

# Exploring Leadership Styles

## The Four “Birds”

Written by Pat Ford

### Objectives:

1. Assess personal leadership styles
2. Explore the:
  - Strengths and weaknesses of different leadership styles.
  - Value of different leadership styles in a team setting.

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Preparation:** Before starting, post the signs (above) in the room on the respective walls and corners. Some facilitators like to withhold the pictures of the birds until after they have done the first step in the activity. In this case, the birds can be hung in the correct position but facing the wall or covered.

### 1. Step One: Introduction (2 minutes)

- Explain: The basic principles of this exercise come from a Harvard Study. There are many different versions besides birds, including colors (red, green, brown, orange) and descriptive words (promoter, supporter, analyzer, and controller).
- Share: This exercise is designed to help us... (share the objectives)

### 2. Step Two: Self Assessment (13 minutes)

- (M & S) Read the paired statements in the following shaded boxes. Each statement has a letter corresponding to the letters you have posted on the end walls. Ask the participants to move to the end of the room they most identify with.
- Have them move to one end of the room or the other after you read each statement—no standing in the middle. Explain that for the purposes of this exercise, it may help them to think of how they would respond in their current role in Girl Scouts (staff position, volunteer position, etc.). They may find themselves moving back and forth with each statement.
- Ask them to keep track of how many times they are at one end of the room or the other.

**Note:** Emphasize that it is important for participants to do their best to tell themselves the truth. The assessment is not about how they might like to be, but more about how they are. There is no good or bad way to be.

Be sure that you just read the statements. Do not try to clarify or explain them. Your personal attitudes will come through and may influence what people choose. You can re-read the statements if you want.

# Exploring Leadership Styles

## Question Set One

- (S) You are more open to getting to know people better and establishing new relationships, or (M) you exert more control over who you get involved with, including how well you know them.
  - (M) You focus conversation on tasks, issues, business, or the subject at hand, or (S) you allow conversation to take the direction of interest of the parties involved, even though this may stray from the business at hand.
  - (M) You tend to make decisions based on objectives, facts, or evidence, or (S) you tend to make decisions based on feelings, experiences, or relationships.
  - (M) You are more likely to make statements: “That’s the way it is!” or “I feel ...“, or (S) you are more likely to ask questions or speak less assertively: “How does this fit?” or “As I understand it...”.
  - You are more likely to expect and respond to conflicts (M), or you are less likely to expect conflict and less motivated to deal with conflict. (S)
  - You are more likely to accept others’ points of view, ideas, feelings, and concerns (S), or you are less likely to accept others’ points of view, ideas, feelings, and concerns. (M)
  - You tend to focus mostly on the idea, concept, or outcome (M), or you tend to focus primarily on the interest level, person involved, and the process. (S)
  - You are likely to stick with your own agendas and concerns while tuning into the power and motives of others (M), or you are more likely to tune into others’ agendas and concerns while minimizing any conflict or disagreement. (S)
  - You prefer to work independently or dictate the conditions as they involve others (M), or you prefer to work with and through others, providing support when possible. (S)
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- Once you have completed these statements, ask participants to go to the end of the room where they spent the most time. If it was even, then tell them to pick one.
  - (I & D) Once they have selected their spot, tell the participants that you are now going to read them a new set of statements that will send them to one side of the room or the other. Stress that when they move, they should stay on the end of the room where they currently are standing.

Read the second set of statements and have participants move to the corresponding letter that most represents their usual behavior.

