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A leadership styles competency framework for governing bodies in sport

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Abstract

National Governing Bodies in Sport in the United Kingdom increasingly implement the Regional Development Managers Scheme in the quest to promote effective leadership within their organisations. Regional Development Managers need professional leadership development. However, much of what has been done in this regard falls drastically short. Leadership development has been too vague, outdated and theoretical. It has rarely been tied to an organisation's immediate needs, nor has it adequately prepared leaders for the challenges of the future. An approach to leadership development programmes that combines theoretical concepts with opportunities to apply observable behaviours is required. The 21st century demands a new kind of leader with relevant skills. Action learning is effective in developing leaders because it is adaptable and flexible. In this investigation, 58 Regional Development Officers were asked to rate the leadership styles of Regional Development Managers on the *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)*. In turn, 18 Regional Development Managers were asked to report on the same questionnaire their own leadership styles. According to Regional Development Officers, the two leadership styles mostly displayed by Regional Development Managers (according to behavioural rating) are the coaching and democratic styles. Regional Development Managers deemed the affiliative and democratic styles to be the mostly used. The findings of this study, together with relevant literature, are used to propose a *Leadership Styles Competency Framework* for Governing Bodies in Sport.

Keywords: Leadership styles; sport; governing bodies; framework

Introduction

As pointed out by Gilbert (2005), major organisational change used to take place every 15 to 20 years. In today's ever changing and highly competitive world, organisational change has become an annual necessity. Leaders need to be effective performers through such change. In order to keep up with constant organisational change, leaders need to constantly develop their leadership skills. This article proposes a leadership styles competency framework for National Governing Bodies in Sport (NGBs) in the United Kingdom. The heart of this research is to promote effective leadership within these sport governing bodies. According to Berry and Cartwright (2000), leadership development is an important and ever growing field of research due to its practical application in optimal organisational growth and success.

Literature review

Various definitions and descriptions of *effective leadership* are found in literature. According to Ogbonnia (2007), effective leadership is the ability to successfully integrate and maximize available resources within the internal and external environment for the attainment of organizational or societal goals. Mayo and Nohria (2005) view 'great leadership' as a function of the circumstances in which businesses and their top executives operate. Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy (2006) portray effective leadership as a process in which leaders and followers interact dynamically in a particular situation or environment. According to Goffee and Jones (2006), effective leadership has the potential to excite people to extraordinary levels of achievement. For Parks (2005) and Gordon (2009), effective leadership addresses problems that require people to move from a familiar but inadequate equilibrium, through disequilibrium to a more adequate state. In other words, the complex conditions of today require acts of leadership that assist people moving beyond the edge of familiar patterns into the greater unknown terrain of greater complexity, new learning and new behaviour, which usually require loss, grief, conflict, risk, stress and creativity. Bennis and Thomas (2002) argue that true leadership is the ability to learn from even the most negative experiences.

According to Hooper and Potter (1997), *effective leaders* exhibit certain key attributes and associated actions. According to them, effective leaders have a vision for the future, set direction, and can communicate that vision to all stakeholders involved in an organisation. They are honest, they explain organisational strategies, and inspire people to tackle challenges (Pegg, 1989). Gardner (1997) argues that effective leaders also exhibit a readiness to confront authority, a readiness to take risks, resilience in the face of failure and a confidence in one's own instinct and intuition. They also exhibit the ability to see and keep in mind the 'big' picture, being driven by a moral commitment and a sense of timing, allowing them to stand back, reflect and learn from experiences. For Hopfl (1992), effective leaders should be charismatic and committed. The ability to create a compelling vision and to promote broader organisational effectiveness by linking efforts of multiple groups or teams is a priority in effective leadership (Hughes et al., 2006; Lord, Devader, & Alliger, 1986; Nwankwo & Richardson, 1996), while the use of a variety of strategies to promote team morale and productivity are also important (Bono & Judge, 2003; Conger, 1999). A leader should also be effective in developing the long term potential of employees by encouraging them to identify lessons learned and providing reassurance after setbacks (Pawar & Eastman, 1997; Popper & Mayseless, 2003), and should focus on realistic hope (Pegg, 1989). Krause (1997) believes that effective leaders should show depth of purpose in the following ways: they should exhibit tact and diplomacy, tolerance for ambiguity, reliability and loyalty, diligence and quality and regard for others. Effective

