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Mountain Training’s leadership model

Leaders/instructors need to demonstrate the basic skills and decision-making of adaptive leadership. They should have a well-researched plan for their group which incorporates factors such as the groups’ abilities and needs, the weather and conditions, as well as the location and intended route/climbing venue and intended climbs. What is most important is to match their leadership choices with the desired outcomes for the group.

In spite of the best made plans, things can and do change; the weather, the group, how busy the venue is, etc. A good leader/instructor will notice, and be on the lookout for, these changes before a problem arises and adapt their approach accordingly. For example: if the climbing wall is very busy, you may need to adapt the session to make use of available

space.

There are seven components of leadership that contribute to the effectiveness of the leader:

1. Leadership style: controlling versus non-controlling.

2. Decision making: what informs this and how to make them.

3. Leader observations: what they should be and how to make them.

4. Leader communication skills: verbal and non-verbal, listening.

5. Experience and ability: how this inﬂuences decision making.

6. Emotional intelligence: to support individuals

7. Group management: techniques, style and influences

Candidates should reﬂect on these when leading/instructing groups and seek to develop them over their career.

Underpinning the role of a leader are the values, beliefs, and ethos that shape every individual’s view of what leadership should be. All leaders tend to have preferred behaviours (leadership styles) that are heavily inﬂuenced by these and their personality traits. Leaders will need to adapt their preferred behaviour to an appropriate set of actions required to balance the needs of both the situation and the group.

The ’Vision, Support, Challenge’ model of transformational leadership provides a framework that instructors can use to plan, execute and review their leadership behaviours. In this way, groups who receive the right balance of the three categories can be encouraged to perform beyond their own expectations. Transformational leadership is a model of positive behaviours (known by the mnemonic INSPIRE) that instructors can use to promote the best outcomes for their groups:

**I**nspire and motivate your followers with a unified vision.

**N**urture an environment of team-focused goals

**S**et the example you want to see in your followers.

**P**raise and give constructive feedback to help your followers develop.

**I**nsist on setting high standards, relative to each individual.

**R**ecognise and respond to each individual’s needs.

**E**ncourage followers to create and implement their own solutions.

Leaders need to develop trust amongst their group. This requires an appropriate balance of consultation, empathy and instruction to engineer success. Effective leaders will, for example, adapt the way they communicate to best suit their group and will give different degrees of responsibility to groups of varying ability and experience.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Which 3 behaviours do I want to work on?** | **What do I currently find limits my ability to fully demonstrate these behaviours?** | **What will I now do/say in order to develop these behaviours? What can I change about my practice?** | **When and how can I implement these ideas?**  **(specify dates & events)** | **How will I track my progress? Will I need someone else to give me feedback?** |
| **1.** |  |  |  |  |
| **2.** |  |  |  |  |
| **3.** |  |  |  |  |

A diagram of a path to effective leadership

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