

Your Personal Style of Leadership

Know what it is and how to maximize its potential

5. The Leader Who Is Motivated By PLEASURE

In the last installment it was pointed out that every leader's main motivation determines what type of coach is best for him. Joe happened to have in Henry the type of superior that is most likely to be effective in helping him. Why was Henry the right type of coach for Joe? You guessed it: Henry was the right leader to coach Joe because he is motivated by PLEASURE. Leaders motivated by pleasure possess the qualities of diplomacy, a knack for teaching, and the ability to combine the useful with the pleasant, qualities required to deal successfully with persons who, like Joe, are too strongly motivated by ACCOMPLISHMENT.

Like all classic types, PLEASURE-motivated leaders also have a fear accompanying their strong motivation. Their fear is physical privation. That means they are always concerned that they won't have enough of the things that bring them pleasure, that what they have may not last, that they must enjoy things while they can. As we have learned, fear causes negative behaviors. We're already familiar with some of the negative tendencies in Henry's behavior. For one thing, he is paternalistic, which causes resentment. For another, he tends to be involved in too many things, which causes Henry to either neglect things or to do them superficially. As we have seen, with too many irons in the fire Henry neglected to start coaching Joe right from the time Joe got promoted to foreman.

You may be asking yourself at this point: 'If every classic type is unbalanced due to dominance by his main motivation, what would be the motivational pattern of a perfectly balanced person?' That's a good question. The answer is rather simple, which does not mean it is easy to put into practice. The fact is that all six main motivations should be of equal importance in any person's makeup. Therefore, to achieve greater personal balance, one should pay full attention to all six of the basic motivations. What this means is that a perfectly balanced person would possess all the qualities connected with the six main motivations and none of the negative tendencies. In other words, such a person would be avoiding the fears that result from the unbalanced use of any of the six motivations. This is possible in theory, but in practice it is rather unlikely.

The difficulty in attaining perfect balance lies in the quasi-inevitability of dominance by the motivation of the type to which one belongs. "I am the way I

am”, Joe had said to Henry, and he was basically right. We can exert a certain CONTROL over the way we are, but we cannot change WHO we are. In other words, I can control a behavior I don’t want if I am aware that it will be better for me and if I am willing to make an effort. But I can control that behavior only if I continually make that effort. My dominant motivation is not going to disappear. It’s a permanent part of me. Some of it has to do with my glandular functioning. It’s in my nature. I can’t make it go away. It’s not a mental thing alone, it’s also physical. It’s my whole body-mind.

A good example of learning to exert such control is what Joe succeeded in doing. Joe’s tendency of being too task oriented and, as a result, of getting impatient, aggressive, and intolerant when things don’t go according to plan, is a tendency which is part of the nature of his type, the type motivated by ACCOMPLISHMENT. Having learned to calm down for a second when his adrenaline starts rushing in, Joe manages to exert the required control and to modify his behavior sufficiently to be successful as a leader, even though he is, and always will be, motivated by accomplishment. As we will see in this installment, Henry similarly discovers and starts dealing with his negative tendency, that of being involved in too many things, which is part of the make-up of his type, the one motivated by PLEASURE. But first, let’s see what happened as a result of Henry’s coaching success.

Even though the coaching with Joe was done without fanfare, the word got out through the grapevine that Joe had stormed out of a meeting with his team, greatly upsetting the team. The story that was circulating had it that Joe was then called on the carpet by Henry and that from that point on Joe went through an amazing, almost overnight, transformation. Both Henry’s and Joe’s reputations grew steadily. Henry soon got promoted to Vice-President of Operations, and Joe took Henry’s place as Production Manager. The management style in the Company steadily improved. Operations and Human Resources worked together much more harmoniously and the Company’s fortunes grew. Both Henry and Joe were destined for still greater things.

Henry was living life to its fullest. He was appreciated by the Company President and by all his colleagues. According to type, Henry often invited to his home the President and his wife, as well as the Vice-President of Finance and his wife, the Vice-President of Research and his wife, the Vice-President of Marketing and his wife, and the Vice-President of Sales and his wife. They all in turn invited Henry and his wife to their homes. Of course, there was a lot of talk in these get-togethers about everything under the sun, but a good proportion of the talk was devoted to future plans for the Company. There was the question of buying other companies, and then there was the idea of expanding operations internationally.

The latter idea was of great interest to Henry. He felt that the contacts and the negotiations required in an international adventure would be a great and welcome challenge for him. The President thought so too, and things were in the works for creating the position of Senior Vice-President of International Operations.

Although Henry was content and looking forward to great new things, he also had some misgivings about the quality of his professional relationships, which he thought were not what they used to be. He felt that the way his subordinates reacted to him indicated that he was less effective as a leader than he had been earlier. His subordinates did not come to him for advice as much. Henry felt that even though he had grown socially, he was stagnating professionally. People somehow did not seek his professional advice as much. They were more interested in his joviality. He also realized that he had been gaining weight. He was now fat by any standard. He drank and smoked more regularly than ever. He did not get drunk, but he felt that he imbibed too frequently and that this contributed to being overweight. Yet, Henry was very busy. He was involved in more activities than ever. Many of them were social activities, but there was also gardening, oil painting, and antique art objects. And then there were the meetings of the Leadership Conference Series (LCS) which usually dealt with leadership psychology. Henry often reflected on some of the principles about leadership effectiveness he had picked up at the LCS sessions.

Henry decided to confide in someone, a person who could be a good coach for him. He had been thinking about this for awhile and he finally concluded that he should talk to Sakina at the next LCS meeting.