leaders act as powerful examples and role models based on the notion that most people are more influenced by what they see than what they are told (Hooper & Potter, 1997). Goffee and Jones (2006) focus on leaders who excel at inspiring people and who succeed in capturing 'hearts, minds and souls', along with the notion that leaders can consistently be themselves, even as they alter their behaviours to respond effectively to changing contexts.

According to Fink (2003), effective leaders use a variety of strategies and styles, and they actively seek the best practices and adapt them to their particular contexts. Hesselbein, Goldsmith and Beckford (1996) point out that effective leaders make things happen. They are responsible for initiating constructive processes, and in some cases, create disequilibrium in order to maintain the vitality of the organisation they lead. Furthermore, effective leaders act on their statements and create a climate in which staff are motivated and want to align to a shared organisational vision (Hooper & Potter, 1997) in order to increase employee cohesion and commitment to the organisation's values, goals and strategies (Daft, 1999).

Smith (2000) recognises that modern organisations in England, such as the National Governing Bodies (NGB) in sport engaged in this study, require people to be more exposed and more accountable, operating in a culture where all need to think and take risks, suggesting ideas that may be wrong but at the same time visiting how key elements can be improved. Such personnel need to stand by what they know, making their own judgements. They need effective leaders who strive to meet the real needs of each situation with awareness, attitude and purpose, whilst operating at the edge of their abilities and creativity, being responsible and accountable for their actions. Smith (2000) stresses that effective leaders should expose themselves to risk and stand up to their convictions; seeing the 'bigger' picture and applying their insight to meet objectives. Such leaders should constantly improve the organisation, inspire others to give their best, open themselves to challenge seeking to understand others' viewpoints, and approach work with courage, passion, humanity, purpose and spirit. Berry and Cartwright (2000) promote the view that today's organisations are involving into federations, networks, clusters, cross-functional teams, temporary systems, ad hoc task forces and indeed anything but pyramids with obsolete top down leadership. A review of literature conducted by Marquardt (2000) prompts his suggestion that certain attributes (archetypal themes) appear to have emerged as being crucial for leaders in the 21st century, i.e. the systems thinker, the change agent, the innovator and risk taker, the servant and steward, the polychromic coordinator, the teacher, the mentor, the coach and learner, and the visionary and vision-builder. According to Kumari, Shriberg and Shriberg (2005), leadership in a modern organisation is the process of guiding, directing and motivating an organisation to outstanding achievement in the organisations fundamental purposes. Indeed, Gonzalez and Guillen (2002) believe that in the present

complex world of organisations, where flexibility and creativity are necessary conditions for survival, the role of the leader is even more critical. Bennis (2004) suggests that the mark of a future leader in modern organisations is the ability to identify, woo and win the mentors who will change their life, and that the real test of their character is to nurture those whose stars may shine as brightly as, or even brighter than, the leader's own. Berry and Cartwright (2000) believe that the new leaders will encourage healthy dissent and values, and that those followers who are courageous enough to will say no. Goffee and Jones (2006) believe that authenticity is a highly desirable quality for a leader in a modern organisation in that authentic leaders use their personal histories to establish common ground with those that they lead. Mayo and Nohria (2005) believe that leaders in modern organisations should confront change and identify latent potential in their organisation that others consider stagnant, mature or in decline. Such leaders should possess a vision of possibility and hope where others see failure and demise. According to Pierce and Newstrom (2006) organisations still frantically search for that magical leader who can pull the organisation together and place it back on a competitive pace.

