

Impact of management style on change management and staff development

Industry
Public Sector

Diagnostic Tool
Life Styles Inventory

Total Staff
800+

Introduction

Human Synergistics' research has clearly shown that the management or leadership style of any given manager has enormous impact on the behaviours of those being managed.

In particular, those managers who manifest the Constructive Styles of Achievement, Self-Actualising, Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative, are more likely to have a positive impact on the development of their people, whilst those manifesting the Passive/Defensive and Aggressive/Defensive Styles are more likely to impact people in a way that causes them to behave defensively.

This is represented in the model on the left.

This case study demonstrates the marked impact a manager's personal style has on the development efforts of two groups of professionals within the public sector:

Key Strategies

As part of the change programme in this particular public sector organisation, managers and professionals attended a 2 day development workshop, using the Human Synergistics Life Styles Inventory (LSI 1 & 2), obtaining feedback on own current personal behaviours and for the managers, their management styles.

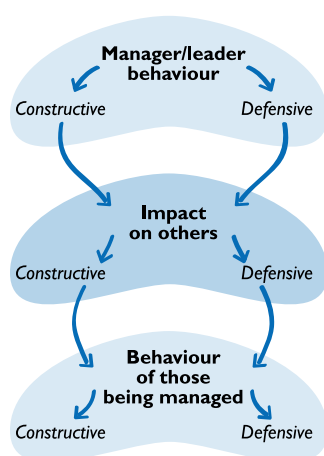
This exercise was repeated exactly one year later, providing each participant with further feedback and in particular focusing on where personal change and improvement had taken place.

It became immediately clear in this 'retest' situation that some individuals had changed enormously whilst others had not. In fact some people were being described as being more defensive than they were in the original measure.

Analysis of the data showed that the degree of development and change the professionals achieved was absolutely linked to the personal styles of their own managers.

In the examples below two managers, each with very different styles, had very different impacts on the change process amongst their professional teams.

In the case of **Manager A** this particular individual received feedback in the original workshop that his/her behaviour was extremely constructive.



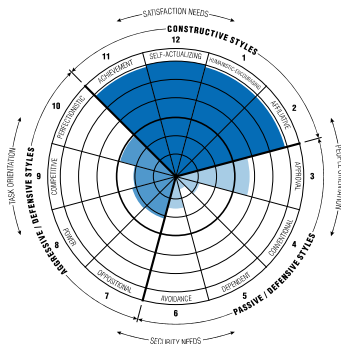
The Challenge

The public sector has experienced many reforms to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the services it provides. Significantly, competitive tendering has driven much of this change. Challenged by the need to match and compete with the private sector (driven primarily by the Hilmer reforms) many government agencies have had to make fundamental changes to the way they operate.

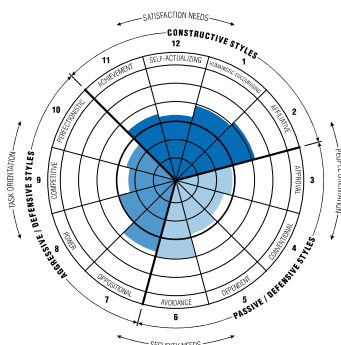
Vital to successful organisational change is an understanding of the behaviours and styles that drive organisational success. Human Synergistics' circumplex provides a powerful model or road map for public agencies to move from traditional public sector thinking based on the Conventional, Dependent and Avoidance styles, to the more constructive styles based on Achievement, Self-Actualising and Humanistic- Encouraging styles.

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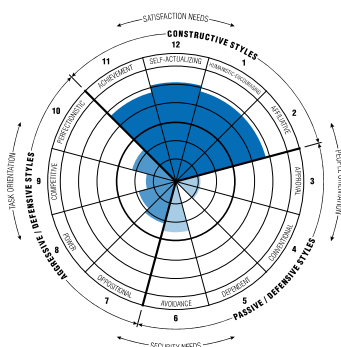
Manager A: Impact of management style on staff development



LSI 2 Test 1997: N=6



LSI 2 Retest 1998: N=6



Manager A's feedback showed extensive use of Achievement, Self-Actualising, Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative behaviours. These styles all correlate significantly with leadership and managerial effectiveness. This manager's feedback also indicated little reliance upon defensive behaviours as a way of dealing with either people or tasks.

When the feedback for the professionals in Manager A's team was collated, it showed a dramatic shift had taken place during the year of the change programme. Where these professionals were originally described by others as being quite high in the constructive styles, they were also relying on the passive/defensive style of Avoidance and the aggressive/defensive style of Oppositional to deal with both people and tasks.

By the time these professionals received feedback a year later, observable and measurable change had taken place.

Manager B on the other hand, received feedback that showed him/her to be a particularly passive/defensive manager; using Approval, Conventional, Dependent and Avoidance to deal with both people and task issues. Although this manager was very Humanistic and Affiliative, the defensive behaviours overwhelmed these more positive styles.

The professionals working for Manager B showed less constructive behaviours at the beginning of the change effort, and by the end of the first year were exhibiting even more defensiveness in dealing with both people and tasks. Not only had their defensiveness increased, but what constructive behaviours they had at the beginning had reduced over this time.

