

# **Chapter 8**

## **Leadership and Self-Understanding**

## Chapter 8 Leadership and Self-Understanding

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*I have to live with myself and so I want to be fit for myself to know.*

-- Dan Rather, CBS news anchor,  
*The Wall Street Journal*

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#### SCOPE

This chapter provides information and materials for helping members to better understand their own preferences and motivations and those of others, and to use this information to work effectively with others in their AmeriCorps assignments. It examines the concept and practice of leadership, including definitions and traits, philosophies and models, and leadership styles, and their application to the AmeriCorps experience.

#### IMPORTANCE

AmeriCorps programs emphasize getting things done both individually and through collaboration, creating a common sense of purpose, and implementing partnerships in order to meet program

challenges. To work together, members first need to understand who they are and how they function, and then begin to see themselves in relationship to other people, with their own needs and interests. They also need to begin to think of themselves as leaders, reaching the goals of the AmeriCorps program by motivating themselves and others.

**TARGETED USERS**

This chapter is designed primarily for the trainers delivering this segment of PST. However, members can also individually complete the worksheets as self-directed activities and review the Supporting Information on leadership.

**EXPECTED LEARNING**

This chapter provides training staff with information and sample activities to prepare and provide pre-service training focusing on helping members better understand themselves and others, including leadership styles and motivating factors. It provides both theoretical and practical information which can be used in a number of ways: overheads, bullet points on newsprint, topics for discussion groups, and themes to use during debriefings and reflection.

**RELATED CHAPTERS**

This chapter provides information which complements the material in *Chapter 9: Working Effectively in Groups*, page 359, and also complements the work in *Chapter 11: Diversity and Multiculturalism*, page 445.

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**Hint:** This chapter can be very helpful in personalizing the PST experience because it gives the members a chance to learn more about their own preferences and motivations and those of other members. Comparing and contrasting our own preferences and styles with those of other members helps increase tolerance and acceptance and builds understanding of what makes each of us special.

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## Activity #8: Understanding Your Task Preferences

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### Trainer's Notes

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**Trainer Skills Needed:**

Facilitation skills  
Knowledge of work environments, work groups, and activity types

**Time Required:**

1 hour 15 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

*Member Instructions*  
*Task Preferences Worksheet*

**Learning Objectives:**

At the end of this activity, members should be able:

- To identify their own task, role, and situation preferences, in terms of work group versus individual tasks, level of independence, visibility, personal contact, and other factors
- To understand the implications of these task and situation preferences for their AmeriCorps assignments

**Skills Development:**

Self-understanding  
Communication  
Teambuilding

**Directions:**

Present the activity, and provide some background on task preferences. Explain that each of us prefers certain kinds of tasks, roles, and "working environments." Also note that we each have preferred ways of organizing and carrying out tasks that, while comfortable for us, may be in conflict with the preferences of team members.

Note that there are many ways of looking at preferences and personality "types," and many tools for assessing an individual's types or preferences. Some well known instruments include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, but there are many others that can also be used.

This activity is designed to help members identify the kinds of situations and tasks which they particularly enjoy or dislike, and consider the implications of these preferences for their AmeriCorps experience. One way for members to look at task preferences involves the following considerations:

- **Contact with people:** Do you prefer having daily contact with people? How many people? Do you prefer working with the same people over a period of time, or to see new faces every day? Do you prefer to have the community come to you for services or to seek out community members? Do your answers to these questions change if you ask the questions for contact with team members, instead of community members? Do you prefer working with the elderly, with adults, with youth, or with children?
- **The physical environment:** Do you prefer to work inside or outside? If you prefer outside, do you prefer to work in an urban area (renovating houses, for example) or in a rural or natural habitat area (cleaning up trails in national parks, for example)? Do you prefer being in an office, sitting at a desk or computer most of the day? Or do you prefer to be out in the community visiting schools, offices, business, or homes?
- **The type and content of tasks:** What kinds of tasks do you like? Do you enjoy researching an issue or writing a report? Do you like working with your hands? Do you prefer working on particular topics, such as education issues or health issues? Would you do anything related to environmental projects, but prefer to avoid public safety issues?

Review the *Member Instructions* with the full group. Have the members work individually. Ask them to look at the situations and complete the preferences form. This should take about 5 minutes. Then ask them to share with two other people, focusing on these questions:

- Looking at your responses, what kinds of preferences do you have -- preferences related to contact with people, the physical environment you complete your assignments in, the types of tasks you do, or the content of the tasks you do?
- What kinds of tasks or situations do you seem to prefer to avoid? Why? To what extent do you avoid some of these situations because you feel you would not do them well, rather than because you would not enjoy doing

them? Would having training in the areas you avoid make it easier to do those things?

- Are there major differences among member preferences in your group?

Allow 15 minutes for this discussion.

Now have several people **report** on their responses to these questions. You may want to start by asking members to raise their hands to indicate which alternatives they most prefer, and then go through again to see which they most dislike. This helps show the diversity of the group. **Process** by asking: What did you learn from this exercise about yourself and others? Then discuss the other two questions, which help to **generalize** the experience. Spend 20 minutes on this discussion.

Now discuss **applications**, such as what members may want to do about those activities they do not enjoy. Should they try them out in their AmeriCorps assignments, especially if the problem is a perceived lack of skills, so they can gain new skills? Should they try to explain their preferences to supervisors in order to ensure that their major assignments are consistent with their preferences and skills? Should they ask their supervisors to pair them with someone who can train or mentor them in these skills? Spend another 20 minutes discussing this.

