

**EBOOK**

# THE 6 MANAGEMENT STYLES



Managers harness the power to influence their team’s performance. Their words and actions can inspire engagement and productivity—or they can spark negative outcomes.

## So, what kind of manager do you want to be?

Take a moment to think about the best manager you ever had. What made this person so effective? What are some adjectives you’d use to describe him or her? How did this manager make you feel?

There’s no one “best” manager style. Some are highly dominant while others are highly collaborative. Some managers are people-oriented while others are task-oriented. A less extraverted manager can be just as effective—and sometimes more effective—than a highly extraverted manager. A collaborative manager can impact business results just as well as a dominant manager can.

While managers come in all shapes, sizes, and workplace behaviors, the best ones do tend to exhibit the same few qualities:

- **Strong work ethic**
- **Honesty**
- **Sense of humor**
- **Positive attitude**
- **Confidence**
- **Recognizes a job well done**
- **Good decision-making skills**



## The key to success as a manager is self-awareness—and working toward continuous self-improvement.

As a manager, you need to dig deep to understand what makes you tick so you can get in front of any of your innate behaviors that might spark negative workplace outcomes. For example, if you're more task-oriented than people-oriented, others might perceive your communication style as hurried, brisk, or formal; some employees will be intimidated by this. If you're self-aware, you can take extra steps to show your team you care—like giving hand-written cards of appreciation.

The good news is that there's no need to change yourself to try to become a different type of leader when you can work with the skills you already have. By taking our [management style quiz](#) and reading this complimentary e-book to learn more about your management style, you're walking the path to being the best manager you can be.

**The next few pages will cover the defining qualities of each of the six management styles.**

Each of these manager styles is based on data. Our science team explored results from 5,000+ survey responses by creating a correlation matrix and conducting an analysis called a principal component analysis. Based on these analyses, they grouped related checklist items into six buckets. These were the foundation of our six management types.

First, read more about your specific manager style. Once you understand your strengths and caution areas, you'll be able to recognize how they manifest in the workplace. Don't worry, for each caution area, you'll find a recommendation for improvement. We'll also suggest a way to take one current strength and build upon it to make you the best leader your employees could dream up.

And remember, self-awareness is what sets a great manager apart from a good one. After reading this guide, stay attuned to your strengths and caution areas as you notice them in your day-to-day interactions—and push yourself to improve your relationships with your employees.



# You are a **COACH.**

## Strengths

Congrats, coach. Your upbeat attitude motivates your staff to also keep a positive mindframe. Just like the coach of a sports team, individuals who embody this management style inspire their employees to perform to the best of their abilities. Your staff comes to you as they know you're always there to provide an honest answer, and your well-rounded knowledge and experience set a great example. You also encourage the personal and professional development of your team, because you believe that when they're empowered, the entire organization wins.

## Caution areas

While your dedication to your staff is admirable, sometimes you put the needs of your employees above the needs of the business. The good news is that you can tap into your strengths to improve in this area.

Being a manager means having to make difficult decisions and deliver honest feedback. For someone like yourself who tries hard to lift your employees up, you might struggle with giving constructive feedback—or enforcing consequences. But since you've taken the time to build a relationship built on trust and support, your team will be much more open to receiving whatever type of feedback you give. So go ahead and be honest. They'll respect you even more.

Similarly, don't give in to the urge to commiserate. When an employee comes to you to complain about the business simply say, "I'm sorry you feel that way. What can I do to help?"



**YOU ARE A COACH.**

## Maximize your management style

You care deeply about the career and personal development of your employees, and now's the time to help them care about that equally. How? Encourage them to think of self-development as an everyday practice rather than something to think of a few times a year. Football teams aren't practicing once a quarter to prepare themselves for the Super Bowl. They show up every day for strength training and skills mastery. Tap into your coach-like mindset to encourage your team to show up every day to practice developing their individual skills too.





# You are a **LISTENER.**

## Strengths

You're the kind of person that people gravitate to—a great quality for a manager to have. Why? Because you make your staff feel both heard and cared for at the same time. They know that when they need you, you'll listen to their concerns and share a thoughtful and logical response. Your patience is unwavering and your kindness is incomparable.

## Weaknesses

As a listener, you seek harmony and consistency, and by avoiding risk or conflict, you're fostering a safe space for your employees to perform well in their jobs. However, risks often reap rewards, and your staff may benefit by being pushed slightly out of their comfort zone.

Empower your employees by giving them ownership over new tasks that will move your business forward while challenging them to grow. It's also important to reframe failure as a learning experience. Nobody knocks it out of the park every single time—especially when they're working on something new.

You also have the instinct to encourage your team to slow down when it's crunch time to avoid mistakes. Work on helping them maintain a consistent pace and still deliver high-quality results.



**YOU ARE A LISTENER.**

## Maximize your management style

To grow here, ask your employees for opinions on how things are working and if they feel well-supported and empowered to take risks in trying new things. This allows you to do what you do best—listen. Then, if they give you suggestions for improvement, tap into your logical way of thinking to make strategic plans for change using their suggestions. This way, you're innovating without taking on any additional risk.





# You are a **PROBLEM SOLVER.**

## Strengths

You're a true professional with your hands in the details and your eyes on the big picture. You carry a vision for a project's business value and know exactly what and who you need to bring that project to life. You don't waste a second, or a resource—you know how to build a focused team that works smarter, not harder, and gets things done. Your team sees you as a logical subject matter expert who isn't afraid to roll up your sleeves and help.

## Weaknesses

You know how to solve any issue that arises in the office, and you're in the trenches with them when it's crunch time, but it usually takes you a while to connect with your employees. Your team knows they can rely on you, but they also want to feel comfortable around you, too. You very rarely talk about personal details as you prefer to keep conversations focused on work.

