

THE LEADERSHIP POCKETBOOK

2nd Edition

Fiona Elsa Dent

Drawings by Phil Hailstone

"A pragmatic and practical guide that's as helpful to those new to leadership as it is in reminding seasoned leaders how to make sense of leadership in a complex world. Fiona has distilled her huge experience into an accessible pocketbook - it's this that makes this different."

Marcus Powell, Director, Leadership & Organisational Development, The King's Fund

"Understanding the juggernaut that is leadership can be a real challenge for most. This book beautifully navigates the context and behaviours of leadership while offering some simple self-awareness techniques to help you develop your own authentic leadership style."

Dr Kerrie Fleming, Director, Ashridge Leadership Centre

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LEADERSHIP AND YOU

LEADERSHIP STYLE



Much is written about leadership style: whether one is more autocratic, democratic, charismatic, collaborative, individualistic, etc. Current and recent research suggests that no one leadership style is best. However, two key messages do emerge:

- Successful leaders have the ability to vary their style according to the context
- A more participative style seems to be most effective

Personally I believe that real effectiveness depends upon each leader creating and developing their own unique style.

You may like to define your own style or at least have a perspective on your particular preference for leading and working with others. The checklists on the following page encourage you to reflect on a range of words that can be used to describe leadership style. Examine the four lists and tick those words that you believe reflect your own particular style and approach to leadership.

LEADERSHIP AND YOU



LEADERSHIP STYLE CHECKLISTS

| Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | Column 4 |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charisma | <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage | <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Sociable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tell | <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate | <input type="checkbox"/> Intuitive | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordinator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Control | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen | <input type="checkbox"/> Visionary | <input type="checkbox"/> Team-player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structure | <input type="checkbox"/> Developer | <input type="checkbox"/> Networker | <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Empower | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuader | <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus | <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive | <input type="checkbox"/> Assertive | <input type="checkbox"/> Sincere |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decision-maker | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-aware | <input type="checkbox"/> Change agent | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible | <input type="checkbox"/> Praise | <input type="checkbox"/> Results-focussed | <input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opinionated | <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Catalyst | <input type="checkbox"/> Open-minded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding | <input type="checkbox"/> Convincing | <input type="checkbox"/> Considerate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |

Note down the total number of words you have ticked in each column.

LEADERSHIP AND YOU

LEADERSHIP STYLE REVIEW



The checklists on the previous page examine your preferences in terms of your own particular leadership style. The words used describe four typical styles:

Directive (Col.1) – leaders who take control, make decisions and are self-reliant

Coaching (Col.2) – leaders who focus on developing and involving others

Influencing (Col.3) – leaders who are confident in their own ability, convincing and drive to achieve

Collaborative (Col.4) – leaders who create harmony and work with and through others

Most of us will have a preference for one style over the other. Your predominant style is the one which has the highest total.

Note down your predominant style _____

What is your back up style? _____

What does this tell you about your current approach to leadership? Think about recent leadership situations and the way you dealt with them. Ask yourself:

- Did I get the best out of the situation?
- How did the people react to me?
- Were there other approaches which might have been more effective?

LEADERSHIP AND YOU

LEADERSHIP STYLES COMPARED



ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

Directive

- works well in times of crisis
- good with inexperienced people
- effective when time is an issue
- when you are the most knowledgeable

- can appear over-controlling
- doesn't involve others
- can stifle creativity
- ignores the need to motivate others

Coaching

- develops people
- improves performance
- raises self-awareness of followers
- builds trust

- can be time-consuming
- relies on others to work with them
- assumes people want to develop

Influencing

- mobilises people
- can be inspirational
- appropriate in times of change
- when you have high credibility

- may appear manipulative
- can be regarded as condescending
- may appear too pushy

Collaborative

- builds consensus and ownership
- motivates people
- involves others
- uses others' expertise and experience

- relies on others' involvement
- can appear indecisive
- relies on others' commitment
- assumes others have knowledge

LEADERSHIP AND YOU

IMPORTANCE OF ADAPTING STYLE



Understanding your preferred leadership style is important. It also helps you to understand the effect your style has on others and when it is most effective.

However, in today's complex, rapidly changing and multi-faceted business environment it is more important to be able to adapt and vary the style to suit the people involved, the situation you are in and the prevailing business environment.

*No one has it all.
It's a matter of fit.
True situational leadership involves
calibration of behaviour to fit a
given situation.*

Adapted from *Relax It's Only Uncertainty*,
Hodgson & White, Prentice Hall, 2001

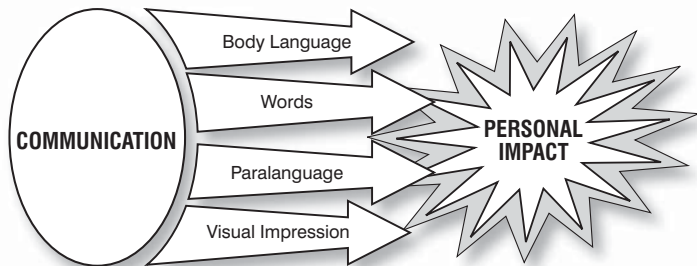
LEADERSHIP AND YOU

CREATING PERSONAL IMPACT



As a leader, people will be watching you at all times, looking and listening for the messages you convey in your dealings with them. This means that you have to be very aware of the subtle messages you are conveying to others in what you say and do and how you say and do it. All of this contributes to your personal impact.

Personal impact is all about communication:



LEADERSHIP AND YOU



CREATING PERSONAL IMPACT

Think about, watch footage of and reflect on some well-known leaders (past and present), for instance:

- Barack Obama
- Nelson Mandela
- Bill Clinton
- Steve Jobs
- Christine Lagarde
- Aung San Suu Kyi
- Tony Blair
- Bill Gates

How would you describe their personal impact?

Now focus on yourself. Consider the impact you typically convey in a variety of interpersonal situations. For instance, think about:

- When you are talking to large groups
- When you are taking part in a meeting
- When you are interacting with one other
- When you meet someone in the car park
- When you walk into a room

Reflect on the messages you are conveying by your visual impression, your body language, the words you use and your paralanguage (how you say things).

How would you describe your personal impact in general? How will this affect your role as a leader?

LEADERSHIP AND YOU

THE 15-SECOND RULE



"When we see someone for the first time, the initial sound/visual "bite" - a combination of their looks, their dress, their bearing and the tenor of their opening remarks - becomes deeply etched in our minds and affects our attitudes to them!"

Michael Shea
in Personal Impact



About the Author

Fiona Elsa Dent, MA, MSc, Chartered FCIPD, FHEA

Fiona is an independent management trainer, consultant, coach and author. She spent over 20 years on the faculty at Ashridge Business School and continues to work with them as a leadership coach and tutor on various programmes. She is predominantly interested in helping people to develop their personal skills to be the best they can be. Her particular specialisms are influencing, interpersonal and relationship skills.



Her books cover topics such as influencing, people management skills, self-managed development, women in business and coaching and mentoring. She has written two other Pocketbooks: '*Working Relationships*' and '*Self-managed Development*'; her latest publications are '*The Leader's Guide to Coaching and Mentoring: How to Use Soft Skills to get Hard Results*' (with Mike Brent, 2015) and '*How to Thrive and Survive as a Working Woman: The Coach Yourself Toolkit*' (with Viki Holton, 2016).

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