LINDSAY B COACHING

# Authentic Leadership

## A Guide to Discovering Your Unique Leadership Style

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# Why Authentic Leadership Matters

## Introduction

The world is diverse, and so are leadership styles. Each of us brings unique strengths and perspectives that deserve to be celebrated because there's no single "right" way to lead. Yet many leaders struggle to find their authentic style, often trying to copy others in ways that don't feel natural. This disconnect can lead to frustration, burnout, and self-doubt.

Authentic leadership is about embracing your individuality and leading in a way that aligns with your values, strengths, and innate qualities. It's grounded in self-awareness, integrity, and genuine connection. When you lead authentically, you inspire trust, build meaningful relationships, and create environments where everyone can thrive.

While there are many leadership styles, the most effective leaders understand their own unique approach and adapt it to different situations, all while staying true to who they are.

This guide will help you discover and define your authentic leadership style, one that honors your unique strengths, aligns with your values, and empowers you to lead with confidence and purpose. We'll also explore 10 common leadership styles to spark insight and reflection as you shape your own path.

Let's get started!



# 10 Common Leadership Styles

Here are 10 common leadership styles to explore as you define your own. Each style offers unique strengths and insights. Use them as inspiration to craft a leadership approach that aligns with your values, boundaries, and support system.

**1. Commanding Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Centralized decision-making, minimal team input, strict control.
- **Best for:** Situations requiring quick decisions or in crisis.
- **Challenges:** Can stifle creativity and lead to low morale if overused.

**2. Democratic Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Encourages team participation. in decision-making, values collaboration.
- **Best for:** Creative industries or teams needing innovation
- **Challenges:** Decision-making can be slower due to team consultations.

**3. Transformational Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Inspires and motivates teams to achieve beyond expectations, focuses on vision and innovation.
- **Best for:** Driving change, long-term projects, and organizations seeking growth.
- **Challenges:** Requires significant energy and constant motivation from the leader.

# 10 Common Leadership Styles

**4. Transactional Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Focuses on structure, rewards, and penalties to manage performance.
- **Best for:** Tasks requiring consistency, routine, and efficiency.
- **Challenges:** May not foster innovation or personal growth in team members.

**5. Servant Leadership**

- **Characteristics**: Prioritizes the needs of the team, emphasizing support, empathy, and collaboration.
- **Best for**: Teams needing trust-building and development.
- **Challenges**: May be seen as too passive in fast-paced environments.

**6. Minimalist Leadership**

- **Characteristics**: Provides minimal direction, allowing team members to take the lead.
- **Best for**: Teams with highly skilled and self-motivated individuals.
- **Challenges**: Can lead to confusion or inefficiency if team lacks discipline.

**7. Charismatic Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Relies on the leader's charm, enthusiasm, and personal appeal to inspire others.
- **Best for:** Organizations needing a morale boost or facing significant challenges.
- **Challenges:** Dependency on the leader may hinder team autonomy.

# 10 Common Leadership Styles

**8. Coaching Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Focuses on personal and professional growth, offering guidance and mentorship.
- **Best for:** Developing talent, especially in younger or less experienced teams.
- **Challenges:** Can be time-intensive and may not suit high-pressure environments.

**9. Bureaucratic Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Emphasizes rules, procedures, and hierarchical authority.
- **Best for:** Organizations requiring strict compliance, such as government or regulatory bodies.
- **Challenges:** Can suppress creativity and flexibility.

**10. Visionary Leadership**

- **Characteristics:** Focuses on setting a clear, long-term vision and inspiring others to follow.
- **Best for:** Startups, organizations undergoing transformation, or new initiatives.
- **Challenges:** Requires a leader with strong communication and credibility.



**Tip:** Leadership isn't one-size-fits-all. Blend what resonates and make it your own!

# Defining Your Values

Values are fundamental beliefs and principles that guide our behavior, decisions, and priorities, shaping our character and influencing our view of the world. Knowing our own values is crucial because it provides clarity on what motivates us, helps in our decision-making, and enables us to align our actions with our most authentic selves.

**Pick 5 values that resonate most with you**

Accountability
Achievement
Adaptability
Adventure
Ambition
Authenticity
Authority
Autonomy
Balance
Beauty
Boldness
Collaboration
Commitment
Communication
Community
Compassion
Connection
Courage
Creativity
Curiosity
Determination
Dignity
Discipline
Diversity

Empathy
Empowerment
Excellence
Family
Fairness
Faith
Flexibility
Freedom
Friendships
Fulfillment
Fun
Genorosity
Gratitude
Growth
Happiness
Harmony
Honesty
Humility
Humor
Inclusivity
Influence
Initiative
Innovation
Integrity

Joy
Justice
Kindness
Knowledge
Leadership
Learning
Love
Loyalty
Mastery
Mindfulness
Modesty
Nature
Openness
Optimism
Partnership
Peace
Perseverence
Personal Growth
Poise
Popularity
Power
Privacy
Professionalism
Preparedness

Recognition
Reliability
Resilience
Resourcefulness
Reputation
Respect
Responsibility
Romance
Security
Self-Awareness
Self-Respect
Self-Expression
Service
Spirituality
Stability
Status
Success
Transparency
Truth
Trust
Vulnerability
Wealth
Well-being
Wisdom

# Reflect on Your Authentic Leadership Style

1. Which leadership styles resonate most with you, and how do they reflect your values?

2. What are your greatest strengths? Consider both what energizes you and what others often compliment or rely on you for.

3. How do you personally define success as a leader? What impact or experience do you want others to have when they work with you?

4. What support or resources will help you continue to evolve and refine your authentic leadership style?

# Craft Your Own Authentic Leadership Style

Write 2–3 sentences using your values, strengths, and desired impact:

**“My authentic leadership style is…”**

# Additional Information

**Additional Resources**

- Lindsay B Coaching on Substack
- Recommended Books: What Got You Here, Won't Get You There; Triggers; Thanks for the Feedback;
- Recommended Podcasts: Work Life by Adam Grant; Coaching Real Leaders; HBR On Leadership

**Meet your Coach**



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Lindsay Benitez specializes in helping leaders build confidence, redefine success, and create authentic careers and lives. A certified coach and trainer with 15 years of HR leadership experience, she combines her expertise, coaching mastery, and lived experience as a First-Generation leader to empower leaders at all levels through workshops, coaching, and talent development programs.