

#### Section 9

Defining Your Own Personal Leadership Style

(A Self Discovery Activity)

*Part Of A Continuing Program Of Individual Commitment*

*To Grow Leadership Skills*

*And Create a Leadership Culture*

##### Created by

##### TJG 2006 logo

##### Hopkinton, NH

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| Name: Click or tap here to enter text. | MVS: Click or tap here to enter text. |

Defining Your Own Personal Leadership Style

(A Self Discovery Activity)

Defining you own personal leadership style is similar to creating your own personal vision. It defines an essential ingredient not only of who you are, but also in how you interact with people as a leader. This activity summarizes many of the things you have learned about yourself, but focuses on your emotional intelligence as an important part of defining your leadership style.

**Objectives**

* Recognize and define your own rules of engagement or leadership style for leading, using words that are meaningful to you.
* Establish a basis for becoming more confident of who you are as a leader and applying emotional intelligence to your leadership because you will have a clearer understanding of how you want to lead and your own leadership issues.

**Benefits of Defining Your Own Style**

Some people say, “I am who I am, and I like to be flexible and keep my options open and, therefore, I do not want to bind myself into a set leadership style.” That statement, in and of itself, defines a leadership style. It will confuse those you are leading and does not help you be more thoughtful about how you will lead or define your rules of engagement other than “be spontaneous,” but it is a leadership style.

Defining your own leadership style will help you:

* Identify what is important to you as a leader;
* Better understand your own approach to leadership;
* Determine how you want to express your leadership and interact with others as a leader;
* Have greater comfort and confidence in exercising your own leadership;
* Explain differences in leadership styles as you inspire leadership in others;
* Explain your leadership style if asked when coaching or mentoring others;
* Have greater ability to refine your style to be more effective in the future.

**Leadership And Emotional Intelligence**

Responding to the pressures and difficulties facing every leader is a true measure of who you are and a true application of your core values. Therefore, leadership is a true application of your emotional intelligence. The best leaders know who they are and use their emotional intelligence in how they lead.

**Overall Guidelines For Defining Your Own Style**

# Having a consistent leadership style requires tunneling down from head knowledge and head thinking to heart level thinking, and establishing what is important to you as a leader and how you generally want to interact with others. It is a fundamental part of exercising leadership integrity and part of applying your emotional intelligence. The people you lead do not need you to tell them how you lead, but they do need a certain amount of consistency *in order for them to meet your expectations of them*.

# Key things to remember in defining your style include:

* Be true to yourself, who you are, and what you believe is important
* Live your leadership integrity
* We lead from our own vision; we can only manage under another’s vision
* We are confident leaders under our own leadership style, but can only manage if we are mimicking someone else’s leadership style
* What works and is comfortable for others may not build your self-worth
* People with different Motivational Value Systems lead in different ways
* Every person has a unique way to describe leadership and his/her style
* Your definition or statement of your leadership style must be in your own words—words that mean something to you

# Sources Of Information

You have a vast array of information available on leadership, beginning with your experience prior to this program. This leadership development program has exposed you to a broad discussion of leadership topics, leadership concepts, personal leadership skills, and information on leaders and leadership. Therefore, the information that you now have should form a solid foundation for you to define your own leadership style:

* What you learned during the program about yourself and motivating others
* What you have observed in other managers and leaders
* Your own definition of a leader and leadership
* Ideas about leadership from your reading on leaders and leadership
* Class discussions about leaders and applying leadership skills
* Your review and discussion of each of the leadership concepts in Section 8 from *Listen Up Leader!* and *A Leadership Primer* about Colin Powell’s approach
* Notes from *Listen Up Leader!* and other books

#### Instructions For Defining Your Leadership Style

We recommend the following steps and personal analysis in defining your own leadership style. Some will find this material too detailed while others will want even more detail. Use the worksheets that help you. Ignore the others. During the leadership development program you should have completed many of these steps. To the extent that these steps were not completed, or only partially completed, either review the material or complete each step.

