



Should You Change Your Management Style?

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A good manager has lots of qualities: **ambition**, drive and the **resourcefulness** to lead a company into the future. But additionally, managers need to decide what relationship they will have with their team-members. Let's review the three major options.

Authoritarian style - Here the manager remains **distant**. He or she makes all the decisions, gives the orders and expects **subordinates** to obey. This style is **limiting**, but is useful when quick decisions need to be made.

Paternalistic style - Here the manager is more approachable and gives workers the chance to **contribute** to decision-making. However, although the manager may **consult** the staff, ultimately, he or she will make all the major decisions.

Democratic style - Here, the manager **empowers** the workers and gives them the **autonomy** to make their own decisions. The advantage of this is that it can improve **morale** and **motivation**, but on the negative side, decision-making is a slow process.

No one of the management styles above is right. Each has its pluses and minuses depending on the nature of the business. However the style you choose can **make or break** your company, so it's worth reassessing your style. It could make your company more productive.



Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- 1 What are the qualities of a good manager?
- 2 What are the qualities of a bad manager?

Reading

2 Listen and read this blog about management styles. Then, mark the sentences as true (T) or false (F). What styles can a manager adopt? Tell the class.

- 1 — An authoritarian manager gets advice from his workers.
- 2 — Staff members with a paternalistic manager will contribute.
- 3 — Giving workers more independence slows the decision making processes.

Vocabulary

3 Write a word that is similar in meaning to the underlined part.

- 1 Buying lunch for employees improves their happiness.
_ o _ _ _
- 2 The project could lead to the success or failure of the company. m _ _ _ _ r
_ r _ _ _
- 3 Workers do their best when given some independence.
_ _ t _ _ _ m _
- 4 Giving the power to make decisions to employees makes them loyal.
e _ _ o _ _ _ i _ _
- 5 Employees don't approach managers who are removed from the group. d _ _ t _ _ _
- 6 Being inclusive of all employees' opinions can make employees happy. _ _ m _ _ _ a _ _ c
- 7 Try to provide employees with the urge to do something well. _ _ _ _ v _ _ i _ _
- 8 Most employees dislike Mr. Gray's controlling style of management.
a _ _ _ o _ _ _ a _ _ _ _ s _ y _ _

- 4 Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank.

Word BANK

contributes subordinates limiting ambition
consult resourcefulness paternalistic

- _____ your manager for advice.
- People with _____ want a better job.
- Good team morale _____ to productivity.
- The manager is firm but fair with all of his _____.
- Kate's idea is _____ - it would create more problems than it solves.
- _____ shows someone is practical and creative.
- Mr. Tek isn't _____, and never involves workers in decisions.

Listening

- 5 Listen to a conversation between a business owner and an employee. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- ___ The meeting was called to discuss the man's management style.
- ___ Emailing documents saved the company a lot of money.
- ___ Employees prefer Mrs. Thomas' democratic style.

- 6 Listen again and complete the conversation.

Employee: Well, it's not really a complaint. It's just that Mr. Eggers is so, I don't know, 1 _____.

Owner: You mean he's hard to approach?

Employee: Exactly. And when you do, he doesn't really listen to 2 _____.

Owner: Can you give me an example?

Employee: Sure. Just last week I suggested to him that we email documents instead of printing them. It would 3 _____.
But Mr. Eggers didn't even comment on it.

Owner: Hmm. Thanks for letting me know. I 4 _____
_____ much for morale, does it?

Employee: Oh, it's not so bad. In fact, I know everyone really likes Mrs. Thomas' management style.

Owner: What is it 5 _____ that people like?

Employee: She listens. She let's us contribute.

Owner: So she's 6 _____
than Mr. Eggers?

Speaking

- 7 With a partner, act out the roles below, based on the dialogue from Task 6. Then switch roles.

USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:

Do you have a complaint about one of the managers?

Can you give me an example?

I know everyone really likes ...

Student A: Talk to an employee about his or her managers. Ask Student B about:

- complaints
- good management
- examples

Student B: You work at Student A's company. Answer his or her questions. Make up some details for two managers.

Writing

- 8 You are a business owner. Write a memo to one of your managers suggesting that he or she adopt a new management style (100-120 words). Talk about:

- What the employee's complaints about the manager's style are
- Why it is important to change the management style
- Which management style you recommend
- Why you recommend this style