

FINDING YOUR PERSONAL MANAGEMENT STYLE

What is meant by management style, and how can you know what yours is and how to use it? The following exercises identify management styles and the typical behaviors that accompany each. Completing the exercises will help you characterize your personal management style.

Ministry Style Assessment

Using a five-point assessment scale, describe to what extent the 40 attributes below characterize your ministry style. Choose. Two or three people who know you well to help you think through your answers as objectively as possible. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1 means "very uncharacteristic of me" and 5 means "very characteristic of me."

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| _____ 1. Decisive | _____ 16. Visionary | _____ 31. Detached |
| _____ 2. People pleaser | _____ 17. Demanding | _____ 32. Experimental |
| _____ 3. Organized | _____ 18. Sensitive | _____ 33. Power-conscious |
| _____ 4. Change-oriented | _____ 19. Concern for routine | _____ 34. Conflict-avoiding |
| _____ 5. Exhorter | _____ 20. Non-traditional | _____ 35. Information focused |
| _____ 6. Spontaneous | _____ 21. Perfectionist | _____ 36. Activist |
| _____ 7. Efficient | _____ 22 Accommodating | _____ 37. Dominating |
| _____ 8. Innovative | _____ 23. Planner | _____ 38. Contemplative |
| _____ 9. Controlling | _____ 24. Questioning | _____ 39. Detail-intensive |
| _____ 10. Informal | _____ 25. Confrontational | _____ 40. Controversial |
| _____ 11. Politically sensitive | _____ 26. Procrastinating | |
| _____ 12. Persuasive | _____ 27. Formal | |
| _____ 13. Competitive | _____ 28. Long-run focused | |
| _____ 14. Sharing and participative | _____ 29. Results-oriented | |
| _____ 15. Closure-oriented | _____ 30. Emotional | |

The 40 style attributes are regrouped into four columns below. Transfer your numerical responses to the corresponding column and enter your total score for columns I – IV.

Style I	Style II	Style III	Style IV
1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	6. _____	7. _____	8. _____
9. _____	10. _____	11. _____	12. _____
13. _____	14. _____	15. _____	16. _____
17. _____	18. _____	19. _____	20. _____
21. _____	22. _____	23. _____	24. _____
25. _____	26. _____	27. _____	28. _____
29. _____	30. _____	31. _____	32. _____
33. _____	34. _____	35. _____	36. _____
37. _____	38. _____	39. _____	40. _____

The ministry style with the highest point total signals your dominant, or preferred, ministry-management style. The higher the score for your preferred style relative to the other three styles, the more that style probably dominates your ministry behavior. More than one high score among the four shows you have a broad managerial-style repertoire-the capacity to utilize more than one ministry style.

Ministry Style Matrix

Consider the following descriptions of management styles:

Style I: Commanders (decisive, exhorter, controlling, competitive, demanding, perfectionist, confrontational, results- focused, power-conscious, dominating) combine a direct interpersonal style with a strong relationships orientation.

Commanders like being in the driver's seat and thrive on using legitimate power to achieve ministry results.

Style II: Shepherds (people-pleasing, spontaneous, informal, sharing and participative, sensitive, accommodating, procrastinating, emotional, conflict-avoiding, contemplative) are relational like commanders, but they prefer to facilitate (guide, encourage, equip) ministry members rather than to overly direct them.

Style III: Managers (organized, efficient, politically-sensitive, closure-oriented, concern for routine, planner, formal, detached, information-focused, detail-intensive) use formal, official policies and procedures to efficiently direct ministry activities in a way that permits independent action and decision making, minimizing the need for group deliberation and participative management. Maintenance managers favor orderly, routine operations run "by the book."

Style IV: Entrepreneurs (change-oriented, innovative, persuasive, visionary, nontraditional, questioning, long-run focus, experimental, activist, controversial) like to operate independent of organizational bureaucracy with an eye toward facilitating change and innovation. Entrepreneurs yearn to start projects hooked to a tantalizing vision of ministry progress.

Management Style Situational Effectiveness

Which of the four ministry styles is most effective? That depends on circumstances. Each style has unique strengths and weaknesses, depending on the needs of the particular ministry. The table below provides insight into the situational effectiveness of each style for the 10 most common managerial challenges.

	Commander	Shephrd	Managers	Entrepreneur
Jolting productivity	A	D	B	C
Defusing conflict	A	B	C	D
Fostering change	D	B	C	A
Bolstering morale	A	B	C	D
Implementing routine work	B	C	A	D
Implementing new projects	C	D	B	A
Building relationships	D	A	C	B
Managing a crisis	A	D	B	C
Goal setting	B	D	A	C
Keeping in touch with people's feelings	D	A	C	B

A = Style of greatest potential

B = Style of second greatest potential

C = Style of third potential

D = Style with least potential

Management-style flexibility is a cardinal virtue. You need to strive to utilize your preferred style (the one God has especially suited you for) in as many situations as possible that benefit from its strengths. You should also use any strong subordinate styles in a similar fashion.

It's important to know where your style strengths are ineffective and seek out partnership opportunities with other leaders who hold complementary style strengths. Ultimately, all Christian ministry is a partnership between interdependent team members empowered by God to do His kingdom work.

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