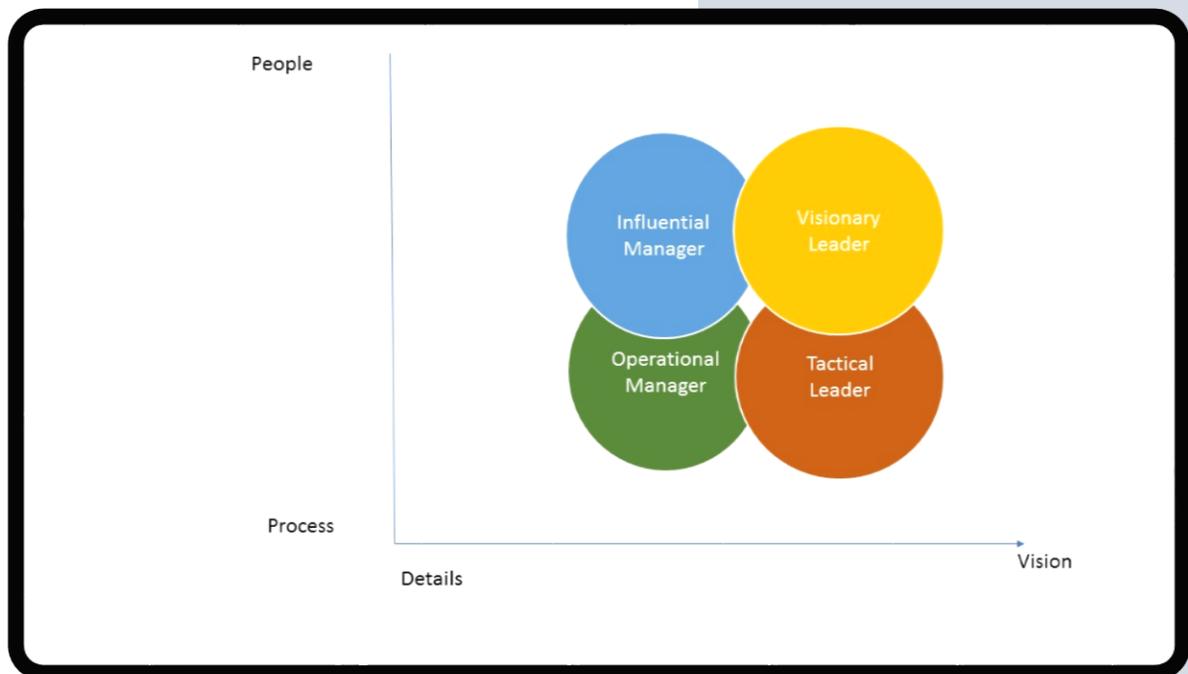


Leadership Effectiveness Style



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TRUE STAR LEADERSHIP

Leadership Effectiveness Style:

Introduction:

I started to do my research on leadership styles, because an individual asked me the difference between a manager and a leader. The more I thought about this question, the more I realized that it was a false narrative. A leader can be a manager. A manager can be a leader. After reaching this conclusion, I pondered how the terms manager and leader should be differentiated. I realized that it was how they approached their job. A manager is more likely to focus on the details and process of an organization, and a leader focuses more on the strategic vision and people of the organization. All four of these considerations; details, process, strategic vision and people are critical to an efficient organization.

In this white paper, I explain the different leadership effectiveness styles and how they impact an organization. What is clear from the research is that all four of the defined leadership styles are effective in the right organizational environment. Some individual leaders will not fit into one of the four distinct leadership styles because they are not effective leaders. Usually, this means they focus on a single consideration. For instance, spending all their time on creating a vision for an organization and not spending any time making sure it is executed. Or focused on the details and not spending any effort on how to move the company to the next level.

If you are interested in learning about your leadership effectiveness style, you can take the assessment I created at my website. www.johnthalheimer.com. This will give you an overview of your “home base” style – the one you are most comfortable in. As leaders, it is our responsibility to flex our leadership style based on the organizational environment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at john@johnthalheimer.com.

John

Leadership Effectiveness Style:

Our Leadership Style is how we interact with the people and the processes of an organization. My research and experience have lead me to believe that there are four distinct leadership styles that leaders use to get positive results.

Leadership is contextual – different skills, characteristics, and influence levels are necessary for a leader to be successful in various environments. A leader of a fast moving, disruptive company needs a different leadership style, then a head of traditional, slow moving organization. The key to leadership success is based on using the right leadership style in the right organizational environment.

In working with leaders and potential leaders, I am asked what the difference between a manager and a leader is. I hate this question because it is a false narrative. Cannot a manager be a leader? Cannot a leader be a manager? People who are usually considered a manager focus on the details and the process of an organization. Individuals who are regarded as a leader focus on the people and the vision of an organization.

A Leader is anyone who influences another person's or a group of people's performances towards a common goal.



With this definition in mind, the leadership style is how we choose to interact with the people and processes of an organization. We can be at any leadership level within the organization and have a different leadership style; a supervisor, a manager, a director, a vice president, or a Chief Executive Office.

The four leadership styles I have defined are based on a horizontal axis of details and vision and a vertical axis of process and people. In general terms, as humans,

we have a preference for looking at the details of things or looking at a whole of things. We also have a preference between focusing on people or processes.

Very rarely does a single individual just focus on process or just focus on people, there is some gradient where a person might focus on process seventy percent of the time and focus on people thirty percent of the time. The same can be seen in the horizontal axis between details and vision. However, we do have a zone of comfort where it is most comfortable for us to interact with an organization we are leading.

And where we are most comfortable will change based on our life and work experience. Working with one leader who was moving from a supervisor role where she had focused on the process of the organization into a managerial role, we worked on building her connection with the people of her department so that she could increase her influence in the organization.