## USE CARE WITH PERSONALITY TYPE TOOLS

Many people enjoy and benefit from using personality type inventories -- such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the Keirsey Temperament Sorter -- as a way to better understand themselves and others. Used as one way to look at members' own preferences and to recognize and appreciate differences in preferred behavior, they can be interesting and helpful. However, this manual does not provide personality type tools, because they should be used and interpreted only by trained experts. If you use such a tool, with trained assistance, it is extremely important to communicate to members that:

- **"Personality types" are not absolutes; they are simply preferences.** People behave differently in different situations, types change over time, and many people's response to a question differs depending on whether they use a work perspective versus a social perspective.
- **Interpretations of personality types vary.** The Myers-Briggs type of inventory is particularly popular, but there are many other approaches to understanding our own preferred behavior.
- **Participation in personality assessments is voluntary.** Anyone who is not comfortable with the process should have the option of not completing the tool, with no negative consequences.
- **Sharing or not sharing his/her personality type is each member's own decision.** Many members will enjoy writing their type on a name tag and looking for other people with similar or very different types. Others may be uncomfortable with this process. Give members the option of not sharing their types, and do not allow peer pressure to change their minds. There is probably no reason why facilitators or supervisors need these results; use the tools for the members' use only.
- **Interpretation of personality type be done by specialists.** Obtain "official" tools and scoring sheets and use interpretations prepared by experts.

See *Section D: Resources* for publications on personality type.

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**Activity #8: Understanding Your Task Preferences**  
**Member Instructions**

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**Assignment:**

To have you explore your personal preferences in terms of tasks, roles, and working environment -- the kinds of tasks you like to carry out and the situations you enjoy, and those you dislike and would prefer to avoid.

**Directions:**

Look at the alternative roles and responsibilities specified for each of the situations in the worksheet on the next page. Identify the roles you would very much enjoy and those you would dislike or prefer to avoid.

Then share your responses with two other people. Focus on the following questions:

- Looking at your responses, what kinds of "work environments," task groups, roles, and tasks do you prefer? Do you see patterns or generalizations you can make?
- What kinds of situations do you seem to prefer to avoid? Why? To what extent do you avoid some of these situations because you feel you would not do them well, or because you would not enjoy doing them?
- Are there major differences among the three of you in your preferences? What are they?



## Task Preferences Worksheet

For each situation, identify one or more roles/responsibilities which you would very much like to have, and any which you would dislike or prefer to avoid.

1. Your AmeriCorps assignment is with a community-based health organization; you work with a project which provides preventive care, health education, and health screenings. You are planning a major community health fair, and the following roles are available for members:
  - a. Preparing a system and forms for registering participants, recording all test results, and planning follow-up.
  - b. Organizing and coordinating community outreach to get the greatest possible participation.
  - c. Taking care of children while their parents get screened at the health fair.
  - d. Doing the vision screenings and recording results.
  - e. Arranging for follow-up appointments with health care providers within and outside your organization.
  
2. You are assigned to an organization concerned with public safety, in a medium-sized city. In order to understand community needs, resident concerns, and project preferences, your organization is going to conduct a community needs assessment. You may take any of the following roles:
  - a. Coordinate the design of a resident and a community leader questionnaire, as part of a work team.
  - b. Interview the residents using a door-to-door survey.
  - c. Facilitate a focus group to get in-depth information from neighborhood residents about the greatest public safety problems within the community.
  - d. Analyze the data from the needs assessment.
  - e. Write the report.
  - f. Present the results of the report before a coalition of community groups interested in implementing a public safety project in the city.
  
3. You are part of an after-school tutoring and enrichment program for junior high school students. You have the opportunity to play any of the following roles:
  - a. Coach the little league team of boys and girls.
  - b. Develop curriculum to improve reading skills through reading popular magazines.
  - c. Tutor individual students.
  - d. Work with parents to get them more involved in their children's education.
  - e. Teach an art or math or other class (pick a subject you know well) for 15 students.

4. You are an AmeriCorps member assigned to an environmental organization in a rural area near a national forest. The organization's summer project is to clean up a camping/picnic area and several trails connecting that area with other parts of the forest. You may take any of the following roles:
- a. Recruiting and organizing a group of teenage volunteers to assist with the project.
  - b. Cleaning up the area and trails as part of a work crew.
  - c. Being a crew leader on a work crew of other members, teenage volunteers, or a mix of the two.
  - d. Arranging for needed supplies for the clean up effort.
  - e. Coordinating the activities of the work crews.

## Activity #9: What Motivates Me and Others?

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### Trainer's Notes

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<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Facilitation skills
<b>Time Required:</b>	1 hour 15 minutes
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<i>Member Instructions</i> <i>Motivation Worksheet</i> <i>Sample Motivation Worksheet</i> Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint Newsprint and markers for the group
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of the activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To examine what motivates them personally</li><li>● To understand that people are motivated in different ways</li></ul>
<b>Skills Development:</b>	Communication Teambuilding Self-understanding
<b>Directions:</b>	<p>Divide members into cooperative learning groups of 3-5 participants. Give each group one or two pieces of newsprint, markers, one copy of the <i>Sample Motivation Worksheet</i>, and enough copies of the blank <i>Motivation Worksheet</i> so that each person has a copy. Review the <i>Member Instructions</i> with the full group.</p> <p>Discuss the concept of motivating factors -- they may be things about the AmeriCorps assignment, other AmeriCorps members, the host site, etc. Give examples of motivating factors, using the <i>Sample Motivation Worksheet</i>. Explain that motivations may vary throughout their lives; for example, people with young children may be highly motivated by the child care assistance AmeriCorps provides.</p> <p>Let the members explore their motivations for being AmeriCorps members, for a total of 35 minutes. First ask them to work individually for 10 minutes to fill out Columns 1 and 2 of the blank <i>Motivation Worksheet</i>. Give them 4 minutes to list (in Column 1)</p>

the factors that motivated them to apply to become members, 3 minutes to list new motivations that they have discovered since joining, and 3 minutes to identify and circle the three most important motivations to them at this moment in their AmeriCorps experience.

