

How are You Leading Through Crisis?

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Based on conversations with leaders during this crisis, there are four patterns of leadership styles we're noticing. One of the styles includes the leader who thinks they don't need to read further (ahem - if this is you, please see "Type 1" below ASAP).

What's alarming is that these varying degrees in leadership styles can make the difference between a Club recovering successfully from the COVID-19 crisis versus stalling or even sinking before the challenge passes.

According to the Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations, self-awareness is the strongest predictor of overall success. Become more self-aware by identifying your leadership style below.

WHICH ONE ARE YOU?

TYPE 1: DENIAL

Those in denial are failing to recognize that they need to step up to lead their teams. These leaders are using an avoidance strategy. They seem to be hoping that the situation will be resolved favorably without any action on their part.

Problems:

- If leaders wait too long to make a decision, the opportunity to take action may pass them by.
- Their team and board are looking for leadership, and the lack thereof is creating panic, concern and a false sense of security.
- Their team may lose their sense of security because the Club's leader is no longer providing a stable and safe person they can count on.
- Without a leader, team members create their own truths. In the absence of leadership, people listen to other sources including rumor or popular opinion that may not be supported by facts. They may search for leadership from another team member or even another Club.

Solutions:

- Get started!
- Reality check: assess the situation and open your eyes to what's really happening. [Think Cher's Moonstruck "Snap Out Of It" scene here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x-fkSYDtUY>]

- Identify the problems that are right in front of you.
- Gather your rockstar team and brainstorm ideas.
- Create a plan together and start taking action.

TYPE 2: FEAR

Out of fear of failure, these leaders are taking no action. Their fears may include the opinions of others, job loss, loss of control or lack of trust.

Problems:

- These leaders are so paralyzed by fear that they are unable to act and lead their teams.
- The reality of having a leadership title is that this comes with a heavy burden in times of crisis. The fear of doing the wrong thing can overwhelm decision-making, resulting in making no decisions, or missing critical ones.

Solutions:

- There are two systems of decision making. System 1 is emotional (think: gut reactions), and System 2 is analytical. These leaders need to switch from System 1 to System 2. This means slowly and deliberately making decisions while rationally balancing benefits against costs with all available information taken into account.
- Take all data into account to increase confidence when making decisions.
- Start by making small decisions.
- After making a decision, take action.
- Learn from your mistakes, if they happen.

Note: Denial and Fear are similar. These leaders are doing the same thing (failing to take action), but for different reasons: avoidance versus emotional.

TYPE 3: SURVIVAL

These leaders are simply being reactive and struggling to "survive" in the current situation. They are getting whipped around by their board and staff but have no clear plan for action. These leaders want to help, but need someone to guide them and often can be stuck in analysis paralysis.

System 1 thinking

INTUITIVE
AUTOMATIC
EMOTIONAL
UNCONSCIOUS
INSTINCTIVE

System 2 thinking

LOGICAL
RATIONAL
CONSCIOUS
EVALUATIVE
DELIBERATIVE

BRANDTRUST*

DENIAL FEAR SURVIVAL HYPER PROACTIVE



Hyper-proactive leaders think creatively, are confident enough to try a new idea or solution, and share their ideas with and get feedback from respected peers.

Problem:

- These leaders struggle to think outside of the box, develop fresh solutions or pivot their plan.
- These leaders are receiving feedback from their Board, staff, Members and others and are trying to please everyone instead of choosing a path forward.
- Their indecisiveness causes confusion.

Solutions:

- The antidote to ambivalence is action. Make a plan and stick to it. Be confident enough to make the decision to pivot when necessary.
- Make a list of pros and cons.
- Make decisions based upon smart questions such as, *“How can I continue to meet the Club’s goals and objectives during this situation?”* *“What problems can I solve for the stakeholders to stay relevant and keep them engaged as valuable employees and Members?”*
- Don’t be afraid to try new things - trying something is better than doing nothing. Schedule time to talk with a trusted peer if you need someone to share ideas with.

TYPE 4: HYPER PROACTIVE

Hyper-proactive leaders will lead their team to success! These leaders are innovating: *“How do I stay ahead of this situation and get my team and Club through this?”* These leaders are brainstorming daily, developing a plan for continuing to deliver content, experiences and value to Members. Hyper-proactive leaders think creatively, are confident enough to try a new idea or solution, and share their ideas with and get feedback from respected peers. Furthermore, these leaders gather information to have a solid understanding of the challenge at hand as well as what the future may look like.

Problems:

- These leaders have big ideas, but need to be able to convince their Board and team to execute.
- These leaders are moving very fast and may have team members who work at a slower pace, which can cause frustration for all.

- These leaders are running on all cylinders to support their Club and team, but they may need to take a moment to stop and breathe.

Solutions:

- These leaders should convey to their team that they have their backs.
- These leaders should put together a written plan to clearly convey their ideas, including any supporting data and metrics.
- These leaders should let their enthusiasm show. Adding positive emotion will help them inspire, motivate and reassure their team.
- Recognize team members who excel in this environment and share recognition from Members.
- When new ideas don’t work, pivot and keep moving forward. Don’t dwell on failures, simply learn from them and move forward to keep your team confident and productive.

We’re seeing the Hyper-Proactive leadership style to be the most successful for helping Clubs to navigate this situation. The result is Innovative programming, highly attended virtual events, happy staff, satisfied and grateful Members, a supportive Board and the ability to get a good night’s sleep.

The great news is that if your leadership style isn’t yielding these results, you have the power to improve. SCS has been strengthening leaders and their leadership tools and resources for years. If you feel like you need some guidance, we’re here to help.

The true test of leadership is how well you function in a crisis.



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