

The apprentice (uk): alex's leadership qualities essay sample

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



Alex Mills was appointed as the Project Manager in the BBC TV series, The Apprentice UK in the 9th episode of Season 9. In the beginning of the episode it is more than evident that Alex works more as a democratic or participative type of leader. This type of leader utilizes a more participative leadership style which allows more involvement by the workers in the decision-making process, but the team leader makes the final decision on what the course of action will be. The democratic style of leadership boosts the morale of the team as a whole because it makes team members feel as though their ideas and actions are valued in the process of their work. In the beginning Alex showed very good use of his democratic style of leading by allowing his teammates to brainstorm and give ideas on the target market that they would be aiming at and what sort of brand they would like to create. After everything was said, they all decided they would like to target children and 2 ideas were in the brew to be picked. Myles had come up with an idea to create a brand called " Deadly Dinners" and in the other hand Alex was very adamant about his idea of " Popty Ping". All the team members, besides Myles, agreed that Alex's idea was better, however Myles was persistent on pitching his idea and Alex initially shut the idea down as the leader should.

With a little more persuasion, Alex then caved into Myles' demands and went against his better judgement and decided to do " Deadly Dinners". Alex's downfall was letting his subordinates undermine his authority. This is a mistake that can be very easily made by democratic leaders; they can often bend to the will of their subordinate in spite of their better judgement and it does not always turn out to a good end result as shown in the case of Alex

Mills. In a retrospective point of view, Alex had very little input in his own project. He let Myles, his subordinate, undermine his authority and in turn he ended up going with Myles' design and Myles also completely shut down Alex's input on the design of the ready-quick meal that they were making.

As a result of Alex's poor control of Myles, his team lost the challenge and he was fired and sent home by Lord Sugar. In my opinion, I think it would have been very crucial for Alex to take a stronger hold on his ideas and his team would have performed much better if he exercised some autocratic qualities as well. Popty Ping was clearly a better, more marketable idea for a product and Alex's decision to fold under Myles' pressure was a detrimental move and it cost him dearly. Alex Mills also showed that at times he can also use a Laissez Faire style of leading a team. He did this at the point when team endeavour had to present their product (Deadly Dinners) to the 3 different food companies. When Jordan asked why he isn't presenting Alex said: " Me? I am more of a manager. I've given you the floor, just do it. Get it done. Just do it for yourself and as well as that, do it for the team". This portrays this Laissez Faire type of leading in him.

In comparison, he was not as good of a leader as his counter-part for that week. His counterpart was Team Endeavour's Project Manager, Neil. Alex and Neil both attempted to use the same style of leadership (Democratic). Neil was a little stronger in using this style. He did not let his teammates override his authority or blind his judgement. Neil allowed his subordinates to give a lot of input but he did not let their ideas overpower his ideas. On the contrary he took the good ideas and integrated them into his own vision

of what he wants out of the product he is producing. Alex did not blend with his teammates, in the episode Myles very clear expresses that he thinks that Alex is hard to work with. In the boardroom Lea speaks up and says that Alex does not always have his mind where it is supposed to be, she says “ Alex, you come up with ridiculous and ludicrous suggestions.

He comes up with these silly ideas that don't tie up with his centre of expertise”. One of Lord Sugar's advisers speaks with regards to Alex and says “ He can't focus on the end result. He just gets carried away with the enthusiasm and he runs down in various directions making snap decisions and it becomes a mess.” Neil was decisive and it really came out in the end product of his work. Louisa, when working with Neil actually stated that she cannot work with a weak person and Neil is a strong teammate and that is why she enjoys being at his side in the challenge. Later on in the boardroom when Lord Sugar asks if Neil was a good leader both of his teammates say yes and Louisa goes on to say “ I really liked working with Neil.”

I think this is very important because in order for a leader to get the best results out of his or her teammates, the leader must get his teammates to enjoy their work and enjoy you as the leader. This is something that Neil did and Alex failed to do. Whilst Neil had a high morale with his teammates, Alex left his teammates frustrated and confused and this ultimately led to the loss of the challenge and his elimination from the show. Overall I think Alex was a bad leader and deserved to be fired for his poor leading skills and maybe lack of maturity due to his young age. Alex has the potential to be a great business man but he must first learn to hone his strong points as an

individual and share them as a leader to his followers. Lord Sugar himself admitted that for someone so young, Alex is someone who needs to be admired and if he can stick to one thing he will succeed in life.