



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING  
Institute for Leadership Education in Engineering

# *Leadership Styles*



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Handbook for Student Leaders

Vision, Mission & Strategy  
Motivation & Delegation  
Personal Development & Mastery  
Team Development  
Recruitment  
Reflection & Awareness  
Transition & Succession  
External Relations  
— **Leadership Styles**  
Purposeful Leadership

# **What type of a leader are you?**

## **How does this influence your effectiveness?**

### **How do people respond to you and how do you adapt to their styles?**

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Each of us has a preferred style of leading. It's helpful to know the strengths and values of your style and those of others. This section presents a model of four leadership styles, reminding us that 75% of people are quite different from us in how they think, make decisions, communicate, manage stress, and deal with conflict.

#### **Spectrum 1: Assertiveness**

Assertiveness is the degree to which one's behaviors are seen by others as being self-assured, firm or directive. More assertive people demonstrate more energy, move and speak faster, decide things more quickly and are more confrontational.

Less assertive people demonstrate less energy, move and speak slower, decide things less quickly and are less direct when expressing opinions and making requests.

#### **Spectrum 2: Responsiveness**

Responsiveness is the degree to which someone is comfortable with their own emotions and demonstrates awareness of the feeling of others.

More responsive people express feelings more openly, appear friendlier, are comfortable with small talk and prefer to work with others.

Less Responsive people are most disclosed with their feelings, appear more reserved, are more task oriented and are more structured in their use of time.

There are many ways to lead, and having an understanding of the differences will make you more effective in working with others.

This section presents a model of four leadership styles developed by Bolton & Bolton in [People Styles at Work](#) (1996).

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## Exercise

The questionnaire on the following page will help you determine where you lie on the two spectrums. Answer the questions by putting an 'X' in the box that best matches your response to the question.

Like in any self assessment tool, you may find you don't agree with the style that the test tells you. If it helps you understand yourself better and you can articulate why it doesn't match perfectly, this is great! It means you are increasing your self-understanding, and being critical, rather than blindly accepting what it tells you.

Take the totals for each column and translate them onto the graph below, where assertiveness is the X-axis and responsiveness is the Y-axis.

For columns 1 & 2: If column 1 has a higher total, you are on the Left half of the grid (less assertive), and if column 2 has a higher total, you are on the Right half of the grid (more assertive).

For columns 3 & 4: If column 3 has a higher total, you are on the Top half of the grid (less responsive), and if column 4 has a higher total, you are on the Bottom half of the grid (more responsive).

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### Analytical

- Need time to understand the big picture before making decisions
- Often listens more than talks
- Detail oriented

### Driver

- Quick to make decisions and act
- Likes organization and efficiency
- Natural delegator

### Amiable

- Team player
- Attentive to group dynamics, relationship-builder
- Potential conflict mediator