According to Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy (2006), the 'best' leaders are those who recognise the situational and follower factors inhibiting or facilitating change, whilst painting a compelling vision of the future and formulating and executing a plan that moves their vision from dreams to reality. Gerzon (2006) believes leaders that can traverse boundaries have always been vital, but that today the need for such leadership capacity is even more urgent and widespread. He refers to the notion that leading as if the world stops at the edge of one's tribe, religion, nation or company had become impractical and often impossible. Hamm (2006) suggests that the leader's job, at its core, is to inspire and support an organisation's collective responsibility to create a better future for the organisation. The notion is promoted that when a leader defines what he or she means and sets a clear direction according to that definition, then relationships and feedback improve, action is more efficient and improved organisational performance follows.

A pioneer model of leadership styles was proposed by White and Lippett (1959) who identified the 'autocratic' and 'democratic' leadership styles, which are often considered as task-orientated and relationship orientated. The reality is that most leaders exhibit behaviour as a variable running along a continuum. Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) suggested four leadership styles along a continuum. The autocratic leader who takes the decisions and announces them, expecting subordinates to carry them out without question. The second style relates to the persuasive leader who at this point on the scale also takes all the decisions for the group without discussion or consultation, but believes that people will be better motivated if they are persuaded that the decisions are good ones. The third style relates to consultative leadership. The significant feature of

consultative leadership is that the leader confers with the group members *before* taking decisions and, in fact, considers their advice and their feelings when framing decisions. Finally, they refer to the democratic style, where the leader would characteristically lay the problem before his or her subordinates and invite discussion. The leader's role is that of conference leader, or chair, rather than of decision taker. He or she will allow the decision to emerge out of the process of group discussions, instead of imposing it on the group as its boss. Northouse (1997) highlights several strengths and weaknesses of the style approach to leadership. In positive terms, a wide range of studies (as previously highlighted) supports the reliability of such an approach. It also includes the study of the behaviours of leaders rather than only their personal traits or characteristics, and it has a heuristic value as it provides a broad conceptual map which is useful for gleaning an understanding of one's own leadership behaviours. In negative terms, Northouse (1997) claims that researchers adopting the style approach have not been able to identify a universal set of leadership behaviours commensurate with effective leadership. The current study, however, promote the notion that individuals with the same job description can be expected to adopt similar leadership behaviours.

Research by Hay (1998) over a number of years has illustrated that leadership styles are important because of their direct impact on how individuals within a particular team feel, and the degree to which they are motivated to perform at higher levels. Hay (1998) claims that leadership styles seemingly mean the patterns of behaviour a leader adopts to plan, organise, motivate and control, and it is the extent to which the leader listens, sets goals and standards, develops action plans, directs others and gives feedback. Leadership styles are deemed to be a function of a leader's personal characteristics (e.g. personality, values, characteristics), the styles a leader has witnessed and experienced others using, and the specific management situations and people the leader deals with most. Leadership styles impact on staff performance by creating the environment in which staff work, which in turn influences the staff's discretionary effort. Covey (1990) believes that the leader who controls others through fear (coercive style) will find that the control is reactive and temporary. What is critical to a leader's effectiveness is his or her ability to diagnose the demands of the situation at hand, and to make use of the full array of styles, rather than to rely on only one or two styles to deal with all situations.

Litwin and Stringer (1968) and Hay (1998) proposed the model for leadership styles as presented in Table 1. Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi (1985) state that no one leadership style is correct. They stress that each style is effective according to a particular situation. This is reinforced by Cranwell-Ward, Bacon and Mackie (2002) who promote the notion that effective leadership is hinged on selecting the right style for the right situation and executing the given style well. The most effective style depends on, and varies according to the task, people,

and situation to be led. All of the styles are more or less effective depending on the characteristics of the situation, such as the experience of the team, employee strengths and weaknesses, the complexity of the task and time pressures.

