

J-7: The nature of leadership-Lauretta Eldridge

Leadership Nature of Leadership

The lessons seek to encourage some discussion about the nature of leadership, such as what the characteristics of a 'good leader' are. Also, consider why there might be different - and equally appropriate - leadership options for the same situation.

The Presentation covers in more detail than usual some of the principal leadership theories and considers the problems facing leaders in introducing change. Some aspects of the issues associated with change leadership are therefore considered in the light of the process by which change can be managed.

The Activity is anticipated to be carried out in small groups - no more than three, ideally - and aims to get students thinking through the process by which change can be introduced and what type of leadership approach would be appropriate given different situations.

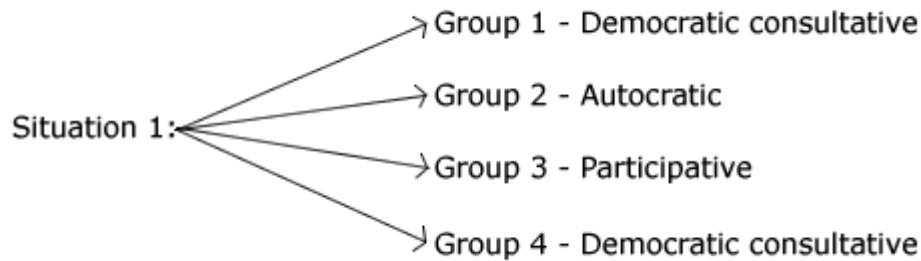
The intention is to try to discourage the idea that autocratic leadership, for example, is necessarily 'bad' - there may be times when it is appropriate - but that there are a host of factors that the leader has to consider when leading change in an organization.

In considering the difficulties, students should show some appreciation of the problems of organizational change, especially the problems of managing human behavior. Most people in education will be familiar with the 'politics' that are an integral part of most staff rooms and the relationship with senior managers, but students may not be so aware of these subtleties and the discussion forum is a place where such issues can be raised and aired.

Once the groups have considered their responses to the four situations provided, the whole class can be brought together to discuss the approaches that each group has decided upon and to debate the issues that arise from the different approaches and reasons etc. that have been suggested.

It is suggested that the situations be summarized on the board or a large sheet of paper and the different leadership approaches listed next to them - see below:

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This can then provide the basis for students to recognize the different approaches that have been suggested.

When presenting their ideas and thoughts as well as in the subsequent discussion, students should be encouraged to use appropriate terminology and concepts. For example, their decision might depend on whether they adopted a Theory x or Theory y approach to staff, as well as incorporating other facets of communication skills and motivation theory they may have already covered as part of the course.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the lessons, students should be able to:

- **Identify the main types of leadership style**
- **Identify the main characteristics of different theories of leadership - trait, transactional, etc.**
- **Demonstrate an ability to apply different leadership styles and characteristics to different business situations**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the problems associated with leading change in an organization**
- **Show an understanding of the process by which individuals and groups cope with change**
- **Demonstrate an understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of different leadership approaches to a problem**

Resources

- [PowerPoint Presentation - Leadership](#) [171K] ([basic version](#) also available for quicker download [148K])

- [Mind Map - Leadership](#)
- [Activity - Leadership](#)

Lesson Structure:

Lesson 1

- Ask students to think about one person who they regard as being a good, strong leader. Get the students to write down 4 things that they think makes this person a strong leader (it can be from any field).
- Discuss the feedback from this exercise - try to make a list of characteristics that define (at this stage) what makes a good leader.
- Look at the Mind Map to highlight the different types of leadership style and the theories of leadership - can the characteristics discussed so far be classified in any of the styles/theories?
- Show the Presentation and discuss the different styles and theories of leadership encouraging students to think of when the different styles might be most appropriate.
- Introduce the Activity explaining what the aims and process will be, divide the class into groups - suggested to be no more than three.
- Review the main outcomes of the lesson.

Lesson 2

- Remind students of the Activity and its aims.
- Break out into groups and carry out the task.
- Come back together for feedback and discussion of the issues raised.
- Review the main outcomes of the lesson.