### Expressive

- Think out loud
- Offer vision and imagination
- Thinks outside the box

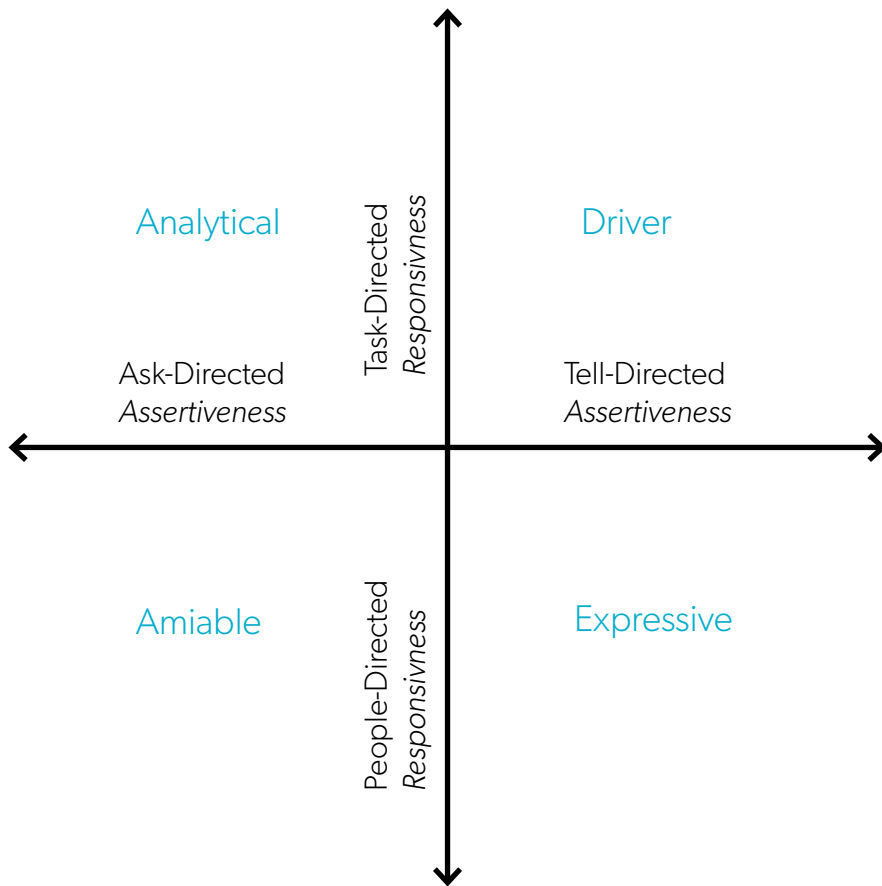
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## Exercise

- |     |                          |   |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| 1.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | More likely to lean backward when stating opinions            |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More likely to be erect or lean forward when stating opinions |
| 2.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less use of hands when talking                                |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More use of hands when talking                                |
| 3.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Demonstrates less energy                                      |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Demonstrates more energy                                      |
| 4.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | More controlled body movement                                 |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More flowing body movement                                    |
| 5.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less forceful gestures  |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More forceful gestures  |
| 6.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less facial expressiveness                                    |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More facial expressiveness                                    |
| 7.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Softer-spoken   |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Louder voice  |
| 8.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Appears more serious  |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Appears more fun-loving                                       |
| 9.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | More likely to ask questions                                  |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More likely to make statements                                |
| 10. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less inflection in voice                                      |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More inflection in voice                                      |
| 11. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less apt to exert pressure for action                         |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More apt to exert pressure for action                         |
| 12. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less apt to show feelings                                     |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More apt to show feelings                                     |
| 13. | <input type="checkbox"/> | More tentative when expressing opinions                       |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less tentative when expressing opinions                       |
| 14. | <input type="checkbox"/> | More task-oriented conversations                              |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More people-oriented conversations                            |
| 15. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slower to resolve problem situations                          |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Quicker to resolve problem situations                         |
| 16. | <input type="checkbox"/> | More oriented toward facts and logic                          |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More oriented toward feelings and opinions                    |
| 17. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slower-paced  |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Faster-paced  |
| 18. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less likely to use small-talk or tell anecdotes               |
|     | <input type="checkbox"/> | More likely to use small-talk and tell anecdotes              |

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— — — — TOTAL THE NUMBER OF X's DOWN EACH COLUMN



Reflection Questions:

How can you adjust your leadership style to address the needs of the other styles?

If you are in a group and you're not speaking what does that usually mean?

What do you think drives other styles crazy about you?

Knowing your style, is there a strength that could become a weakness if overused?

What do you think is the underlying value of your style to a team?

**Responses to Conflict**

A useful context to apply this model is conflict within a group. People with different styles will react differently to conflict, and understanding different people's tendencies can help you respond to the situation more effectively.

Analytical—Avoiding: withdrawn; may cause frustrations with drivers

Drivers—Autocratic: very controlling, bulldozing, closed to other ideas; less assertive people may feel intimidated

Amiable—Accommodating: overly cooperative; agree but body language doesn't match

Expressive—Attack: Take frustration out on other people; Quick tempered—but get over it quickly and move on