Then ask them to share their responses within their cooperative learning groups, using the round robin technique, with each person in the group sharing one response, then the next person sharing one, until all motivations are listed. Allow 10 minutes for this. Once this is done, the groups should take 15 minutes to compare and contrast the motivations, using the following questions as a guide:

1. Are there any motivations shared by all group members? 2. Did others in the group list motivations that you did not think of, but that do apply to you? (**If so, have them add these on their own worksheets in Column 2.**)
3. Are there any motivations listed that do NOT motivate you? (**If so, ask them to write these in Column 3.**)
4. While many of the motivations may be similar, are the three primary motivations similar or do they differ greatly?
5. Ask them to try to categorize the motivations. Which are related to the assignment itself, to roles with others, and to personal/career development?

Have each recorder report on his/her group's motivations, and summarize the discussion they had within the group, focusing on questions 1, 4, and 5.

**Process:** Was it surprising how similar or different the motivations were within the group? Did you learn something about yourself and others? Then **generalize:** What "categories" of motivation seemed most important? Could you see any patterns in the differences such as variations in member experience or age?

Consider **applications:** Host site supervisors need to understand what motivates you, and you may need to communicate this to them (perhaps you can put this form in your portfolio and share it with your supervisor). Also, other people may be motivated by different factors; how can you use this understanding to work more successfully with other members, host organization staff, community volunteers, and community members?

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## *Activity #9: What Motivates Me and Others?*

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### *Member Instructions*

#### **Assignment:**

To examine what motivates you and your fellow AmeriCorps members, and to compare and contrast motivations.

#### **Directions:**

In cooperative learning groups, decide on roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

Working individually for the first part of this exercise, fill out the attached *Motivation Worksheet*. Take 4 minutes to think about and list, in Column 1, the factors that motivated you to apply to become an AmeriCorps member. Then take 3 more minutes to list, in Column 2, new motivations that you have discovered since becoming an AmeriCorps member. Now take 3 more minutes to identify and circle the three most important motivations to you at this moment in your AmeriCorps experience.

For the next 10 minutes, within your cooperative learning group, using a round robin approach, share your motivations for joining AmeriCorps. Each member in turn should state one motivation and indicate if that motivation is one of his/her top three. The recorder should write the motivations on newsprint without comment. Continue around the group several times. Once all the motivations for joining AmeriCorps (Column 1) have been listed, continue the round robin listing new motivations discovered since becoming an AmeriCorps member (Column 2). The facilitator should keep going around the group until all motivations have been listed.

Take 15 minutes to discuss motivations within your cooperative learning group.

1. Are there any motivations shared by all group members? List them on another piece of newsprint.
2. Did others in the group list motivations that you did not think of, but that do apply to you? **(If so, add these on your own worksheet in Column 2.)**
3. Are there any motivations listed that do NOT motivate you? **(If so, write these in Column 3.)**
4. While many of the motivations may be similar, are the three primary motivations each person identified similar or do they differ greatly?

5. Try to categorize the motivations. Which are related to the **assignment** itself, to **roles** with others, and to **personal/career development**?

Put your newsprint sheet up on a wall with those of the other groups. The reporter should be prepared to present the list of motivations and summarize the group's discussion for the full group, focusing on questions 1, 4, and 5.

## Sample Motivation Worksheet

Column 1 <b>My motivation for joining AmeriCorps:</b>	Column 2 <b>Now that I'm on the team, other motivating factors:</b>	Column 3 <b>Does not motivate me:</b>
The education award	Receiving training	Receiving child care assistance
Desire for new experiences	Working as a member of the team	Receiving health insurance
Helping others	Receiving recognition for my work	Physical working conditions
A feeling of personal accomplishment	Developing new skills	Community or public visibility
Making contacts	Agreement with host program and AmeriCorps missions	Freedom in doing my work
Helping to meet a real need in the country or community	Participating in planning and decision making	
Opportunity to develop marketable skills	Opportunity for increased responsibility	
	Being part of the AmeriCorps National Service Network	







## Activity #10: Understanding Leadership

### Trainer's Notes

*Projects are simply laboratories in which members develop lifelong leadership skills.*

-- AmeriCorps Network Northwest,  
Volume 1, Number 4, July 1995

**Trainer Skills Needed:**

Facilitation skills  
Understanding of leadership concepts

**Time Required:**

1 1/2 hours

**Materials Needed:**

Easel pad, markers, and masking tape -- so each small group can have several pieces of newsprint and several colored markers  
*Understanding Leadership: An Introduction* from the Supporting Information of this chapter  
*Member Instructions*

**Learning Objectives:**

At the end of the activity, members should be able:

- To provide a practical definition of leadership
- To describe characteristics which they associate with leaders

**Skills Development:**

Leadership development  
Teambuilding  
Self-understanding

**Directions:**

Introduce the concept of leadership, using *Understanding Leadership: An Introduction* in the Supporting Information at the end of this chapter. Review the *Member Instructions* with the full group. Then ask the members to define the term; instruct them to spend 2-3 minutes working individually to write down their definitions. Get several definitions on newsprint, and discuss these definitions.

Share with the group some of the definitions in *Understanding Leadership* to see how definitions from leadership experts compare to the members' definitions and to see if the members agree with the experts' definitions. Be sure to explain that leadership can only

occur when there is something to be done and people to "follow" or be part of the group. Spend 15 minutes on this discussion.