Sakina is the older sister of Henry's wife Larissa. Sakina is married to Henry's friend Alan. Henry and Alan go back to their school days. At college they had both been halfbacks in the football team, Henry on the right and Alan on the left. They both had had a good time celebrating successes with their teammates and with other friends. They also had a common interest in the arts and in all things beautiful – including beautiful girls. Even before college days they had found art objects of antiquity especially fascinating. You see, Alan's parents are collectors of such objects and both Alan and Henry had become curious about the ancient societies in which those objects originated and they had spent many evenings talking about them with Alan's parents. Many of the more sophisticated girls had been attracted to Henry and to Alan. Both boys were handsome, but girls were interested in them also because they were not talking about sports all the time and they did not have the boyish macho attitude that so many of the others had.

Alan has always had a knack for business. He bought and sold art objects when he was still a teenager and he eventually became a very knowledgeable and a

very rich antique dealer. Alan had always invited Henry to antique auctions, and he still did so regularly, because Henry enjoyed attending them. On one such occasion years back, Alan had brought an unusually large number of very exotic items to the auction. Among the many guests the auction had attracted, Henry and Alan met the two most beautiful girls, Sakina and Larissa. Sakina and Larissa were sisters, and Henry and Alan soon found out that they were of Russian descent, and that they also had distant relatives of Russian royalty.

To make a long story short, it had been love at first sight for the four of them, and they had gotten married in a double ceremony which had become the talk of the town. After marriage the two friends kept seeing each other regularly, most of the time in the company of their wives. Lakina was a perfect match for Alan. She was very supportive as a business partner, very focused and quite content in staying in the background, taking care of the administrative end of things, and also doing her pet research which concerns the history of Christian philosophy. According to Lakina, experts in the field claim that the philosophy underlying Christian thought originated in the philosophy of ancient Egypt, long before the birth of Jesus Christ. She also discovered that in ancient Egypt a close link existed between philosophy and psychology, and she later became an expert in interpreting the theory of relationships between different types of individuals based on the ancient enneagram, which she said was a hieroglyph of a universal language and the philosopher's stone of the alchemists. She said that the enneagram contained a description of six basic types of people, and according to Sakina those descriptions have always been valid and are valid to-day as much as ever.

Nobody could understand much of Sakina's technical explanations, but what people did understand and also appreciate was her amazingly accurate descriptions of the strengths and the shortcomings of different types of people, and also her explanations of how one can learn to grow one's strengths and to interact more effectively with others for maximum harmony in one's relationships, both personal and professional. Her reputation grew among business leaders, and after the business community launched the LCS, Sakina was one of the first experts invited to speak.

Sakina soon became an important resource person for LCS, and she regularly took the podium at meetings. Even though she didn't particularly care for public speaking and always refused to hold question and answer periods after her lectures, preferring to have listeners send in their questions to her, she enjoyed lecturing on the intricacies of leadership psychology and on helping business leaders to work better with their teams.

Well, Henry and Sakina agreed to meet. Let's listen in on what they are saying.

Henry: "Sakina, when I mentioned to you in passing recently that I felt my leadership effectiveness was wanting of late, you said that ups and downs are normal and that in a down one has the opportunity of preparing for a new high. I reflected on that and I would like to ask you a couple of more specific questions about it."

Sakina encourages Henry to share his thoughts and Henry outlines his concerns about the way his subordinates, and even his colleagues, now look to him more for fun and socializing and less for professional advice.

Sakina: "You've come to the right person to seek some coaching in your situation – do you know why I am saying that?"

Henry is baffled by Sakina's remark. He is sure she isn't trying to appear important. That isn't her nature. On the contrary, Sakina is rather self-effacing. "But she is very knowledgeable, he said to himself, and that must be the reason why she said what she just said."

Henry: "Well, you know more about different types of people than just about anybody, that's why".

Sakina: "Maybe I do know more, maybe not. That's not why I said that you came to the right person. In a couple of my recent presentations I explained a rule pertaining to coaching. Remember the principle of the direction of flow between different types? What does that mean?"

Henry: "Yes, now I remember. It means that the list of main motivations that you gave us is arranged in the order of the direction of flow between the six classic types. We can help the person that precedes us in the list of main motivations, and the person that follows us can help us."

Sakina: "Exactly. You were able to coach Joe well because your main motivation follows his on the list of motivations. It worked for you and Joe even though you weren't aware at the time of the rule of direction of flow between the main motivations."

Henry: "Amazing! This type methodology really works. And you belong to the type with the main motivation that follows mine, so I came to see you. My instincts were guiding me again correctly!.

Sakina: "That's true. You can rely on your instincts more than other types can rely on theirs because your type is dominated by the instinctive intelligence. I haven't touched on that yet in my lectures, but I will do so soon."

Sakina continues: “At this point, Henry, we should look closely at the question of negative tendencies. As I mentioned in my early lectures, it is important for a leader to look at his negative relationship tendencies in the context of all six classic types, for then he can be more objective about deciding how to control the leadership behavior he finds least helpful in his career. When you can see the whole picture of tendencies of the different types you are more likely to make a balanced assessment of the seriousness of your own difficulties, neither exaggerating them nor minimizing them.”

Summary

In this installment we’ve learned about the many social and leadership qualities of the type of leader whose main motivation is PLEASURE. We have seen that both Henry and his friend Alan belong to this type. We’ve shared in Henry’s professional success and in his ambitions, as well as in the shortcomings he has discovered in his leadership behavior. We know that the source of those problems lies in the negative tendencies to which his type is prone. Tune in next month to share in the goals that Henry is setting for himself in order to deal with those problems.

We’ve also learned that Henry is being coached by Sakina, who explained to Henry the rule pertaining to the type of person who is likely to be one’s best coach. Knowing that rule, you now are able to determine the type to which Henry’s coach Sakina belongs. In the next installment we will learn more about Sakina, about the negative tendencies of her type, and about the tendency or tendencies that she personally wants to work on.

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