leadership. Worth taking a look at. It’s based on the application of emotional intelligence to leadership. The six leadership styles one can use are: coaching, pace setting, democratic, affinitive, authoritative and coercive.

Here are the six leadership styles Goleman uncovered among the managers he studied, as well as a brief analysis of the effects of each style on the corporate climate:

1. **The pacesetting leader** expects and models excellence and self-direction. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Do as I do, now.” The pacesetting style works best when the team is already motivated and skilled, and the leader needs quick results. Used extensively, however, this style can overwhelm team members and squelch innovation.
2. **The authoritative leader** mobilizes the team toward a common vision and focuses on end goals, leaving the means up to each individual. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Come with me.” The authoritative style works best when the team needs a new vision because circumstances have changed, or when explicit guidance is not required. Authoritative leaders inspire an entrepreneurial spirit and vibrant enthusiasm for the mission. It is not the best fit when the leader is working with a team of experts who know more than him or her.
3. **The affiliative leader** works to create emotional bonds that bring a feeling of bonding and belonging to the organization. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “People come first.” The affiliative style works best in times of stress, when teammates need to heal from a trauma, or when the team needs to rebuild trust. This style should not be used exclusively, because a sole reliance on praise and nurturing can foster mediocre performance and a lack of direction.
4. **The coaching leader** develops people for the future. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Try this.” The coaching style works best when the leader wants to help teammates build lasting personal strengths that make them more successful overall. It is least effective when teammates are defiant and unwilling to change or learn, or if the leader lacks proficiency.
5. **The coercive leader** demands immediate compliance. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “Do what I tell you.” The coercive style is most effective in times of crisis, such as in a company turnaround or a takeover attempt, or during an actual emergency like a tornado or a fire. This style can also help control a problem teammate when everything else has failed. However, it should be avoided in almost every other case because it can alienate people and stifle flexibility and inventiveness.
6. **The democratic leader** builds consensus through participation. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be “What do you think?” The democratic style is most effective when the leader needs the team to buy into or have ownership of a decision, plan, or goal, or if he or she is uncertain and needs fresh ideas from qualified teammates. It is not the best choice in an emergency situation, when time is of the essence for another reason or when teammates are not informed enough to offer sufficient guidance to the leader