Now ask the group to think individually and try to identify three people in their community whom they think of as leaders and what positions or roles they fulfill in the community. Give members about 3 minutes to think about this. Go around the group to get one name and the corresponding position or role from each member. Keep listing leaders until you have gone through the group at least twice. Do NOT ask why these people were identified as leaders.

**Process:** Did members find it difficult to identify leaders? Who are the leaders they listed? Look to see how many are: men versus women, "minority" versus "mainstream," engaged in business versus nonprofit and other sectors, known to the public versus not publicly known.

**Generalize:** Now ask the members to consider what makes someone a leader -- what are some of the traits or characteristics that distinguish a leader. Have members form pairs. Ask members to choose two of the people they identified as leaders and consider *why* they feel each is a leader. Each member should work individually for 5 minutes to think about why the people they identified are leaders and to identify five traits they associate with each person and consider to be characteristics of a leader.

Now ask them to share within their pairs their reasons for selecting the people they did, and their lists of traits. Also ask them to identify any traits listed by both members. Then they should try to come up with a joint list of at least five traits they both believe are associated with leaders. They should make a separate list of any traits about which there is disagreement concerning whether they are associated with leadership. Allow 10 minutes for this process.

## LEADERSHIP TRAITS

Do all leaders share certain qualities that differentiate them from "nonleaders"? Some people believe that leaders must have "charisma," or vision, or that they must be good public speakers. Years of research have not uncovered any consistent traits that differentiate leaders from nonleaders -- experts are still trying to understand what makes someone a leader.

While the pairs are working, put newsprint up on two opposite walls. On one side of the room, write at the top of the newsprint "Leadership Characteristics or Traits on Which There is Agreement," and on the other side of the room "Leadership Characteristics or Traits on Which There is NOT Agreement."

Ask one person from each pair to write the agreed-upon leadership traits on newsprint on one side of the room, and the other person to write the non-agreed-upon traits on newsprint on the other side of the room. Each person writes one trait from his/her list, then goes to the end of the line. As each person gets to the newsprint again, s/he adds another trait from his/her list. This continues until all the traits are up. If pairs have the same traits listed by others, they should put a mark by that trait to indicate agreement -- so everyone can see how many times specific traits were mentioned. (If the group is large, you may want to have one member from each side serve as recorder and another serve as facilitator for each group, to speed the process.)

Discuss in the full group the reasons members gave for identifying individuals as leaders. List them. See if there is agreement on some of these factors -- was it because they accomplished something specific for their community? because many people followed them? because they had a clear vision which they got other people to share? because they led their community in a crisis? because of roles they played inside their family?

Now look at the lists of traits. Was there wide agreement on traits associated with leaders? Were some traits listed very often? Are there some traits that occur on both sides of the room -- which

means that some pairs agreed on them as leadership characteristics while other pairs did not? If so, have both views presented. Can the group identify a set of characteristics or traits that distinguish leaders or are necessary for a person to be a leader?

**Generalize:** Try to categorize the traits -- Which are people born with? Which can be learned? Which deal with a person's values? Which with skills?

Groups often agree that leaders are people who can inspire and motivate people. But there is likely to be considerable variety in the traits identified and agreed upon -- or not agreed upon -- as leadership traits. Often, traits identified have to do with interpersonal relationships (such as good group conflict resolution skills), communication (such as being an effective public speaker), or community-related skills (such as good organizing skills).

### **LESSONS LEARNED: LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

This exercise should help members see that many of the characteristics they associate with leadership are learned skills -- the ability to understand and assess a community's needs, interact effectively with many different kinds of people, speak and write effectively, organize and work with groups. Most of the general or cross-cutting skills provided in your pre-service training session probably involve these skills, and therefore can be thought of as leadership skills. Other AmeriCorps programs have demonstrated that the entire process of being an AmeriCorps member can be a leadership development experience.

Ask members whether this exercise has changed their concept of leadership. Do they feel leaders can be "made" as well as "born"? Do they feel they themselves are or can be leaders? What leadership traits would they like others to attribute to them? See if they now feel a need for any specific kinds of skills. Ask how they can **apply** what they have learned to their AmeriCorps assignments.

This discussion will probably take about 30 minutes.

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**Activity #10: Understanding Leadership**  
**Member Instructions**

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**Assignment:**

To consider what it means to be a leader and what characteristics we associate with leadership.

**Directions:**

Work with one other person -- preferably someone you don't know very well or someone from a different community.

1. Individually think about two of the people you identified as leaders, and consider why you feel each is a leader. Then identify five characteristics or traits that you associate with each and consider to be characteristics of leaders. You have 5 minutes to do this.
2. Together with your partner, share the reasons why you feel each of the people you identified is a leader. Then share your list of traits with your partner, and note which traits you both listed. Review all the traits you and your partner identified and see if you are in agreement that all the traits listed are leadership traits. Identify any traits which you do not both agree on as leadership traits. You have 10 minutes to do this. Be prepared to share your work with the rest of the group.