# Exploring Leadership Styles

## Question Set Two

- You are a less frequent contributor to group conversations (I), or you are a more frequent contributor to group conversations. (D)
- You tend to keep personal thoughts or feelings private, sharing only when asked or necessary (I), or you tend to express personal thoughts or feelings, whether asked or not. (D)
- You frequently use gestures, facial expressions, and voice intonations to emphasize points (D), or you are less likely to use gestures, facial expressions, and voice intonations to emphasize points (I)
- You are more likely to wait for others to introduce themselves at social gatherings (I), or you are more likely to introduce yourself at social gatherings. (D)
- You tend to remain involved with known situations, conditions, and relationships (I), or you tend to seek new experiences, situations, and opportunities. (D)
- You are likely to express your own views more readily (D), or you are likely to be reserved about expressing your own views. (I)
- You tend to react more slowly and deliberately (I), or you tend to react more quickly and spontaneously. (D)
- You are likely to respond to risk and change in a more cautious or predictable manner (I), or you are likely to respond to risk and change in a more dynamic or unpredictable manner. (D)

Once you have completed the statements, ask them to go the side of the room where they spent most time. If it was even, then pick one.

- **Handout:** Supporting, Direct, Indirect, Managing Behavior Handout. Point out that these are what each combination of letters represents. Looking at these, would you change where you are standing at all? Would you be in the SD Corner; the SI corner; the DM Corner; or the MI corner? Go ahead and move if you think another corner fits who you are better.

**Note:** Sometimes, people argue that how they behave changes depending on their situation. This is true for some people. If that is the case, have them pick the corner that represents them when they are volunteering, or at work, or at home, etc.

# Exploring Leadership Styles

## 3. Step Three: Quadrant Explanation (5 minutes)

- Explain they should be standing in one of the four corners of the room. Have each corner reveal their bird. Then explain:
  - If you are standing in the corner between the “I” and the “S,” the “Dove” represents your primary leadership / behavioral style.
  - If you are in the “S” and “D” corner, the “Peacock” represents your particular style;
  - If you are in the “D” and “M” corner, the “Eagle” represents your style;
  - If you are in the “M” and “I” corner, the “Owl” represents your particular style.
- Explain – We picked these particular birds because they tend to create an image of that style, at least in some cultures – i.e. “wise old owl,” “struts like a peacock,” “peaceful as a dove,” “focused as an eagle.”
- Point out that there are many other ways to label these particular quadrants (such as colors, words, or numbers). Each choice is intended to avoid negative assumptions that people make about each of the quadrants. It is impossible because there are negative behaviors associated with all four, but equally important is that there are positive behaviors associated with all four as well.

## 4. Step Four: Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses (15 minutes)

- Give each group five to ten minutes to identify what they consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of their particular group. Have each group report. They can use any method they choose to illustrate these for the rest of the group. i.e., Easel pad list, skit, lecturette, etc.

**Note:** A skit is a relatively fun way to do this, and you can ask them all to do a skit if you have time.

- Mix the quadrants up and debrief this activity by conducting a discussion around the following questions:

*How might knowing this about yourself help you be more effective in your Girl Scout Role? What is the value of having other styles on your team? How can this information support the effectiveness of your team? If you work with Girl Scouts, how might this be a useful tool?*

- Hand out the remaining two handouts, explaining that this might be information they find helpful when working in groups or on a team.
  - Summary of Style Descriptors
  - Creating Agreement by Style
- Answer questions and address concerns.