One simple way to build strong relationships with your employees is to ask your team questions about themselves. Follow their lead—if they mention a recent vacation, ask them where they visited and what they liked the most. You can then share an anecdote about a memorable vacation of your own. Your main goal is to foster connectedness, not force a friendship, so don't feel the need to overshare.

Your working style tends to be heads down and quiet, and that's perfectly okay. There's no need to try to be the life of the party. Just be aware that from time to time you will have to make an effort to open up and connect—and that includes looking your employees in the eye, giving an authentic smile, and recognizing them for a job well done with specific feedback.



**YOU ARE A PROBLEM SOLVER.**

## **Maximize your management style**

Not everyone is as task-oriented as you are, so use this skill to make your employees' lives easier. Help them develop project outlines or break down big goals into a list of tasks. Then, back away to let your team utilize their own skills to see each item through to completion. While it's in your nature to dive in and assist, you sometimes need to step back and let others step up.





# You are an **INNOVATOR.**

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## Strengths

Innovator, you are never short on vision. You thrive on creative energy—both your own and that of your team. Your big-picture perspective helps you imagine your organization’s future in vivid color. You know a good idea when you hear one, and you’re eager to jump on each idea your team brings forward. People see you as a natural leader who’s inspirational and quick on your feet.

## Weaknesses

As a result of your ability to make quick decisions, you move fast—and you expect your team to do the same. This may mean you’re operating without considering the nuances of your decisions. Because of this, your people rush to meet your goals and deadlines and sometimes deliver work that’s less than their best.

You don’t mind a few mistakes—but your employees who are wired to avoid risk do mind. Your hurried “get things done” mindset can stress those people out. Every once in a while, slow down.

Also, you’re great at setting short-term goals for your employees to achieve. However, you struggle with sticking to long-term plans as your vision is ever-changing. People need both long- and short-term goals so be sure to offer both.



**YOU ARE AN INNOVATOR.**

## Maximize your management style

Know that rush of excitement you feel when the flicker of an idea fans into a flame? Inspire that very same feeling in your employees. To get people thinking big, schedule quarterly brainstorming sessions. Keep in mind that some of your more extraverted employees enjoy thinking out loud but others don't love being put on the spot. Give everyone the option to do some pre-meeting brainstorming. That way those people will feel confident sharing their well thought out ideas with the group.





# You are a **PLANNER.**

## Strengths

You're the kind of manager who knows the questions your team is going to ask and has them answered at the outset of every project. You carefully communicate plans, and when employees ask questions you might even give too much detail. You've got your 18-month strategy just about finalized, and everyone can trust you to follow through and get everything done on time and correct. You've never made a promise you didn't keep, and that's largely due to your ability to see projects through stakeholders' eyes, to prioritize, and to be resolute in seeing all tasks through to completion.

## Weaknesses

Because processes and procedures are what guide you to be so efficient in your duties, it's easy to forget that your employees may not function in the same manner. You'll have some people on your team who are free-spirited, and they need room to grow and achieve. Although you don't think you micromanage, your hyper-organization and detailed communication style can give others the opposite impression.

Remember that it's okay to be flexible and to leave some room for interpretation. While you think there's one best way to complete a task, there might be multiple roads employees can take to arrive at the same positive outcome. Sometimes, allowing an employee to try something new or work on a task in a different manner can inspire innovation. Know which times it's okay to bend, and which times it's not. You struggle with adapting to unexpected changes and sometimes you feel that stress deep in your core. You could benefit from mindfulness training and relaxation techniques such as meditation or deep breathing exercises—or repeating the mantra “change is okay.”



**YOU ARE A PLANNER.**

## Maximize your management style

Because you're so good at setting strategic long-term goals for the organization, use this skill to your advantage when it's time to evaluate your employees. Great managers recognize that staff reviews should be spent encouraging their team to grow, instead of rehashing any minor error they may have made in the previous year. Consider switching your review process to a quarterly check-in instead of generic annual evaluations. Then, during this recurring meeting, use your skills to plan out ways your people can grow personally and professionally, and help them to reflect and measure that growth the next time you meet.





# You are a **FREE SPIRIT.**

## Strengths

As an unparalleled people person, you trust your employees implicitly and empower them to take their strengths and run them to greater heights. And because you believe in them, more often than not, they will believe in themselves too. The result? A team who brings their all to every task—and a high employee retention rate. Additionally, because you're able to make decisions quickly, and aren't afraid of taking risks, you inspire innovation at every step of the way.

## Weaknesses

Because you trust your employees to make the right decisions, you may find yourself ignoring the rules in order to give them the freedom to do their jobs however it works best for them. While your employees appreciate your trust and the freedom you allow, they also require some consistency and set expectations to help them perform at their best. Find the balance.

When you catch yourself bending the rules in order to give someone free reign, instead, take that moment as an opportunity to put the onus on your employee to think creatively. Ask their input as to how to solve the problem at hand within the confines of organizational expectations. You might not care much for the details, but the details need to get done—and it's on you to make sure this happens.

As a casual people person, you run the risk of crossing the line from manager to friend. Don't share too many personal details or spend too much time outside of the office with your employees. Boundaries blur quickly and it can be hard to enforce rules or give difficult feedback if you don't maintain some professional boundaries.



**YOU ARE A FREE SPIRIT.**

## Maximize your management style

Your free-spirited confidence allows you to take risks and make quick decisions, which often leads to transformation for the overall organization and inspires forward thinking in your employees. Tap into this strength and encourage your employees to think outside the box in all areas of their work. What ways can they do things differently and get better results? Allow your employees to take chances, and they won't let you down.