Factors Driving Personal Change

When the professionals discussed what had happened over the 12 month period of the change programme, some very specific factors became apparent. The key ingredients in supporting behavioural change were:

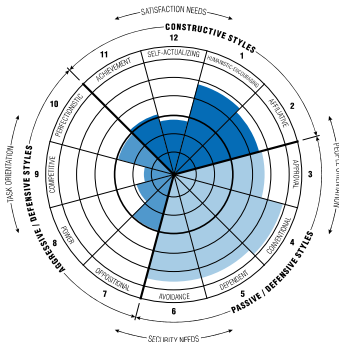
- Constantly reinforcing constructive behaviour at all times.
- Creating a learning environment.
- Chunking changes down into small 'pieces'.
- Constant use of circumplex language to identify and describe behaviours in the work place.
- Self awareness - being able to 'step outside oneself' and think about one's own behaviour.
- A positive and supportive environment.
- Keeping the pressure on for improvement.
- Socratic questioning that encouraged people to think, enquire and learn.
- Coaching and mentoring.
- Seeing the combination of task and people orientation.
- Mutual support to handle the uncertainty about change.

Conclusion

This case study illustrates the clear relationship that exists between how a manager leads and manages and how his or her staff respond to change initiatives.

This is but one example of the many times we at Human Synergetics have seen that change is not something that just happens - it is led. And if the leaders do not display constructive behaviours in their own leadership style and management practices, then change simply will not happen. Or worse - the opposite of what is desired happens - people retreat into more and more defensiveness, further diminishing the prospects of gains from planned improvements.

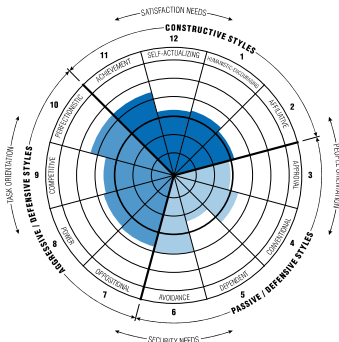
Manager B: Impact of management style on staff development



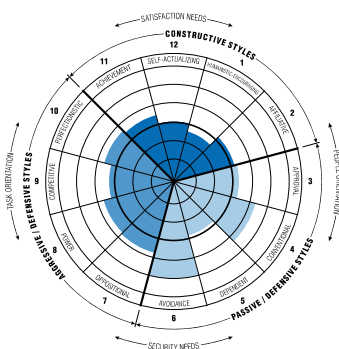
All too often change programmes concentrate on the structural issues. Changing structure does not change behaviours or attitudes. Any organisation is only as effective as the people in it. Today's literature calls this "Intellectual Capital" or "Knowledge Management".

Change starts with leadership. If your organisation's leaders do not project constructive behaviours, then all the change efforts imaginable will be for nought.

LSI 2 Test 1997: N=5

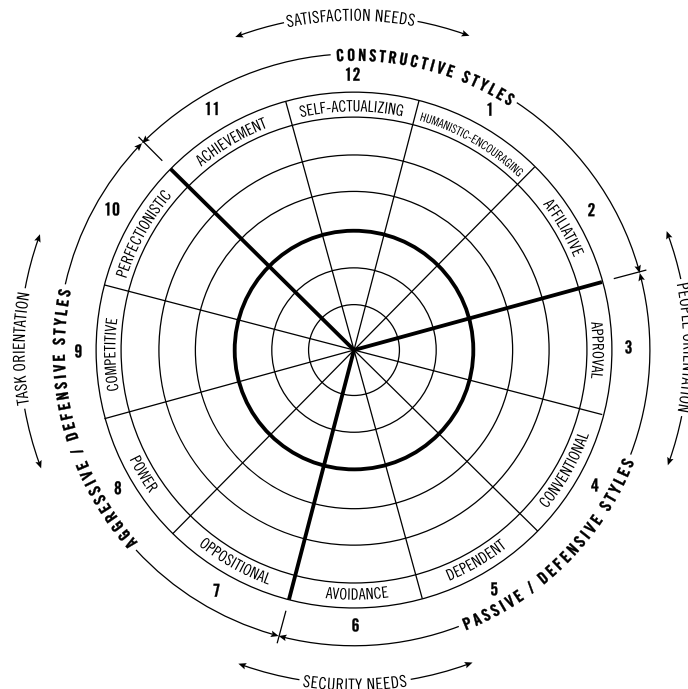


LSI 2 Retest 1998: N=5



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About the Circumplex



Research & Development by Robert A Cooke, Ph D and J Clayton Lafferty, Ph D. © Human Synergistics Int.

Humanistic-Encouraging (1 o'clock):

People are expected to be supportive, constructive, and open to influence in their dealings with one another.

Affiliative (2 o'clock):

People are expected to be friendly, cooperative, and sensitive to the satisfaction of their work group.

Approval (3 o'clock):

People are expected to agree with, gain the approval of, and be liked by others.

Conventional (4 o'clock):

People are expected to conform, follow the rules, and make a good impression.

Dependent (5 o'clock):

People are expected to do what they're told and clear all decisions with superiors.

Avoidance (6 o'clock):

People are expected to shift responsibilities to others and avoid any possibility for being blamed for mistakes.

Oppositional (7 o'clock):

People are expected to be critical, oppose the ideas of others, and make safe (but ineffectual) decisions.

Power (8 o'clock):

People are expected to take charge, control subordinates, and yield to the demands of superiors.

Competitive (9 o'clock):

People are expected to operate in a "win-lose" framework and work against (rather than with) their peers.

Perfectionistic (10 o'clock):

People are expected to avoid mistakes, keep track of everything, and work long hours to attain narrowly-defined objectives.

Achievement (11 o'clock):

People are expected to set challenging but realistic goals, establish plans to reach those goals, and pursue them with enthusiasm.

Self-Actualising (12 o'clock):

People are expected to enjoy their work, develop themselves, and take on new and interesting activities.



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