The Four Leadership Styles:

1. Operations Manager (Analytical)

- Their focus is on the details and processes of the organization. They spend a lot of time with data and metrics trying to make sense of how everything is connected and how to create the best efficiencies.
- **Pros:** The OM will know the details of the business well and be able to relate those details to the processes used within the organization. When changes are made, they will be the first to understand the impact on the business.
- **Cons:** The OM will at times forget that the processes are used by people who cannot fit comfortably into easily into one of his/her boxes. Because they spend most of their time in the details, they will lose sight of the larger picture and may advocate for a new process because it makes more practical sense without understanding its impact on the whole of the organization.

2. Tactical Leader (Planner)

- Their focus is on how the processes can impact the long-term growth of the organization. They create efficient processes to reach their goals.
- Pros: The TL will be able to connect processes to the mission or vision of the organization. And make the necessary changes to move the business in a better direction.
- Cons: Will focus on the processes and vision of an organization at the expense of the employees and the rest of the stakeholders. May dismiss details as unimportant if they do not align with his/her vision for the organization.

3. Influential Manager (Influencer)

- Their focus is on the people of the organization and how the metrics and data tell their story.
- Pros: The IM will work well with individuals across the organization, making sure that they are engaged and willing to move the organization to the next level. Provides a valuable resource to gauge the temperature of employees.
- Cons: The IM will champion people over process, losing sight of the long-term objectives of the organization. Additionally, the IM may focus so much on the details that they lose perspective of who they are working with.

4. Visionary Leader (visionary)

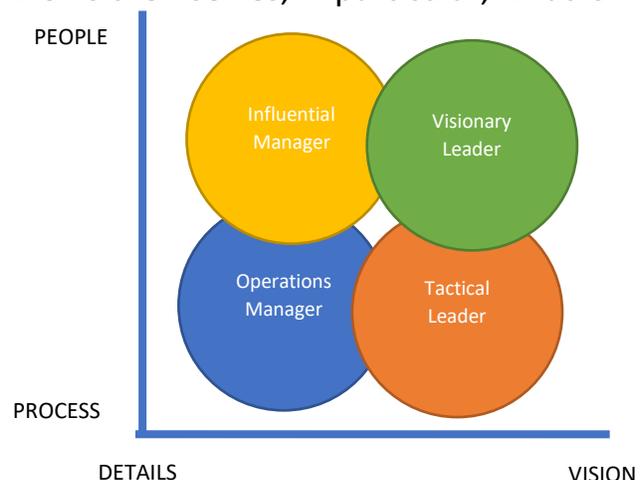
- Their focus is on the future of the organization and creating influential partnerships to bring the organization to the next level.

- Pros: The VL will see past the horizon and have a distinct vision of what the company can achieve. The VL will work hard to influence people to achieve the vision he/she sees for the enterprise.
- Cons: The VL may make a decision without actually understanding the impact on the organization. Can get frustrated with "management" of the organization getting in the way of success.

Effective Leadership Style:

Each one of these is an effective leadership style that can improve an organization within the right context or work environment. They can also be ineffective if applied to the wrong work environment. When I started my career, my leadership style was one of Operations Manager, so much that I only thought of people as cogs in my machine. I didn't relate to them, nor did I consider their human side when developing my process. I had success in working this way. As I moved up in leadership responsibility, my success started to falter because I was using the wrong leadership style in the new context/environment.

When I start working with an Organizational Leader, one of our first conversations will be to understand how well a leader knows themselves, in particular, what is their leadership style and how effective is it in their work environment. For us to be successful leaders, we must understand who we are; our strengths, the behaviors that hold us back, our motivation, and our objectives. Without this, we do not know where we stand.



As a leadership guide, it is my responsibility to take my client from Point A (Actual Performance) to Point B (Better Performance), but this doesn't work if my client doesn't have a clear understanding of how well they are performing. I have used many methods to understand this but the best works when I talk to their colleagues and ask them how my client's performance is impacting their own and what advice or suggestions do they have to improve my client's performance. These insights are invaluable.

In my experience, a lot of the challenges my clients face are how they are applying their leadership style. Are they being too process oriented when the context calls for more of a people approach? Are they presenting fantastic ideas without understanding how it will impact the metrics of the organization? Are they spending so much time analyzing the details, that they aren't making any decisions?

As Leaders, we need to learn to flex our leadership style based on the context or the environment. At first, this will be uncomfortable as we will be asking ourselves to step outside our comfort zone. However, it is a necessary journey for us to take to be effective leaders.

When I was in high school, I had debilitating shyness. If you asked me to speak in front of my classmates, I would have rather poked my eyes out with my pencil. Today, I stand in front of an audience and share my knowledge on leadership. It was a long journey to be comfortable standing in front of an audience. As my career grew, I gain experience, stretching my zone of comfort, giving myself more confidence on speaking to larger and larger crowds. At times I still stumble, forget what I am going to say or the words get jumbled together but I know it is momentarily and I will be better next time.

The Leadership Journey is similar. We start out leading small groups and then building to larger



and larger groups until we are influencing hundreds if not thousands of individuals. This journey begins with understanding who we are and how our leadership style will impact our effectiveness.

As you begin your journey anew, don't be afraid to ask for guidance. As an individual who has been helped by other leaders and has helped other leaders, guidance from an experienced person can be all the difference between whether you are successful or not. Not asking for help is the number one mistake leaders make, don't let it be your downfall.

Each week I put aside time to meet with leaders and listen to their leadership challenge and offer my advice from over twenty-five years of leadership experience and research. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me, no question is stupid, no challenge too crazy, no leader that cannot improve. Success is up to you, but I am willing to guide you if you are prepared to put effort into being successful.

John