1. Have fun. Take this opportunity to laugh at yourself, the mistakes you may have made and lessons learned in leading. Think of this self-discovery activity as an opportunity to bring together everything you have learned about leadership—what to do and what not to do.
2. Identify a personal role model for leadership (a specific man or woman) and write down the important leadership behavior and characteristics that are important to you in words that are meaningful to you. Use the *My Personal Role Model For Leadership* worksheet from Section 1 (also included here as page 9-6). This exercise will be confidential to you.
* Why is that person a personal role model for you?
* What characteristics or behavior make him/her a role model?
* How would you describe that person’s leadership style?
* What do you like as well as dislike about his/her behavior or leadership style?
* Anything else about the person that is important to you.
1. Think about how *you* would like to be led and identify leadership characteristics that are important to you *as a follower*. Capture these points in words that are meaningful to you. One word of caution—you have your own specific Motivational Value System and a good leader needs to motivate and lead people that have many different Motivational Value Systems. Use the worksheet on page 9-7.
2. Review your own written personal vision (from Section 2) and revise it if appropriate. Remember that the words you use should be meaningful to you. You lead from your own vision, but you can only manage from someone else’s vision.
3. Draw on what you learned from the exercises in Section 8. Read the detailed description of each of the lessons in the presentation about Colin Powell’s leadership, *A Leadership Primer* as well as the leadership concepts summarized from *Listen Up Leader!* (see Section 8). As part of this process, review each leadership lesson or concept and then ask yourself the following questions as well as any other questions that are relevant to you. Section 8 includes the lessons/concepts and a place to record your thoughts.
* What does the concept mean to me as a leader with my own leadership style?
* Do I agree? How would I reword it so that it is more meaningful to me?
* How do I put the lesson/concept into practice (if I agree with it)?
* If leadership is “doing the right thing,” how do I know what is the right thing and how to do it? How does this lesson help me define my own leadership style?
* What principles or lessons are missing from this list for me personally?
1. Give some real thought to who you are, how you deploy your strengths, how you control your emotions, and other things related to your emotional intelligence. Use the *Who I Am—Understanding My Emotional Intelligence* worksheet (page 9-8 to 9-12) and *Understanding My Preferred or Natural Leadership Practices* (pages 9-13 to 9-15).
2. Define “leader” and “leadership” in your own words as a first step to creating your Rules of Engagement or approach to leadership (page 9-16).
3. Now write your own Rules of Engagement or Leadership Principles for yourself. Use words that are specifically meaningful to you when you are in your comfort zone (your basic MVS). What you write can be in sentences, punchy statements, or bullet points. Remember, this document is only for your use. Some people find that this step is easier for them if they first select the 10 or 15 lessons or concepts (from Section 8) that are most relevant to them. Use what you wrote in the worksheet on page 9-13 to understand your natural/preferred leadership practices, advantages in leading, and things to watch out for in using these practices. The worksheets on pages 9-17 and 9-18 are one way to start writing your Rules of Engagement. Use the following guidelines in writing your own Rules of Engagement:
* The more concise the description, the greater its value to you in defining your leadership style. Do not exceed one page as a maximum.
* Imagine what you would say if someone asked you to describe your leadership principles in detail, but in 300 words or less.
* You may want to elaborate on each point in order to capture the full meaning in a longer form (example—the expansion of each point in the A Leadership Primer), but first create the short version.
1. Create a short description of your personal leadership style, one which can be used to educate others as to how you prefer to operate—use page 9-19.
2. Contrast your leadership style with other styles. People naturally have different leadership styles. What are the pressure or stress points between your style and the leadership style of others? You can use this knowledge to educate others over the differences between your styles, anticipate points of conflict, and be proactive to reduce unwarranted conflict. Use the worksheet on page 9-20 for this analysis.
3. Review your definitions, descriptions, or whatever you write after a few days and revise the words or priorities as appropriate.
4. Review your personal vision, particularly the sections related to how you want to grow or lead people and how you have integrated the company mission/vision into your personal vision. Look for consistency as well as potential conflicts. If you do not have one, you may want to add a section to your personal vision on your vision for leading and impacting others.
5. You may want to develop a 50 words or less summary of your leadership style to use in educating others so that they can understand where you are coming from and to reduce unwarranted conflict between your leadership style and the leadership style of others.
6. Periodically revisit your Rules of Engagement or description of your leadership style as you continue to grow as a leader. Ask yourself what you have learned about leadership that may cause you to refine how you want to lead.

**My Personal Role Model For Leadership**

(This exercise was completed as part of your homework in Section 1)

Identify a personal role model for leadership (a specific man or woman). Use this worksheet to write down the important leadership behavior and characteristics that are important to you. As an alternative, identify leadership characteristics or behavior that you admire in several leaders and create a composite description of what is important to you in a leader. Use words that are meaningful to you. This worksheet will be confidential to you.

|  |
| --- |
| Name of role model |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Why person is a role model for you |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Characteristics/behavior that makes him/her a role model |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What you like/dislike about behavior or leadership style |
| Like:Click or tap here to enter text. | Dislike:Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Other information important to you |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

**How I Prefer To Be Led**

Understanding how you prefer others to lead you can provide insights into some elements of your innate leadership style or rules of engagement. Use this worksheet to write down the leadership behavior and characteristics that are important to you *as a follower*. This information will be confidential to you.

