

The Four Leadership Styles

Directions: Read the following descriptions of the four leadership styles. Which best describes you as a leader? Note the contexts where you minister best and the strengths that you bring to that context or situation. Also, be aware of your weaknesses.

Directors (The Strong Leadership Style)

Context. Directors are task-oriented leaders. As such, they bring this strength to ministries that need more task orientation.

Strengths. Directors excel at the task-oriented aspects of leadership. Some are visionaries and most set lofty goals for their ministries and regularly challenge people to accomplish those goals. They're change agents who question the status quo and may struggle with maintaining traditions. They tend to be point pastors in their churches and are often involved in leading church planting and refocusing efforts.

Weaknesses. While Directors are strong, task-oriented leaders, they often struggle with the relational side of leadership. They have to resist the temptation to take control of a ministry and to work around rather than with a ministry team.

Inspirational (The Personable Leadership Style)

Context. Inspirational are people-oriented leaders that bring this strength to ministries that need a more relational orientation. Like the Directors, they often gravitate to lead positions, especially in church contexts.

Strengths. Some temperament tools call Inspirational leaders influencers because they tend to be natural born leaders, especially in relating well to people. Thus, they, too, often lead church planting and refocusing efforts.

Weaknesses. However, some Inspirational can be loud and obnoxious. They enjoy being the center of attention, and that often bothers followers. While Inspirational are strong relationally, they may struggle at accomplishing necessary leadership tasks and may prove to be weak at administration.

Diplomats. (The Supportive Leadership Style)

Context. Diplomats are people-oriented leaders who, like the Inspirational, bring a more relational orientation to the ministry context. They lead best in situations that call for a person that is caring, supportive, friendly, and patient. They prefer a slower ministry pace and resist change environments because they're concerned about the risks change brings and how it will affect people.

Strengths. Other leaders praise Diplomats for their loyalty and support, especially in difficult times. They are great team players that cooperate well with their teammates in accomplishing ministry tasks.

Weaknesses. Some people complain that Diplomats are so nice that it's hard to be angry with them when you need to be—you don't want to hurt their feelings. Diplomats would benefit by being more proactive and taking the initiative in ministry opportunities.

Analyticals (The Conscientious Leadership Style)

Context. Analyticals are task-oriented leaders. Thus, they can bring certain complementary, task-oriented abilities to their ministry contexts. They lead well in ministry situations calling for people that are analytical, factual, probing, detail oriented, and that demand high quality. An example is an academic or teaching setting such as a Bible college or seminary classroom. They also function well as lead pastors of churches that emphasize a strong pulpit characterized by deep Bible teaching, the teacher-pastor model.

Strengths. Analyticals are conscientious, self-disciplined leaders that are self-starters. They are good at evaluating their church and ministry programs and holding churches to their theological moorings. Some people are attracted to Analyticals for their careful, accurate Bible teaching. Analyticals who preach prefer to cover the Bible in depth, using lots of facts and details to support their conclusions.

Weaknesses. In their leadership roles, Analyticals attempt to maintain the status quo or even look to the past and tradition for direction. Consequently, they may not see the need to move into the future and consider new ministry approaches. Analyticals have a tendency to be critical of innovative leaders that do ministry differently, and they may even stir up negative feelings toward them. They would benefit much by developing strong relational ministry skills with their staff and congregation.

These leadership styles also combine to form at least sixteen different styles. For example, the Director style could have the following combinations: Director-Inspirational, Director-Diplomat, and Director-analytical. Perhaps you noted that you have a combination of two or possibly more styles.