

# Six Emotional Leadership Styles

Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee, in *Primal Leadership*, describe six styles of leading that have different effects on the emotions of the target followers.

These are styles, not types. Any leader can use any style, and a good mix that is customized to the situation is generally the most effective approach.

## The Visionary Leader

The Visionary Leader moves people towards a shared vision, telling them where to go but not how to get there - thus motivating them to struggle forwards. They openly share information, hence giving knowledge power to others.

- They can fail when trying to motivate more experienced experts or peers.
- This style is best when a new direction is needed.
- Overall, it has a very strong impact on the climate.

## The Coaching Leader

The Coaching Leader connects wants to organizational goals, holding long conversations that reach beyond the workplace, helping people find strengths and weaknesses and tying these to career aspirations and actions. They are good at delegating challenging assignments, demonstrating faith that demands justification and which leads to high levels of loyalty.

- Done badly, this style looks like micromanaging.
- It is best used when individuals need to build long-term capabilities.
- It has a highly positive impact on the climate.

## The Affiliative Leader

The Affiliative Leader creates people connections and thus harmony within the organization. It is a very collaborative style which focuses on emotional needs over work needs.

- When done badly, it avoids emotionally distressing situations such as negative feedback. Done well, it is often used alongside visionary leadership.

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- It is best used for healing rifts and getting through stressful situations.
- It has a positive impact on climate.

### **The Democratic Leader**

The Democratic Leader acts to value inputs and commitment via participation, listening to both the bad and the good news.

- When done badly, it looks like lots of listening but very little effective action.
- It is best used to gain buy-in or when simple inputs are needed (when *you* are uncertain).
- It has a positive impact on climate.

### **The Pace-setting Leader**

The Pace-setting Leader builds challenge and exciting goals for people, expecting excellence and often exemplifying it themselves. They identify poor performers and demand more of them. If necessary, they will roll up their sleeves and rescue the situation themselves.

They tend to be low on guidance, expecting people to know what to do. They get short term results but over the long term this style can lead to exhaustion and decline.

- Done badly, it lacks Emotional Intelligence, especially self-management. A classic problem happens when the 'star techie' gets promoted.
- It is best used for results from a motivated and competent team.
- It often has a very negative effect on climate (because it is often poorly done).

### **The Commanding Leader**

The Commanding Leader soothes fears and gives clear directions by his or her powerful stance, commanding and expecting full compliance (agreement is not needed). They need emotional self-control for success and can seem cold and distant.

- This approach is best in times of crisis when you need unquestioned rapid action and with problem employees who do not respond to other methods.

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