|  |
| --- |
| Integrity as a leader |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Personal interaction/communication style |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Level of personal transparency and empathy |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Providing feedback |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Dealing with conflict |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Leading change |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Coaching, mentoring, or investing in me |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Other |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Who I Am—Understanding My Own Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is no more than (1) understanding myself (who I am) and my emotions, (2) understanding how to control my emotions and behavior, (3) under-standing how to motivate myself, (4) understanding the emotions and behavior of others, and (5) applying this knowledge in my social skills and in interacting with others as a leader, as a team member, in an organization, in personal relationships, etc. Use this worksheet to describe who you are. It will help you understand your strengths and limitations as a leader as well as where you need to grow in your emotional intelligence. This information is confidential to you.

|  |
| --- |
| **My positive aptitudes:** |
| How optimistic am I?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| How well do I control emotional impulses?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| How adaptable am I?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What is my personal integrity?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What are my areas of true giftedness?Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **My negative aptitudes—what causes me difficulty:** |
| Where am I strong-willed?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Where am I pessimistic?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What kind of people do I have difficulty with?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What causes me to go into stress or conflict?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What demotivates me?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What causes burnout—emotional or physical?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What causes depression or worry?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What are my hot buttons = emotional anger / rage?Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **My early warning signals related to emotions or conflict:**(for each emotional change—i.e. becoming demotivated, burned out, etc.**)** |
| How do I feel just before moving into my stress zone? When moving deeper into stress?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| How does my thinking change?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What do I do that is different?Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| **Using my positive/negative aptitudes:** |
| How do I use my positive aptitudes?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| How am I affected by my negative aptitudes?Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| --- |
| **How I manage/control myself:**(For each emotional change—i.e. becoming demotivated, burned out, etc.) |
| How do I challenge my negative thoughts or actions?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What actions do I take to get back to normal?Click or tap here to enter text. |
| What do I do to help counter negative results of my behavior?Click or tap here to enter text. |

# Understanding My Preferred Leadership Practices

Answer the following questions to help you understand your preferred leadership practices, the advantages of using them, and problems you may create in using them. What things do you need to watch out for in using these practices? This information is confidential to you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | What is my basic MVS and conflict resolution sequence? What are the implications for my leadership style? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 2 | How do I exercise my leadership integrity, and what is the impact on people? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 3 | How do I prefer to use conflict as a tool in leading? (Some people believe that a little 1st stage conflict is good and instill conflict in their organizations. For them, an important issue is how to control the situation to keep conflict at the 1st stage level.) |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 4 | What do I do that creates conflict or uncertainty in people? (Think about your overdone strengths and use your Portrait of Overdone Strengths in answering.) |
| Description:Click or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 5 | How do I deploy my strengths? (Look at your Portrait of Strengths in answering.) |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 6 | How do I prefer to empower individuals and empower my organization? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 7 | How do I prefer to invest in others / coach and mentor others? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8 | How do I prefer to lead change and create an environment for change? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 9 | How do I deal with taking and controlling personal risk and how do I trust or depend on others in taking and controlling risk? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 10 | How do I invest in myself as a leader? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |
| 11 | How do I prefer to apply empathy and personal transparency as a leader? |
| DescriptionClick or tap here to enter text. |
| AdvantagesClick or tap here to enter text. | Things to watch out forClick or tap here to enter text. |

# My Definitions

|  |
| --- |
| **Leader:**Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Leadership:**Click or tap here to enter text. |

# Rules Of Engagement / Leadership Style Worksheet

Use this worksheet to help you start the process of defining your Rules of Engagement as a leader. It is only a starting point to aid your thinking. Add other elements that are important to you, but not included here. You may wish to reduce these rules of engagement to several sentences or a collection of bullet points using the next page. We recommend a KISS description (keep it simple). Try to limit yourself to no more than 10 to 15 rules. This information is confidential to you.

|  |
| --- |
| Exercising leadership integrity |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Communicating/interacting with others |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Using conflict/leading conflict |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Leading change |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Empowering |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Investing in people/coaching and mentoring |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Taking and controlling personal / career risk |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Inspiring leadership in others/creating a leadership culture |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Investing in myself as a leader |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

# My Rules Of Engagement / Leadership Style

Write your personal Rules of Engagement below in whatever form is useful to you. Remember that you lead from your own vision / style, but can only manage by using other people’s vision or style. Examples of Rules of Engagement are included at the end of this section.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 2 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 3 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 4 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 5 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 6 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 7 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 8 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 9 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 10 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. |

# Description of My Personal Leadership Style

Write a description of your personal leadership style in 50 words or less.

|  |
| --- |
| My Personal Leadership Style |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

