

Summary

People, projects, and tasks require careful management. Without such, business can become more costly and ineffective due to delays, redundancy, or inability to contribute to the customer. These three management styles have proven effective at alleviating risk and driving greater business results.



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Management - Effective Styles

Effective management means knowing and using the right management styles. There is no one style that is universally effective in every situation, so understanding some key styles and their application will help avoid costly mistakes and energize your organization to the goal line.

Some management styles are more people oriented. Some other styles tend to be more focused on a task, a project, or a product. Both are needed in every organization. Your responsibility is to understand which style will work the best in a given situation and to use it effectively to motivate your team to action and success.

Teamwork: Primarily designed as a task or project-oriented style, the Teamwork Style helps expedite meeting deadlines and goals. You motivate the team members to ‘pool’ their experience, understanding, and knowledge to exceed their own and your expectations. Regularly, teams can overcome obstacles faster than you can or any other team member can alone. The result is a management approach which can be repeated over and over to bring in the results.

Successful teamwork requires coordinated effort and solid communication between team members. Interactions and reporting will need to be ‘on-point’, clear, and concise to maximize time spent on project issues. Critically important is to remove ambiguity by ensuring that all issues are explained clearly and that there is little room for questions which go unanswered. Likewise, ensuring that team logistics are handled in a manner which encourages interaction, creativity, and cooperation is important.

Lastly, when the team hits the goal line, or achieves the expected results, celebrate! Make sure the team knows that they were the ‘winners’ and that you appreciated their ability to work together to make things happen. This is especially true when your team has performed under great time or task pressures.

Participation: This style is critical when working cross-functionally or within groups of highly-motivated and talented individual contributors. Make sure that each individual has a task to complete and that they understand their role with respect to the task or project. Motivate them to exceed your and their expectations by helping them see the bigger picture and how their component contributes to the greater success.

Ensure that you fully explain the details on why their role is important to help them see the value of what they are doing and to encourage ownership of the task(s). Continually ask questions to check for uncertainty or confusion in the individuals and to provide opportunity for clarification and refocus. Your job in the Participation management style is to remove obstacles and create a ‘clear path’ for the individual contributors to be successful. When problems do occur, remove them quickly and check back that the individuals are still on task and on target.

Encourage all the individuals on the project, motivate them frequently, and celebrate achievement and success. Remember, your success is based upon the success of your people.

Directing: It is inevitable that a firm, direct management style will be required. Deadlines, customer expectations/needs, business priorities, and the like can stimulate a need for tight focus and achievement in short timeframes. Likewise, large and complex projects require a more directing approach to ensure that all are heading in the same direction.

In the directing style, managers must answer the who, what, why, when, where, and how questions for individuals and teams. Ensuring full clarity on needs, expectations, roles, responsibilities, timeframes, and ownership. This style may seem impersonal and hard, at times, but it doesn’t mean that you need to remain inaccessible and aloof. Make sure that you interact with key individuals and team leaders frequently, providing additional direction and motivation. Provide counsel and assistance based upon your past experience and successes.

Lastly, you must be willing to make many decisions quickly and effectively. Perhaps setting priorities daily/hourly, reassigning resources to needs. Communicate early and often to minimize problems. And, of course, reward proper behavior and successes often - creating additional momentum and motivation.