## Activity #11: Leadership Styles

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### Trainer's Notes

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<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Facilitation skills Understanding of leadership concepts and applications
<b>Time Required:</b>	1 hour and 15 minutes
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	<i>Member Instructions</i> <i>Leadership Style Analysis Form</i>
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of the activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To identify and describe four different leadership styles</li><li>● To identify the leadership styles with which they feel most comfortable -- as a group member and as a leader</li><li>● To describe the advantages and disadvantages of specific leadership styles in completing different types of group tasks</li></ul>
<b>Skills Development:</b>	Leadership skills Self-understanding
<b>Directions:</b>	<p>Allow 15 minutes for initial presentation and discussion. Introduce the concept of leadership styles (Refer to <i>Understanding Leaders: An Introduction</i> at the end of the chapter). Note that there are many different ways to look at leadership -- in terms of traits or characteristics of leaders (as considered in the previous activity), leadership models or philosophies, or leadership styles. This activity involves looking at different leadership styles and the factors that determine leadership style.</p> <p>Discuss the value of looking at different leadership styles, to understand their practical advantages and disadvantages, from group member, leader, and task-completion perspectives.</p> <p>Using the descriptions in <i>Understanding Leadership</i>, present four different leadership styles: <b>authoritarian/autocratic</b>, <b>consultative</b>, <b>democratic</b>, and <b>laissez-faire</b>.</p>

Begin by asking members of the group to try to describe each type of leader. They will probably distinguish the four styles based on level of decision-making authority maintained by the leader. Note that this is just one of the ways to differentiate the four styles. Suggest that there are at least three different "continuums" to consider:

- **Decision-making and power** -- retained by the leader versus held by the group
- **"Leader-centered" versus "group-member-centered" leadership** -- whose interests and needs are emphasized
- **Communication between leader and group** -- down versus both up and down

With the full group, discuss where each style of leadership falls on each "continuum."

Review the *Member Instructions* with the full group. Now have members work in pairs using the *Member Instructions*. Ask that they work with someone they do not know well. Each pair should complete the *Leadership Style Analysis Form*, comparing the four leadership styles in terms of advantages and disadvantages of that style from the perspective of the leader, the group, and the task involved. Allow 5 minutes for everyone to read the *Member Instructions* and review the *Leadership Style Analysis Form*, and then 10 minutes for the pairs to work together.

Then have two pairs share their responses; allow 10 minutes for sharing. Ask pairs to modify or add to their *Analysis Forms* based on the discussion.

Then ask four different pairs to share their analyses, by making a presentation to the full group. Ask each to focus on a different leadership style. After each presentation, ask other members of the group if they have anything to add. This should take about 15 minutes.

Then **process**; see if most members agree with the analyses. Begin to **generalize**. Ask members to vote on the leadership style they would most prefer in a person leading a group in which they were members. Then ask them to vote on the leadership style they would feel most comfortable being identified with themselves. Discuss how leadership styles **apply** to their AmeriCorps assignments, in

terms of both their own leadership development and an understanding of the leadership styles of others. Be sure to emphasize that many of the skills being developed in the PST help members take on and succeed in leadership roles, and that leadership development is an integral part of AmeriCorps. Allow 20 minutes for this part of the discussion.



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**Activity #11: Leadership Styles**  
**Member Instructions**

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**Assignment:**

To analyze and understand the advantages and disadvantages of different leadership styles -- from a group member, leader, and task-completion perspective.

**Directions:**

1. Review the attached *Leadership Style Analysis Form*.
2. Working with one other person, take 10 minutes to complete the attached *Leadership Style Analysis Form*. For each leadership style, as summarized in the box below, consider its advantages and disadvantages from the perspective of the group, the leader, and the completion of tasks. Try to put yourself in the place of the leader and of a group member, and consider two different kinds of group tasks that might be a part of your AmeriCorps assignment: organizing a clean-up project in a community with a group of teenagers from a local high school, where the AmeriCorps member is the leader, and developing and implementing home visits throughout a community to determine parental views about the most needed after-school activities for children and youth, where AmeriCorps members compose the entire group.

<b>LEADERSHIP STYLES SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Authoritarian:</b>	Leader makes decisions unilaterally; leader-centered; most communication is downward from the leader
<b>Consultative:</b>	Leader consults with group but retains final responsibility for decisions and action; slightly more leader- than group-centered; communication is two-way
<b>Democratic:</b>	Group makes decisions jointly; group-centered; communication is two-way
<b>Laissez-faire:</b>	Leader abdicates responsibility for decisions or actions; very little downward communication, which discourages upward communication; group-centered but without leader support

3. Now take 10 minutes to share your responses with one other "pair" and make changes or additions to your Form based on that discussion.
4. Be prepared to present and discuss your analysis with the full group.



## Leadership Styles Analysis Form

Leadership Style	Advantages and Disadvantages For the Group	Advantages and Disadvantages For the Leader	Advantages and Disadvantages In Completing Tasks
<b>Authoritarian</b>			
<b>Consultative</b>			
<b>Democratic</b>			
<b>Laissez-faire</b>			



## Activity #12: Situational Leadership

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### Trainer's Notes

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<b>Trainer Skills Needed:</b>	Facilitation skills Understanding of leadership and situational leadership concepts
<b>Time Required:</b>	1 hour
<b>Materials Needed:</b>	Easel pad, markers, and masking tape -- so each small group can have several pieces of newsprint and several colored markers <i>Member Instructions</i> <i>Situational Leadership Analysis Worksheet</i> Cooperative Learning Roles Chart posted on newsprint
<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	At the end of the activity, members should be able: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● To describe and apply the concept of situational leadership</li><li>● To identify and describe factors to consider in deciding what kind of leadership approach is most likely to be effective in a particular situation</li></ul>
<b>Skills Development:</b>	Leadership skills Group problem-solving skills Self-understanding
<b>Directions:</b>	Spend 15 minutes providing background for the activity. If you have not used other leadership activities which introduce leadership styles, introduce them here. Then introduce the concept of situational leadership -- using different leadership styles or approaches in different situations (Refer to "Leadership Philosophies and Models" in <i>Understanding Leadership: An Introduction</i> , in the Supporting Information at the end of the chapter). Note that there are several models for situational leadership, which suggest different factors to consider in deciding what leadership style or approach is likely to be most effective. Explain that the following are particularly important in task-focused groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Factors related to the leader</b>, including position and power as well as influence, including extent of group member support and loyalty;</li></ul>

- **Factors related to the members**, such as their age, level of education and experience, ability and willingness to accept responsibility for the work of the group, and motivation to do a good job and set and meet objectives; and
- **Factors related to the group**, such as its purposes and the tasks it needs to perform.

