

## TIPS ON COALITION LEADERSHIP

Developing and overseeing a coalition requires all different kinds of leadership styles and techniques. Listed below are various styles of leadership that may be required when working to develop a coalition, along with some helpful tips for navigating which type of leadership may be most useful in certain situations.

An individual's leadership style refers to their characteristics and behaviors that they exhibit when motivating, guiding, or managing a task or a group of people. Each style has its own pros and cons, and we have described a few below. These are listed alphabetically, and the order has no significance:

- a. **Autocratic:** In this approach, the party in power gives direction to their subordinates. Decisions are made quickly and teams deliver, but team members may feel unseen or restricted in their thinking.
- b. **Bureaucratic:** This approach usually comes from title or position as opposed to personality or other characteristics. This offers stability in leadership; however, it can lead to rigidity and decreased creativity among team members.
- c. **Charismatic:** This approach capitalizes on a leader's charm, excellent communication skills, and other attractive personality traits to influence a team's goals and direction. The team can become willing to agree to objectives and meet demands for such a leader, but the constant focus on the individual may detract from broader team/organization goals.
- d. **Democratic or Participative:** This approach typically allows for input from the team on ideas, goals, projects, and outcomes. Thus, this approach tends to be more collaborative than top-down management. While imaginations are freed up and employees find more satisfaction in their jobs, coming to a consensus can often be time-consuming and expensive.
- e. **Laissez-Faire:** This type of leadership takes a non-interventionist approach. Teams may be more creative and confident, but they also must be disciplined and self-motivated to successfully achieve their goals.
- f. **Transactional:** This approach rewards satisfactory work with recognition and penalizes underperforming team members. This style clearly outlines tasks to be completed, but it can be seen as inflexible, stifle free thinkers, and create discontent amongst team members.
- g. **Transformative:** This approach leads by infusing excitement into the team and finding more efficient ways to complete tasks. However, the leader may upend long-standing procedures or traditions in the process and create resentment within the team.

The leadership styles that you choose to utilize in different situations will be important, but successful leadership is the product of multiple factors outside of style. No matter the leadership style, effective leaders consistently embody a set of

characteristics. Below are some key leadership qualities needed to create a successful and collaborative workforce:

- Effective leaders have a mindset that allows them to bring out the best in the team or workforce. In order to do this, leaders must recognize that each individual has an important role to play. A great leader helps team members discover and build on their unique or unused talents to help reach team goals.
- Valued leaders bring positivity, a sense of confidence, and a strong desire for success to team efforts while ensuring that honesty and integrity drive the process. They focus on goals while simultaneously ensuring that people know that they are the most important part of the endeavor.
- Unpretentious leaders are trusted and in turn, trust others. These leaders do not lose sight of themselves. They remain true to their values and are honest about their strengths and their vulnerabilities. This leader keeps promises while relying on employees and participants to demonstrate honesty, as well.
- Good leaders admit when errors are made, take responsibility for the cause, and seek resolution without pardoning the mistake. Accountability is crucial to the restorative process of the team and the project or effort. A natural leader will live out the qualities valued by the team and expect the same from them.
- Successful leaders have a presence, whether they are addressing a large group or speaking with someone one-on-one. They practice passive and active listening as appropriate and reaffirm the value of each person on the team. This type of leader will not only *listen* to other's ideas and suggestions, they will *engage* with them by asking questions and demonstrating interest.
- Empowering others is the quintessential trait of celebrated leaders. Sincere confidence in the delegation of tasks without fear of diminishing the role of the leader is hugely motivating to the team. There is no fear of abuse of power when team members feel trusted, recognized, and capable.