Major Assignment

Communication Practices

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**Q. Differentiate between different leadership styles**

**Differentiating Leadership Styles**

Everyone around us wants to be a leader, right? well, its “easily said than done”. The reasons are many but the main reason according to Forbes in its article “100 Answers to the Question: What Is Leadership?” is expressed to be that every individual perceives leadership differently due to the effect of many factors bombarding their personality and behavior. In the same article, Forbes has written somewhat a hundred definitions relating to leadership.

The concept of the word may be perceived differently but the approach towards this role is defined by many great scholars, writers, and ancient thinkers in their scripts. Hence it is important that an organization has its values, approach, and competencies defined for the said role so everyone is on the same page.

The need to develop this attribute or role is of key importance, especially in this growing age of rapid advancements to fit in the market and survive and can be deduced from IBM’s recent approach towards new recruits, where the candidates are screened through AI systems to ensure ones hired will lead the organization in this chaos for survival.

As previously said the approach towards this role is rather not as diverse as it is perceived since its already been defined by many and is categorizedin “leadership styles”, that can correspond to any personality and behavior studied till now.

Generally, there are ten different leadership styles based on one’s attitude, experience, exposure, personality, behavior, situations, and many other factors. The first 3 were identified in 1939 by a team of researchers under the leadership of Kurt Lewin, a psychologist. The other kept flowing in later.

**Autocratic (Authoritarian Leadership)**

Starting from the least effective, the autocratic, which is bossy in nature. The elements here that drive this type are **efficiency** and **results**. Since its more of a bossy in nature, hence the expectations and results are clearly stated, and opinions of others are not taken into consideration, with decisions made in personal capacity scoring it to be the least effective type. Although having its cons, it is beneficial in situations/institutions:

* Military.
* Scenarios that require swift reaction (no time for group discussions/opinions).
* Institutions that require no innovation/ creativity. Example: Factories.

**Laissez-Faire (Delegative Leadership)**

Is a French word referring to “let them do," and compared with autocratic, this type is sometimes effective to it. As the words suggest there is a free-float approach by the leader which has its own pros and cons. The pros are that with no check and supervision, the members tend to develop trust with their leader and a feeling of ownership is felt by workers but its prolonged bombardment leads to its downside and with no clear expectations stated can decline the productivity of employees or workers .It is beneficial in situations:

* If the workforce is highly experienced and needs no monitoring.
* If the mindset of the workforce is such as that it needs little oversight.

**Democratic (Participative Leadership)**

The most effective type and as the heading reflects, the leader adopting this style has a blend of both autocratic and Laissez-Faire style of leadership. The team is communicated the expectations but at the same time, their opinions are heard as well to further refine the results.

Its best used in situations where the industry needs constant creativity and push the limits of innovation.

**Transformational Leadership**

A Sometimes-Effective type and initially coined in the 1970s, this type is characterized by high emotional intelligence, creativity, and innovation, the ability to motivate groups, and in turn prove to be a role model for the followers. It includes the most important and common abilities that are to be sought in a leader.

Its most important use among all industries is in the service industry since it includes the most needed element to drive the job that is emotional intelligence. These leaders are an asset for an organization and create the environment of well being among the workforce in turn paving way for organization’s success.

**Transactional (Managerial leadership)**

Also, a Sometimes-Effective type Initially explored by Max Weber, a well-known sociologist, as the name suggests follows the principles and laws laid down for managers. The heading “transactional” refers to the relation of the leader (manager) and the subordinate that is 'give and take'. The good actions are rewarded with rewards (promotions, bonuses) while the bad ones are punished (transfers, salary cuts).Its best used in situations:

* Individuals have fixed roles.
* Motivational rewards drive the workforce.
* Creativity and innovation are not as important.

**Bureaucratic Leadership**

A rarely effective type and most commonly found in old conventional and large businesses where the leader unlike the autocratic type, takes in the feedback and opinions of the workforce but is likely to turn them down if it's not in line with organizational regulations or conventional way of carrying out business. Hence no room for creativity and innovation.It best fits in:

* The organization is following conventional business practices and are successful.
* Government, finance, and healthcare organizations.
* Fixed roles for workforce.
* No need for innovation.

**Coach-Style Leadership**

The most effective type of leadership characterized by motivating and creating a challenging and positive environment for the workforce. To familiarize this type, think of a football team coached by an individual who has knowledge about everyone’s strengths and weaknesses and assigns them the position on field accordingly. Not just that, he also helps them further nourish their skills and deplete weaknesses .It bests fits where:

* There is no constraint of time since its time consuming.
* A team with variable skill set is to be set.

**Visionary leadership**

Style of leadership that is needed in desperate situations, an organization or industry is facing, and needs to be lifted off towards progress and back on track or to survive in the existing market and come out glorious. For example, an industry that is to encounter bankruptcy and needs to be taken to shores or CEO Compaq Computers, Rod Canyon, who with his vision for future of computers competed with IBM with an iron rod .It best fits in:

* Small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
* Rapidly advancing industry/ organization.
* Organization undergoing major reconstructions.

**Pacesetter Leadership**

The most preferred one in case the organization is facing deadlines or is operating in the services industry hence this approach is adopted to get the results fast and as the name suggests ‘pacesetter’, leader, in this case, is super focused on resources of time and performance. The goals to be achieved are high and end results tend to shape a leader’s attitude towards his workforce .It best fits:

* In industry that deals with projects as they are time-bound.
* Services industry where the performance of agency is of key importance for its sustainability.

**Servant style**

As the heading suggests the leader with this approach keeps his team and workforce on the front row before any other element. Their personal well-being, satisfaction and job performance come first. Because of this approach, the leader tends to have superior levels of respect and trust among his/her workforce and work environment. It best fits in:

* In nonprofit organizations.

**Conclusion**

From above it can be assumed that:

* Every leadership style has it's own specific set of audiences and
* Some situations repeat in more than one form of leadership style that tend to provoke it.

Hence the best practice is to have a mixture of these according to circumstances, one's personality (either you can carry it or not) and environment to ace the corporate ladder successfully.