Provide examples which indicate that different leadership approaches "work" well in different situations. For example, take a group of AmeriCorps members who are highly motivated and well trained for their task, which is to make apartments accessible and comfortable for disabled people in the community. If the crew leader is experienced in disability needs and apartment modifications, is liked and trusted by the members, and has helped to train them, then s/he should be able to use a **democratic** or **consultative** leadership style effectively, or try a "shared leadership" model. On the other hand, if that same group is working on its first apartment, has no experience and limited training, and has just met the crew leader for the first time, and if some of the members are not feeling very highly motivated because they were up too late the night before doing a special community service activity, then the crew leader might need to use a more **authoritarian** style. S/he might be able to work towards a consultative approach as the group becomes more "mature" in the terminology of situational leadership -- better trained, more motivated, and more responsible.

Explain that you want members to learn to analyze situations to decide what leadership approach or style might be most useful.

Divide members into cooperative learning groups of 3-5 participants. Give each group two pieces of newsprint and markers, the *Member Instructions*, and the *Situational Leadership Analysis Worksheet*. Review the instructions with the full group. Each group will be assigned one situation, and members are to analyze that situation in terms of factors related to the leader, the members, and the group purposes and task, and decide what leadership style or approach seems most appropriate for the leader in that situation. They should consider authoritarian, consultative, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles, and may also consider different leadership models or philosophies, such as shared

leadership or servant leadership. Give the groups 20 minutes to discuss the situations.

Then have them present their analysis and recommendations to the full group. The expected recommendations are as follows:

1. Strong and directive leadership, initially even authoritarian - this is a new and inexperienced group that needs clear guidance, at least until it gains skills and matures as a group.
2. Shared leadership or democratic leadership would work very well here. You might even use a laissez-faire approach -- they know what to do; let them do it.
3. Democratic or shared leadership -- everyone's opinion is equally valuable; vote or reach consensus as a group.
4. Consultative -- you can't let them carry baseball bats around, but you don't want to destroy their initiative either; try to get them to see the problems themselves so they gain skills, but make the final decision.

Discuss the small groups' responses and other alternatives; suggest how the appropriate leadership style might change based on changes in the members, the leader, and the task involved. Then **process** and **generalize**. Discuss how they decided what leadership style or approach was most appropriate. Discuss how this information and this method of analysis **apply** to their AmeriCorps assignments, in terms of both their own leadership development and their involvement in groups led by others. Allow 25 minutes for reporting and discussion.

## THE CONCEPT OF SERVANT-LEADERSHIP

One important view of leadership is that of the "servant-leader," a concept developed by Robert T. Greenleaf, a former AT&T official who wrote a series of essays and books in the 1970s and 1980s that continue to influence leaders in all sectors.

In his original essay, *The Servant as Leader*, Mr. Greenleaf described servant-leadership in these terms:

The servant-leader is servant first....It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead...The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant -- first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served.

The best test, and most difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived?

Materials on servant-leadership are available from the Robert T. Greenleaf Center on Servant-Leadership in Indianapolis; Mr. Greenleaf's original essay is referenced in the Resources section, and contact information for the Greenleaf Center is provided.

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## *Activity #12: Situational Leadership*

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### *Member Instructions*

#### **Assignment:**

To see how different situations -- in terms of factors related to the leader, the members, and the group's purposes and tasks -- may require different leadership styles or approaches.

#### **Directions:**

Once in cooperative learning groups, decide on roles for group members, choosing from the cooperative learning roles list posted in the training room.

Spend 5 minutes individually reading the situation assigned to you, and filling out the *Situational Leadership Analysis Worksheet*. Try to decide what leadership style or approach you feel should be used in this situation. Then spend 15 minutes sharing information among the group. Try to reach consensus on an appropriate leadership style and approach, and be prepared to explain why your analysis led you to that recommendation.

1. You are a group of eight AmeriCorps members working as a crew in a national forest. Your first assignment is to repair and improve the main hiking trail, which winds for 17 miles through heavy forest, up and down mountains, along a deep lake, and through some meadows. The assignment is physically difficult, since you will have to carry materials for considerable distances beyond where a vehicle can go. This is your first day on the project. The group just got acquainted during a week of pre-service training, and you don't really know each other's strengths and weaknesses yet. All of you have had some outdoor experience, but the demands of this assignment are greater than some of you expected. All you have done so far is begin to move equipment and materials to the spot where the trail most needs repair. During the process, two members seem determined to demonstrate their agility and strength; the other members are a bit afraid that they might take unreasonable risks on the mountainside. Another crew member is frightened of heights, and is clearly feeling very uncomfortable. The rest of you are not sure how best to organize yourselves to get the work done -- and be sure the two show-offs behave. You know the crew leader is very experienced, having done work like this for more than ten years. She had to consult with someone on the park staff about equipment and materials, but is due back any minute, and you are waiting with some apprehension to discover what kind of a crew leader she will be.

