



## The authoritarian leadership style

The leader is the boss. As an autocrat, they decide everything: the tasks and work of the group. The authoritarian leader thinks, plans, and decides for the whole group and rarely considers their ideas and wishes.

They always have the final say, and their decisions are not up for discussion. They do not have to justify their decisions. The leader strictly controls the team and punishes very harshly.

As a result, all team members want the leader's attention and want them to think well of them. They do not care for one another. Relationships within the group are mostly characterized by competition. The group does everything the leader says—often out of fear of punishment or humiliation. Personal ideas, creativity, and self-determination are not encouraged in authoritarian-led groups. The goal of the authoritarian leader is to create a group that functions perfectly. In the long term, this leadership style leads to a loss of individual judgement and responsibility.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ The leader has good control and oversight of the group.</li> <li>+ No time-consuming discussions.</li> <li>+ Clear structure and orientation – everyone knows what they have to do.</li> <li>+ Fixed rules provide security (if they make sense).</li> <li>+ Calm and discipline within the group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Group members cannot develop their own opinions</li> <li>– They do not learn to express their own ideas: no development of personal responsibility or co-determination</li> <li>– Apathy and passivity: Nothing can be changed anyway</li> <li>– No trust develops toward the leader or among group members.</li> <li>– There is a strict hierarchy.</li> <li>– The ability to handle criticism is suppressed.</li> </ul>



## The laissez-faire ("let them do it") management style

The "relaxed leader" exercises little control over the group and often behaves as if they aren't even present. They seem not to care, so the group can do whatever it wants. The team has to handle its problems on its own. Small subgroups form within the team. The stronger members take control and act unfairly towards others to maintain their power. The leader watches the power struggles and conflicts but does not intervene ("too exhausting" they think).

The "relaxed leader" believes that their leadership encourages participants to act independently and with self-determination, which would help them learn self-reliance. Unfortunately, this does not work. Employees seek a role model for orientation and someone who sets and lives by clear rules for working together. Unfortunately, they do not find this in the "relaxed leader." They become frustrated and make no progress, as power struggles constantly occur over who is in charge. No real sense of unity develops.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Participants learn to make their own decisions</li><li>+ The leader is greatly relieved, because they don't need to prepare many sessions.</li><li>+ In some situations, participants learn to be independent</li><li>+ The team has a lot of freedom to act</li><li>+ A unique social structure can emerge.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Participants don't learn clear boundaries.</li><li>– The strong dominate the weak.</li><li>– There are small groups of dissatisfied participants.</li><li>– Laws or rules may be abused (e.g., alcohol, smoking).</li><li>– The leader is not taken seriously.</li><li>– No group cohesion: the group tends to split.</li><li>– There is a high risk of neglecting supervisory duties (e.g., safety, safeguarding).</li></ul>



## The Democratic/Participative Leadership Style

The leader works intentionally with the group. They recognize each person's abilities and know how to encourage and challenge them. They delegate part of the responsibility to the group and actively involve group members in decision-making.

They support individual ideas and help the team grow together and achieve its goals. Along the way, the leader provides possible solutions and new perspectives, which are discussed with the whole team before decisions are made together.

The leader strengthens the weaker members and sometimes reins in the stronger ones. They participate in discussions and decisions only as much as necessary and as little as possible, so that the group can increasingly take the lead itself. They want the group to function well even in their absence. The leader values group achievements more than individual ones. Fairness and safety are central values for them. There are clear rules that were developed together and are respected by all.

<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>+ Everyone learns independence and responsibility.</li><li>+ The team develops its ability to compromise.</li><li>+ A variety of ideas can emerge.</li><li>+ The team has great trust in the leader and turns to them even with personal issues.</li><li>+ Rules and prohibitions are clearly explained and understandable.</li><li>+ Freedom of expression and the ability to form one's own opinions develop.</li><li>+ Equal rights for all group members.</li><li>+ Everyone becomes aware of their strengths and abilities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– It is time-consuming, as the leader engages in many discussions with the group.</li><li>– In difficult situations, the leadership style can be inefficient or even dangerous: in emergencies, team members must follow instructions without questioning them.</li><li>– The leader must be very flexible and spontaneous to accommodate new ideas.</li><li>– There are often no ideal solutions—only compromises.</li><li>– The leader must observe closely to detect hidden conflicts.</li></ul>