# Exploring Leadership Styles



# Dove

# Exploring Leadership Styles



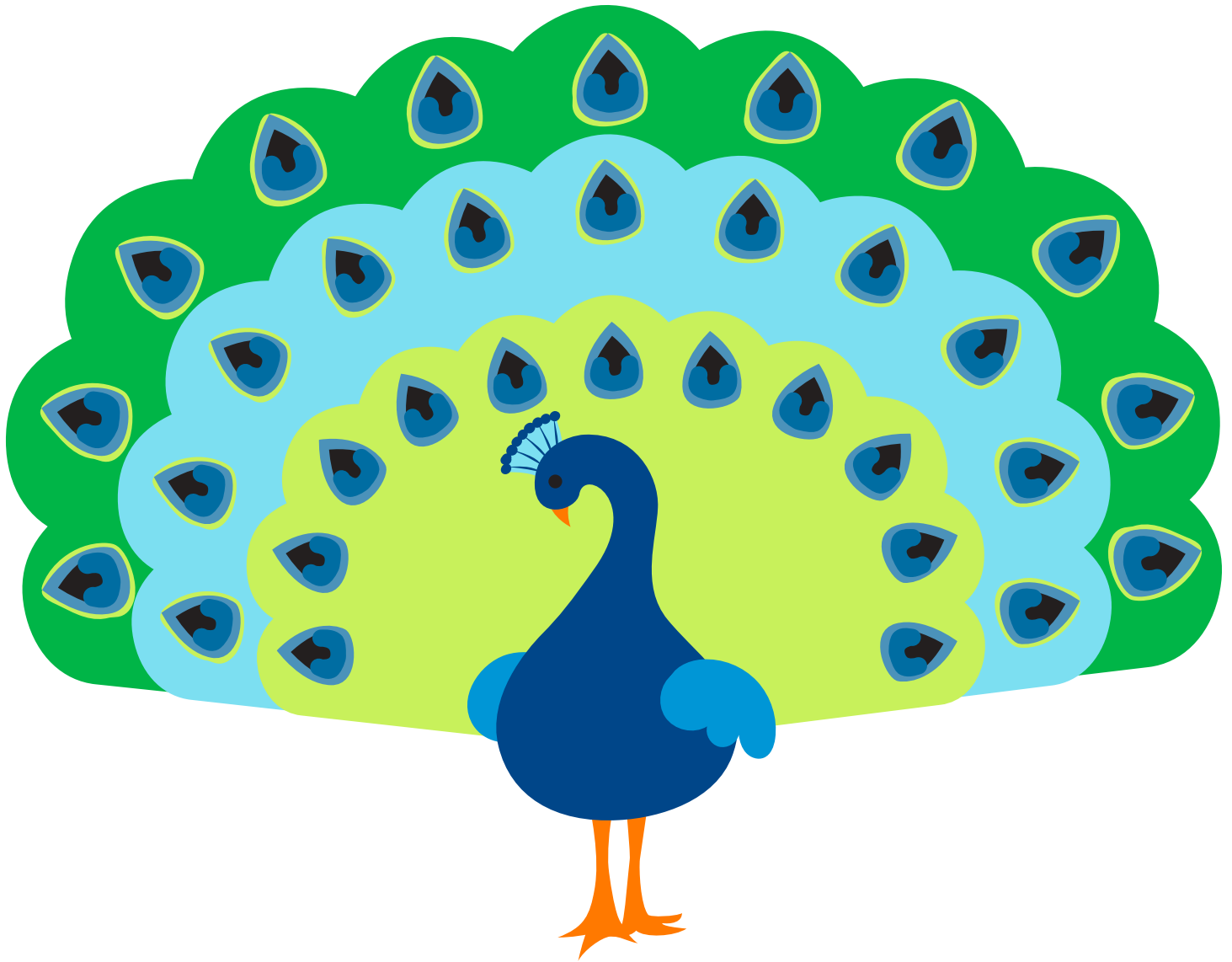
# Eagle

# Exploring Leadership Styles



Owl

# Exploring Leadership Styles



# Peacock





**N M**

D



# Creating Agreement by Style

If you find you are not communicating well with someone, you're not getting what you want, or you are in conflict, try guessing what their style might be. Then approach them in a way that matches their particular style.