2. The project to which you are assigned involves renovating housing for senior citizens, working with a group of community volunteers who are extremely skilled and committed. They all have some background in construction and have already completed work on four houses. You are the coordinator of the project, as an AmeriCorps member assigned to a community-based housing rehabilitation and construction agency. Your skills are more in administration and group process than in the actual construction, but you are the only person involved on a full-time basis. It is time to decide on priorities for the next three months, which involves selecting about five homes to work on from among 15 applications, planning the work, and scheduling activities in terms of priorities and volunteer availability. Five volunteers are supposed to work with you in making these decisions, though the final responsibility is yours.
3. You are a group of members who have decided to do one special community service activity at the end of your AmeriCorps assignment. There are seven members, and three of them have recommended projects: a field trip to a nearby lake for a group of homeless children, a picnic for senior citizens, and painting a homeless shelter. Today the group is meeting to select an activity and develop a plan for organizing it. The group members have been working at several different assignments over the year, but have seen each other on a daily basis, and have often done joint activities. All are highly motivated, and have a long-term career interest in community service; all can point to real accomplishments for the organizations and communities where they are assigned. Because the seven members are assigned to five different agencies within the community, and you want to be clear on everyone's role, the group has developed the habit of choosing one person to coordinate each joint assignment; that person is the official leader for the project. You have been elected the team leader for this project.
4. Two members are working with 15 high school students on a community crime prevention project. The students have been very active; in just three months, they already have helped develop a neighborhood watch program with "safe houses" identified with green flags and residents trained to help in emergencies. They faithfully spend their Saturdays on the project, and some of them are involved as much as three late afternoons and evenings during the week. Now the group is ready to plan its next activity. The members have decided that more visibility is needed to encourage neighborhood residents to become involved in crime prevention, and have been reading about "defensible space." They figure that if they can get people in a selected four-block area to keep their curtains open, sit on their front porches, and show solidarity by wearing green T-shirts and baseball caps, this will make people feel safer on the streets and discourage drug dealers and criminals. They also think it might be good for the students to patrol the area with green hats and shirts and green baseball bats. They promise not to try to do any enforcing; they just want to be visible. You are meeting today to agree on and plan the next activity.

## Situational Leadership Analysis Worksheet

<b>Significant Factors Related to the Leader</b>	<b>Significant Factors Related to the Members</b>	<b>Significant Factors Related to the Group's Purpose and Tasks</b>

**Given your analysis, describe an appropriate leadership style/approach for this situation:**



## Supporting Information



## Understanding Leadership: An Introduction

**Leadership** is a term, a concept, a process. It has many definitions and interpretations, and can be applied to many situations. This summary identifies some ways of defining and explaining leadership and leaders that may be useful to AmeriCorps members, and some models and approaches used to understand and to develop leadership.

Leadership is often viewed from one or more of the following three perspectives: leadership philosophies or models, traits or characteristics of leaders, and leadership styles. This summary introduces all three viewpoints.

### DEFINING LEADERSHIP

Leadership has many definitions. Here are a few:

"Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers" (John W. Gardner, *On Leadership*).

"Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement" (Rauch and Behling, quoted in Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*).

"Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations" (Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*).

"Leadership is the art or practice of influencing others in decisions on goals (what to do) or means (how to do it)" (Dyer and Williams, Institute for Leadership and Volunteer Development, "Developing Local Community Leaders").

What do these definitions have in common? They recognize that leadership can occur only in the context of a group of people who are doing something together. Leadership involves **goal-setting** and **motivating** -- leaders organize or mobilize or influence other people to work towards a common goal or shared aspirations.

### LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHIES AND MODELS

Many, many different leadership models and philosophies exist. Individuals and organizations describe leadership in terms of a set of values or principles or a specific philosophy. For example:

- **Servant-leadership**, as developed by Robert T. Greenleaf, is based on the model of a leader as someone who aspires to lead as a means of serving others. It is "caring leadership"; its critical concerns are that the critical needs of others are met, and that they grow as individuals.
- **Principle-centered leadership**, as defined by Stephen R. Covey, believes that people center their lives and their leadership of organizations and people on "certain 'true north' principles," "self-evident, self-validating natural laws" that pertain to human relationships and human organizations and apply at all times and in all places.
- **The Contingency model of leadership**, as developed by Fred Fiedler, assumes that the most effective leadership strategy depends on the situation. Leaders may be motivated by task or "production," and/or by "relationships" and the desire to have good relations with others in the group. A leader's success with a group is contingent upon both this motivation and the extent of the leader's "situational control and influence" within the group. Control can involve the leader's formal position and power, the extent to which the leader enjoys group member support and loyalty, and the nature of group tasks. This model concludes that there is no single "best" leadership style for all situations.
- **Situational leadership theory**, as developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, also assumes that appropriate leadership style depends on the situation, but focuses primarily on the characteristics of the members of the group (employees or "followers"). It assumes that leadership approaches must consider group members' "maturity" -- their level of education and/or experience, their ability and willingness to accept responsibility, and their motivation towards doing a good job and setting and meeting objectives. The leader must engage in task and relationship behavior appropriate to the "maturity" of the group.
- **Shared leadership**, as defined by Delwyn Dyer and Oscar Williams of the Institute for Leadership and Volunteer Development at Virginia Institute of Technology, is a democratic leadership model in which an organization has more than one leader. It assumes that leadership has a functional component -- certain functions must be carried out so that the group can perform and grow -- and a situational component -- the group needs leaders with the know-how appropriate to particular assignments and stages in their development. At different times, while carrying out different tasks, groups need different leadership skills. Shared leadership helps ensure the right mix of skills, and also keeps the group dynamic and its members committed.

## TRAITS OR CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERS

Some people believe that leadership can best be understood by trying to identify a set of characteristics essential to successful leaders. If these traits can be identified, then it should be possible to identify individuals who are potential leaders. This approach usually does not consider differences in groups or tasks -- it assumes that certain traits are common to all successful leaders, from a military general to the leader of a social movement.

In applying this approach, researchers have found that successful leaders are extremely diverse. Moreover, it is clear that the mix of traits is important and complex. Many people who have the same traits as successful leaders are not themselves leaders; for example, many leaders are highly intelligent and courageous, but many highly intelligent and courageous people are not leaders.

