

What is Your Leadership Style?

by Amy Scholten, M.P.H.

Whether you manage people at work or lead a group in your community, your leadership style can play a big role in the success or failure of a group. This assessment is based on three main leadership styles, authoritative, participatory and delegative. There are no right or wrong answers - each leadership style can be effective in certain situations.

Directions: please read each question carefully and choose the answer that describes how you *typically* make leadership decisions. When finished, interpret your score at the bottom of the page. Please keep in mind that this is a *general* assessment, not a diagnostic tool.

- 1. How do you typically make decisions in your group?**
 - a) You make the decisions without input from the members
 - b) You consider input from the other members before making a decision
 - c) You let the members make the decision

- 2. When someone in the group makes a mistake, your approach is:**
 - a) To reprimand or punish that person
 - b) To talk to the person and together come up with a plan to prevent future mistakes
 - c) To let the person learn from and correct his or her own mistakes

- 3. You believe that group members need:**
 - a) Clear rewards and punishments
 - b) To take part in setting and monitoring their own goals
 - c) To take full responsibility for governing themselves

- 4. You believe group members are most motivated by:**
 - a) Security
 - b) Involvement in the decision-making process
 - c) Autonomy and self-governance

- 5. When things go wrong, you're most apt to:**
 - a) Create a strategy to help correct the problem
 - b) Solicit input from the group members about how to get the problem under control
 - c) Let the group members figure out how to fix the problem because they are highly knowledgeable

6. You're most apt to:

- a) Tell group members what has to be done and how to do it
- b) Ask group members for their perspective on what has to be done and how to do it
- c) Let members figure out for themselves what they need to do and how to do it

7. The vision of the group is set by:

- a) What you determine is the vision
- b) A vision that you and the other group members have formed together
- c) A vision that the members have formed for themselves

8. To get information out to the group, you usually:

- a) Schedule a meeting
- b) Send it by email, memos or voice mail and only follow up in person only when necessary
- c) Send it by email, memos or voice mail and leave it up to the members to act upon the information

9. When there are conflicts in role expectations among group members, you:

- a) Resolve the conflicts by setting clear and firm standards
- b) Work together with members to resolve the conflicts
- c) Let the members resolve their own conflicts

10. As a leader, you most enjoy:

- a) The power you hold over the group
- b) Using your leadership to help group members grow
- c) Sharing your power with the group

11. People achieve organizational objectives more effectively when they:

- a) Receive direction or even threats of punishment
- b) Are allowed to be self-directed and feel a sense of commitment to the objectives
- c) Determine their own organizational objectives

12. When a major decision has to be made...

- a) You're usually the one who makes it
- b) You try to include the input of the group members involved
- c) It must have the approval of each group member or the majority

13. When group members have suggestions, you usually:

- a) Don't have time to consider them
- b) Are open to listening to them and determining if they're feasible
- c) Let them come up with their own plans for putting their ideas into place

14. Final decision-making authority is:

- a) Always yours
- b) Shared between you and the group
- c) Made by the group

15. Project ownership is usually:

- a) Yours
- b) Shared between you and the group
- c) The group members'

16. Organizational problems are usually best solved by:

- a) A strong, decisive leader
- b) Soliciting ideas and creativity from the group
- c) Giving group members lots of freedom and space to grow

17. Your group members are typically:

- a) In need of lots of direction, structure and guidance
- b) Skilled and eager to share their ideas
- c) More knowledgeable than you are about their work and need very little guidance

Scoring

Number of a, b, and c Answers	Point Value for Answers	Total Point Value (multiply total number of a, b, and c answers by their corresponding point value)
Number a answers:	All a answers = 10 points	
Number of b answers:	All b answers = 5 points	
Number of c answers:	All c answers = 1 points	

	Score (add total of a, b, and c points):
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Your Score	Interpretation
116-170	Your score suggests that your overall leadership style is authoritarian . This style is characterized by the leader having control over all decisions and rarely accepting suggestions from group members. This style can be used effectively in groups where the leader is the most knowledgeable person in the group. However, group members often perceive this type of leadership as controlling and bossy, which can cause resentment and inhibit creativity. The more “a” answers you chose and the higher your score, the more you use the authoritarian leadership style.
50-115	Your score suggests that your overall leadership style is participatory . This style is characterized by group members sharing ideas and opinions while the leader makes the final decision. This style can be used effectively in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. It can lead to increased creativity, more effective problem solving, and higher productivity. However, this leadership style can be difficult to use in situations where roles are unclear and deadlines are tight. The more “b” answers you chose, the more you use the participatory leadership style.
17-49	Your score suggests that your overall leadership style is delegative . This style is characterized by very little guidance from the leader. The group members have complete freedom to make decisions and solve problems. This style can be used effectively in situations where the group members are highly skilled and have more knowledge or expertise than their leader does. This style is not effective when leading group members that lack skills, experience, or have difficulty solving problems on their own. The more “c” answers you chose and the lower your score, the more you use the delegative leadership style.

Source:

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Biography

Amy Scholten, MPH, has a Master of Public Health in health promotion and education from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Science in food and nutrition from Framingham State College. She is a freelance health writer and has taught stress management at Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY, USA.

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