



# LEADERSHIP STYLE

## brief definitions

Pioneering | Strategic | Management / Administration | Team | Pastoral | Encouraging

### Pioneering

Within pioneering leadership we consider those who are willing to push themselves, and take appropriate risks in striving to move forwards to discover and reach long term goals. In a Christian context we can quote Philippians 3: "forgetting what is behind, and straining for what lies ahead". Pioneering leaders are passionate about the vision, and are wholly committed to it. Paul is a great example of a leader who was focused on pushing out the boundaries of the church, despite the personal risk.

Pioneering leaders are at their strongest in the early stages of a vision or project, excited by seeking out where God is calling. However as time passes they may lose interest in the implementation of a vision, eager to be looking ahead to the next challenge.

### Strategic

Leaders who can break down visions and large aims into manageable chunks are vital for the church. Strategic leaders have the insight and focus to work out ways of achieving the vision, the "how", and are able to persuade the rest of the church to accept this plan. When Nehemiah led the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, he demonstrated great strategic leadership in dividing the work up, and in keeping the task manageable. His plan was so good, the walls were rebuilt in 52 days.

Strategic leaders can bring common sense to a difficult task - able to help people see how the seemingly impossible can be achieved. However, like pioneers, they can be less engaged with the implementation of a task, preferring to leave this to others.

### Management / Administration

All churches require good stewards and managers, people with gifts of administration (Acts 6). Any vision or change will require people able to plan and problem solve, delegate and organize. Without this gift, the best plans may well not get implemented! The apostles delegated the practical tasks of sharing food and taking care of the widows to those gifted with the necessary skills, including Stephen and Philip.

Managers are often under appreciated, having a leadership style which is less "up-front" than some of the other styles. However, much of the work simply would not get done without them. They are able to organize, and follow through on all the necessary tasks and activities to ensure that the project is completed on time. They may struggle to relate to the visionary pioneers - dreaming of achieving the impossible is not their home ground!

### Team

Here we include leadership in a group context, whether the leader has a formal leadership role in a group or not. For the church as 'the body' (1 Corinthians 12), working together is clearly important. The key strengths of team leaders are a desire to work with others, and an ability to trust them. Team leaders need great humility and servanthood - their sole aim is that the team achieves its goals. What they as individuals achieve is secondary. The greatest contribution Silas made to the church was probably training and developing Paul's ministry so he could go

on to achieve greater things later.

Team leaders are invaluable - if the church is truly to function as a body, team leaders are needed to ensure harmony and effectiveness in the way the team works.

## **Pastoral**

Many church leaders feel they ought to be Pastoral leaders, although many don't have this as their primary style. This is not a problem! Pastoral leaders are real "people people", who have an important role in supporting the pioneers, strategists, team leaders and the rest of the church, particularly when times are hard. Vision and moving into vision seem less important to pastoral leaders. Peter was a pastoral leader, a complete contrast to Paul's energetic church planting and exhortation.

Pastoral leadership is often unseen, and often unappreciated publicly, yet hugely important. Those who are pastoral leaders can sometimes be threatened by the pioneers and strategists - and at times are irritated by the attention to detail shown by the managers. Yet their contribution to a team is invaluable - take time for a moment to think of a pastoral leader - and you will probably find that they command huge respect and support.

## **Encouraging**

Paul was a great encourager - his letters to the early churches contained exhortation and encouragement as well as teaching. Encouraging leaders are able to motivate whole churches, teams and individuals. They have great discernment into people's gifts, their feelings and what motivates them, able to release them into fulfilling their ministries. Who doesn't need encouragement!

Encouraging leaders have the knack of knowing when a quiet word can spur people on, when to challenge and when to support, when to coach and when to give space. Occasionally they may irritate people by appearing less "involved" than other leadership styles - sometimes people want more than just encouragement.



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