	<b>Dove</b>	<b>Owl</b>	<b>Eagle</b>	<b>Peacock</b>
<b>Planning</b>	Likes to know how what you want will support what they are already doing and their relationships.	Likes proof that what you want is logical and has a track record and value.	Likes to know you've done your homework and that you are prepared.	Wants to know how what you want can increase their recognition and excitement while saving effort.
<b>Meeting</b>	Likes to relax and talk warmly and informally. Focuses on feelings, relationships, and building trust.	Needs you to speak slowly and accurately. Wants you to explain why you want to talk with them in particular.	Likes you to talk fast and in a businesslike manner. Will be focused on results, facts, and the bottom line.	Needs you to speak with friendly enthusiasm about aspirations and dreams. Let them set the pace.
<b>Studying</b>	Ask open questions that draw them out. Show tact and sincerity in probing about their life and relationship needs.	Ask open and closed questions that investigate their knowledge, systems, and objectives. Make your questions short and crisp.	Ask open and closed questions that focus on desired results and time constraints. Provide information about yourself while gathering information about them.	Ask open questions that explore their motivations, dreams, and expectations. Mix work questions in with social questions.
<b>Proposing</b>	Emphasize security, harmony, steadiness, and benefits. Involve them by asking for feedback.	Emphasize logic, accuracy, value, quality, and reliability. Present obvious disadvantages.	Emphasize efficiency. Present quick, concise analysis of their needs and your solutions.	Emphasize uniqueness, innovativeness, excitement, visibility, and saving effort. Style of presentation is as important as what you present.
<b>Confirming</b>	Make a plan together. Provide personal guidance, direction, and assurance.	Provide logical options with proof. Give them enough time and information to analyze their choices.	Provide options with benefits for each. Acknowledge that the final decision is theirs.	Act assumptive and quick. Use testimonials and incentives.
<b>Assuring</b>	Practice consistent and predictable follow-up. Continue building your relationship with personal attention and assistance.	Set a specific timetable for when you'll measure success. Continue proving your reliability, quality, and value.	Provide ongoing reminders of what's worked. Show them that you stand behind what you deliver.	Save them effort and complications while making them look good. Check for proper usage.

# Behavior Descriptors

## Summary Of Style Descriptors

	Dove	Owl	Eagle	Peacock
<b>General</b>	Supporting / Indirect	Managing / Indirect	Managing / Direct	Supporting / Direct
<b>Pace</b>	Slow / Relaxed	Slow / Systematic	Fast / Decisive	Fast / Spontaneous
<b>Priorities</b>	The Relationship / Communication	The Task / Process	The Task / Results	The Relationship / Interaction
<b>Appearance</b>	Casual Conforming	Formal Conservative	Businesslike Functional	Fashionable Stylish
<b>Workplace</b>	Personal Relaxed Friendly	Formal Structured Functional	Efficient Structured Busy	Personal Stimulating Cluttered
<b>Gains Security Through</b>	Friendship Cooperation	Preparation Thoroughness	Management Leadership	Playfulness Others' approval
<b>Fears</b>	Sudden changes	Criticism of their work	Being taken advantage of	Loss of prestige
<b>Measures Personal Worth By</b>	Compatibility with others, Depth of relationships	Precision, Accuracy, Activity	Results, Track record, Measurable progress	Acknowledgments, Recognition, Applause, Compliments
Is Motivated By	Involvement	The Process	Winning	The Chase
When Stressed	<p><b>When stressed:</b> will submit “Ok, if that’s the way you must have it, we’ll try it.”</p> <p><b>May appear:</b> wishy washy, submissive, passive, dependent, hesitant, defensive, indecisive</p> <p><b>Under stress needs:</b> Reassurances that they are liked, personal assurance, slow pace for comfort and security, relationships</p>	<p><b>When stressed:</b> will withdraw “I can’t help you any further. Do what you want.”</p> <p><b>May appear:</b> over-reliant on data and documentation, resistant to change, slow to act, slow to begin work, unable to meet deadlines, unimaginative, withdrawn, resentful</p> <p><b>Under stress needs:</b> Guarantees that they are right, understanding of principles and details, slow pace for “processing” information, accuracy</p>	<p><b>When stressed:</b> will dictate “If you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.”</p> <p><b>May appear:</b> restless, critical, blunt, intrusive, uncooperative, irritable, aggressive, pushy</p> <p><b>Under stress needs:</b> control of situation and self, tangible evidence of progress, fast pace for moving toward goals, accomplishments</p>	<p><b>When stressed:</b> will disregard “Hey, let’s get on to something more positive.”</p> <p><b>May appear:</b> manipulative, overeager, impulsive, inconsistent, superficial, unrealistic, wasteful of time</p> <p><b>Under stress needs:</b> To get credit, action and interaction, quick pace for stimulation and excitement, prestige</p>