Despite these limitations, certain traits do seem to be, if not necessary, at least very valuable for leaders.

In his book *On Leadership*, the product of a five-year study, John Gardner (the founder of Common Cause, a former cabinet secretary, and a member of many corporate boards) identifies a group of "attributes" which -- though not present in or needed by every successful leader -- are common to many leaders; they are a compendium of traits identified by many other researchers on leadership (see box). However, none of these traits *guarantees* successful leadership in every situation.

In looking at the characteristics of effective leaders, it can be helpful to focus on certain types of leaders. For example, Gardner also identifies six characteristics which he feels distinguish leader/managers from managers who are not leaders:

1. They think longer term -- beyond the day's crises, beyond the quarterly report, beyond the horizon.

### ATTRIBUTES OF LEADERS

- Physical vitality and stamina
- Intelligence and judgment-in-action
- Willingness (eagerness) to accept responsibilities
- Task competence
- Understanding of followers/constituents and their needs
- Skill in dealing with people
- Need to achieve
- Capacity to motivate
- Courage, resolution, steadiness
- Capacity to win and hold trust
- Capacity to manage, decide, set priorities
- Confidence
- Ascendance, dominance, assertiveness
- Adaptability, flexibility of approach

Source: Gardner, John W., *On Leadership*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.

2. In thinking about the unit they are heading, they grasp its relationship to larger realities -- the larger organization of which they are a part, conditions external to the organization, global trends.
3. They reach and influence constituents beyond their jurisdictions, beyond boundaries....Leaders' capacity to rise above jurisdictions may enable them to bind together the fragmented constituencies that must work together to solve a problem.
4. They put heavy emphasis on the intangibles of vision, values, and motivation and understand intuitively the nonrational and unconscious elements in leader-constituent interaction.
5. They have the political skill to cope with the conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies.
6. They think in terms of renewal. The routine manager tends to accept organizational structure and process as it exists. The leader or leader/manager seeks the revisions of process and structure required by ever-changing reality.

Specific characteristics can be identified with different types of groups. For example, according to Dyer and Williams, studies suggest that task-oriented work groups want leaders who are:

Expediters - Have resources (materials) on hand when needed

Retrievers - Get them good supplies (tools) and surroundings

Smoother-outers - Coordinate the members of the group

Counselors - Help the members solve problems, including personal problems

Consultants - Experts - Help them solve job-related problems

Protectors - Watch out for their interest

Trainers - Develop their skills

Specific characteristics are also identified with particular types of leaders. For example, Covey identifies the following eight characteristics of principle-centered leaders:

They are continually learning

They are service-oriented

They radiate positive energy

They believe in other people

They lead balanced lives

They see life as an adventure

They are synergistic -- amazingly productive but in new and creative ways

They exercise for self-renewal -- they regularly exercise the four dimensions of the human personality: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual

Only a few of these characteristics are demonstrably genetic, which supports the belief that leaders are made as well as born. Historically, it was once believed that some people -- among them kings, members of hereditary aristocracies, and certain castes or groups such as the *samurai* of Japan -- were in fact born to be leaders. It was also assumed that serfs, low-caste individuals, and the masses were born to be followers. The modern concept of democracy, on the other hand, assumes that people from all backgrounds have the potential for leadership, and that leadership skills can be learned.

## LEADERSHIP STYLES

In the 1950s and 1960s, much research on leadership focused on the styles of effective leaders. Several leadership styles have been identified. They can be placed along a decision-making and power continuum. At one end are **authoritarian or autocratic leaders**, who keep power to themselves and make most opinions unilaterally. At the other end are **laissez-faire leaders**, who abdicate their right to lead and provide little or no guidance or direction for group members. Between these two extremes are other styles, such as **consultative leaders**, who share authority and consult with group members, while retaining ultimate decision-making power, and **democratic leaders**, who decentralize authority and involve group members in the decision-making process, often encouraging group members to use consensus or voting to make decisions.

Another leadership style continuum ranges from "leader-centered" to "group-member-centered." Authoritarian leadership is leader-centered, consultative leadership is somewhere in the middle of the continuum, and democratic leadership is group-member-centered. Laissez-faire leadership doesn't entirely fit this continuum; group members make decisions by default, because the leader does not choose to become involved.

Communication between group members and leaders varies with leadership style. An authoritarian leader generally discourages upward communication and depends on threats and punishment for motivation. A consultative leader encourages group member input, and may request it directly. A democratic leader encourages upward communication; respecting the ability

of group members, s/he actively solicits their ideas. A laissez-faire leader is involved in little communication, upward or downward.

While consultative and democratic leadership have obvious advantages in creating involvement, commitment, and satisfaction among group members, and helping members develop skills, they can have disadvantages. Decisions are usually made more slowly, because consultation or democratic decision making takes more time and discussion than authoritarian edicts. Time and planning are required so that group members have the information needed to make a decision. In some situations, it may not be feasible to delay decisions until everyone has been consulted.

Individuals differ in the leadership styles they find most comfortable and effective. Many people have a preferred leadership style to which they seem to gravitate when placed in leadership positions. However, it is increasingly recognized that a successful leader is able to modify his/her style to fit the group's members and stage of development, the task at hand, and the work or community environment.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

The Resources section at the end of this manual provides a number of leadership references. Those most important in addressing all three major perspectives on leadership are the following:

- John W. Gardner, *On Leadership*. New York: The Free Press, 1990.
- Stephen E. Catt and Donald S. Miller, *Supervision: Working with People*. Boston: Irwin, 1991.
- Delwyn A. Dyer and Oscar M. Williams, "Developing Local Community Leaders." Virginia Institute of Technology: Institute for Leadership and Volunteer Development. Posted on Internet February 1994 (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/lvd/leaders>).