

What is your leadership style? How has it evolved and adapted through time?

Why do you believe this makes an effective leadership style? Discuss at least one example of a scenario where it worked. How do you anticipate it will continue to evolve? What will need to evolve and why?

Whether I'm leading a large group, a smaller group, or engaging in an interpersonal activity, I like to employ a consistent strategy. For starters, I provide a **vision and clear direction for the group I'm leading**. Furthermore, by **clarifying group values and goals, energizing others, using audience perspective, and supporting their feedback**, I create an effective and comfortable environment.

By providing an envisioning perspective as a leader and by enforcing clear values and planning, I attempt to crystallize the objective that all members are working towards. For example, in the music group that I teach at a community center, I regularly establish daily goals as well as long-term goals (such as performances, etc.) to help orient the members towards an objective. I try to do the same within Creative Writing Club (and in any group I lead), where I not only attempt to solidify our objective, but I also plan ahead of time to establish what the club will be doing during our weekly meetings. This works well to root and focus the club towards a particular end target. My focus on designing an agenda in advance of a meeting has evolved from my experience leading Creative Writing Club. When I didn't plan our club meetings, we often wasted time deciding what we would do, and this reduced our potential as a group. However, I have found that advance thinking avoids confusion over the agenda and saves a substantial amount of time. In addition to the above, I also prefer to establish behavioral norms and group values which all members are expected to follow to maintain a civil and calm atmosphere. In particular, in the music group I teach, all members are expected to arrive on time and treat each

other with respect, and they are aware of the behavioral expectations that provide for a safe and respectful learning environment; this strategy has led to a warm and welcoming environment within the class.

Beyond envisioning a larger goal, as a leader I like to energize the members and push them to deliver their perspective, helping the group reach its maximum potential. In the music group I teach, I regularly employ the strategy of energizing through incentivization. The way I do this is by encouraging the children through a rewards system; at the end of each month, the children who followed directions, practiced, and performed well are rewarded with a small gift. I have found through my experience that after implementing this system, practice levels increased across the students. Coupled with incentivization, I encourage audience input within the groups I lead. For example, within Creative Writing Club, I regularly inquire about which activities the members like best, and almost always, I factor in the members' preferences into my future agenda plans. Furthermore, whenever we write about a prompt in the club, I make sure that each member gets to implement their ideas into their writing. I also encourage every member to share their perspective and opinion surrounding our collective writing during each meeting with the larger group. This has had the effect of increasing engagement and creating a warm community in which each voice is meaningfully heard. Beyond Creative Writing Club, I also embrace differing perspectives within the music group, where I ask the team members what type of pieces they like best as well as what their thoughts are on the current repertoire. Like in Creative Writing Club (and other school projects), public opinion serves as an influence in my future planning. This empowers the students and also increases their involvement with the rest of the group. Overall, the aforementioned strategies have the effect of not only further engaging the

members of the team, but energizing, invigorating, and valuing each member's perspective also brings the team together, leading to a better result and more positive thinking within the group.

When I began taking formal leadership positions within clubs, teams, and groups, I followed a laissez-faire system. However, although this worked in some small group settings, I quickly realized that this led to confusion, ineffectiveness, and a lack of motivation within groups with a more formalized structure. Over time, based on my own experience, my leadership style has adapted to drive clarity, energization, and feedback within a team that I lead. As I look forward to the future, I feel that my leadership style will evolve to further increase the focus on member empowerment and input; this is due to the fact that each member brings valuable perspectives and insights to the group that can have a large positive effect on the team's progress and end result. Finally, working towards making this crucial adaptation will create a warm and welcoming community in which each individual thrives while the group succeeds.