# Anticipating Potential Conflict Between Leadership Styles

Everyone is different. Therefore, how you choose to lead and your leadership style will be different from what other leaders choose to do. Think about your style and other styles. Where can there be stress or conflict between the different styles? How should you deal with the differences?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Other leadership styles | Points of stress or conflict and how I will deal with differences |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| Click or tap here to enter text. | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Kate’s (Red-Green) Rules of Engagement**

1. Always remember that today's crisis is tomorrow's amusing story.
2. Guide and mentor your people to become experts, so you can trust them to do amazing work. Competency can be cultivated.
3. Invest in people in a way that will leave them saying glowing things about you at your funeral.
4. Include the "people quotient" in your cost-benefit analysis.
5. Do the right thing, even if it interferes with the win. It may be a short-term loss, but it's a long-term gain, integrity-wise.
6. Never say something behind someone’s back that you wouldn’t say to their face.
7. Focus your time and effort on the items that will bring tangible and positive results. Allowing the busywork to consume you is like moving the deck chairs around on the Titanic.
8. Remember that other people won't see the vision if you don't convey it right.
9. Respect the differences in people and strive to be a more well-rounded person when dealing with others.
10. Be the safety net for your tightrope walkers in all aspects of life.
11. Show respect even to people who don't deserve it. It is not a reflection on their character, but on yours.

Laura’s (Blue) Rules Of Engagement

1. Think with your own head. Form your own opinions. The “experts” are full of it.
2. There is no room for dishonest people on my team.
3. Do as little harm as possible, but get the job done.
4. Leave situations, organizations, and people better than you found them. Be a life giver.
5. Never give benefit of doubt in integrity situations. Actively pursue and know the facts.
6. Have fun. Enjoy passionately.
7. Respect differences in people and their vulnerabilities.
8. Build on people’s strengths. Strengthen their weaknesses. Protect them from humiliation.
9. Change is necessary. Anticipate it. Understand the need. Get on board. Upset others as little as possible and get through it with a positive attitude.

Olin’s (Hub) Rules Of Engagement

1. 80/20 does it for consensus building, but make sure someone has thought through the details. It’s hard to tweak concrete.
2. Look for and ensure a balanced outcome.
3. Develop people. They are your true assets.
4. Make the hard people decisions. Everyone is not in the right place and some really can’t be coached and mentored to success.
5. Other people know things that you don’t. Value their opinion when they actually do know something or are part of your team.
6. Do the right thing even when people don’t agree.
7. Be a motivator. Build people up and recognize achievements, even small ones.
8. Don’t forget yourself. Find quality time for yourself. Life is more than getting the next project out the door.

Thomas Jefferson’s

Rules For A Practical Life

- A decalogue of canons for observation in practical life -

1. Never put off to tomorrow what you can do today.
2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap. It will be dear to you.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst, and cold.
6. We never repent of having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.
8. How much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened.
9. Take things always by their smooth handle.
10. When angry, count to ten before you speak; if very angry, a hundred.

**Inspirational Wisdom To Guide Living**

The following are some inspiring quotes that we found displayed in the New Hampshire art studio of Marjorie Noon, educator, artist, and author. She said that they represented important life principles for her. Reading them is inspiration for anyone, but especially for people aspiring to be leaders. The source for many of the quotes is unknown.

* “Man’s mind stretched to a new idea never goes back to its original dimensions.”
* “Look into your soul and see what wants to come out.”
* “What I need most is someone to make me do what I can.”
* Ralph Waldo Emerson
* “I regard time as a valuable possession.”
* “Translate what I can see into what I can do.”
* “Knowing how to live is the art of life.”
* “Enjoy yourself. It is later than you think.”
* “Each of us somewhere during adulthood faces the disturbing question of whether to settle for his or her present level of achievement … the choice of lapsing into complacency or of striving for new goals—higher ones that entail risk.”
* “In anything at all, perfection is finally attained not when there is no longer anything to add, but when there is no longer anything to take away.”
* Antoine de Saint Exupery
* “Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.”
* Henry David Thoreau
* Live with intention

“Walk to the edge. Listen hard.

Practice wellness. Play with abandon.

Laugh. Choose with no regret.

Continue to learn. Appreciate your friends.

Do what you love. Live as if this is all there is.”

* Maryanne Nadmacher-Hershey

Marjorie Noon studied sculpture at Bennington College and the Art Students League. She was an educator (teaching art), school administrator, sculptor (stone, wood, clay/bronze), wood carver; fiber artist recognized for her innovative hooking; and painter. Her work has been shown in New York, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas, New Mexico, Vermont, and Connecticut. She also is the author of an historical novel, *The Task and the Burden*.