

# Democratic leadership

Psychology



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## Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, also known as participative leadership refers to a leadership style where a leader allows the members of the group to participate in the decision-making process. Research has indicated that the democratic leadership style is one of the most effective styles and encourages higher productivity in teams because all members are conceived as important in the decision-making process. There is so single accepted definition of democratic leadership in academia. However, all definitions point out to the participant of group members in this style.

During the 1980s and 1990s, democratic movements grew across the world promoting issues of human rights, freedom, liberty and democracy. This movements exhibited leadership styles where members of those groups had a role to play in decision-making. Therefore, these movements gave a rise to the democratic leadership. As such, the democratic leadership style has since become famous (Choi, 2007).

The democratic leadership style has several characteristics. First, it encourages all group members to contribute in terms of their ideas and opinions about the issue at hand. However, the leader has the final power to decide on the issues that the group deliberates on. Secondly, the leadership style encourages members to be creative and confident in giving their ideas, thereby acting as one of the most effective leadership styles. Thirdly, the democratic leadership style makes the group members to feel engaged in the process no matter its importance. All group members are considered important in the decision-making process and their input is equally important.

The democratic leadership style has several benefits. This leadership style  
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can be beneficial to a project because a leader has a wide scope to choose options from because group members give different ideas allowing the leader to consider them and choose the best. This leadership motivates group members such as employees because they feel as a part of the process. Therefore, they work hard because they know their contributions are acknowledged in the group. The leadership style also prevents unnecessary competition from group members. Rather, it encourages them to cultivate a harmonious working environment where the ideas of every group member are considered vital (Henman, 2011).

The leadership style works best in situations where the members are skilled and ready to share their knowledge. In cases where the group members are unskilled, uninformed and not ready to share their ideas, the leadership style becomes useless. This leadership style can also lead to communication breakdown when the roles of the group members and the issue under consideration are unclear. This is dangerous because it can lead to project failures. The leadership style can also bring about conflicts within groups especially when the leader is considered to prefer the contribution of certain group members to others. It requires a leader that is fair and one that can consider several options given by the group members rather than rushing for a solution or to make a decision. Therefore, the leadership style requires utmost care when in implementation (Ray, & Ray, 2012).

In conclusion, the democratic leadership style is one where a leader allows the members of the group to participate in the decision-making process. It is one of the most effective leadership styles because leaders have a wide pool of ideas to choose from given by the group members.

#### References

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