Table 1: Model for Leadership Styles

Leadership Style	**Primary Objective**
Coercive (Directive) Style	Immediate Compliance
Authoritative (Visionary) Style	Providing long-term direction and vision for staff
Affiliative Style	Creating harmony among staff and between leaders and staff
Democratic Style	Building commitment among staff and generating new ideas
Pacesetting Style	Accomplishing tasks to high standards of excellence
Coaching Style	Long-term professional development of staff

The United Kingdom's National Governing Bodies (NGBs) in Sport increasingly implement Regional Development Managers (RDMs) in their organisations in the quest to promote more effective leadership within the organisation. RDMs need professional leadership development, however, much of what has been done in this regard falls drastically short. In most instances, leadership development is too vague, too dated, and too theoretical, and rarely tied to an organisation's immediate needs. Most programmes also do not adequately prepare leaders for the challenges of the future. The design of effective leadership development programmes that adds value and contributes to an organisation's success is a difficult and challenging field. There has been little research on establishing how much learning from leadership development programmes has been transferred back into the workplace. An action learning approach to leadership development programmes that combines theoretical concepts with opportunities to apply observable behaviours is required, for it is adaptable and flexible. The question arises:: *Can a leadership competency framework be developed for National Governing Bodies in Sport (NGBs)?,* by asking the NGBs and RDMs what leadership styles they need to function effectively. The findings of this study, combined with the literature were used to develop the proposed leadership competency framework.

Study Population and Prescience

The sample selected consisted of all Regional Development Managers (RDMs) engaged in the United Kingdom by the National Governing Body (NGB), as well as all Regional Development Officers (RDOs). The total study population consisted of seventy eight (N = 78) full-time employees of the NGB. All participants have leadership duties as a key focus of their job descriptions, and the emphasis related to the RDMs appointed to a key leadership role. The RDMs duties and requirements include: to manage, deploy and develop the regional delivery team of RDOs and Student Liaison Officers, and to establish and maintain effective working relationships with all Constituent Body Development Plans and Sport England Regional Sports Boards within the region. This study

was conducted with the full support of the NGB, namely the National Development Manager and the National Training Manager. All participants were able to influence the work, and the wishes of those who did not want to participate were respected. Future development of the work will remain visible and open to others, and permission will be obtained before making observations or examining documents produced for other purposes. The researcher accepted responsibility for maintaining confidentiality.

In the quest for consistency of experience and for reliability in testing terms, the RDMs who form the hub of the study were engaged in three, two day workshops at the researcher's University College. The first two day workshop sought to ensure that all delegates better understood the links between individual characteristics, leadership styles and organisational performance. All delegates described and critically analysed their own leadership styles and the organisational climate they created, along with their individual characteristics and how they related to the leadership of others. Personal development targets were stated. The second two day workshop examined models of leadership and organisational effectiveness, with all delegates enjoying one to one feedback sessions on leadership styles, personal characteristics and the organisational climate they created. A third two day workshop enabled the senior managers to examine personal competencies, and the relationship of such competencies to their leadership effectiveness.

Measuring Instrument

The *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)* (Hay Acquisition Company, 2002; Hay McBer, 1998; Litwin & Stringer, 1968) was used for the empirical investigation because the instrument responds to emerging theories, clinical awareness and factor analyses, and exhibits high levels of internal consistency. It is a 68 item multi-rater survey instrument providing leaders with a profile of their leadership styles according to the leadership styles model (Table 1) proposed by Litwin and Stringer (1968) and further developed by Hay (1998), i.e. Coercive, Authoritative, Affiliative, Democratic, Pacesetting and Coaching leadership styles. Originally based on the work of Litwin and Stringer (1968), it promotes the concept that leadership styles drive organisational climates. The instrument has been tested in a variety of different industries worldwide, and demonstrates substantial validity. The LSI employed is favoured over various other options, primarily because it focuses on a predictable relationship between a leader's dominant motive and his or her leadership style. It is designed to help leaders understand the styles they use in relating to their followers. It compares favourably with other instruments because of the breadth of issues dealt with, the theoretical background (not least the data collection and analysis techniques) and the way in which it relates to the 'real world'. The survey provides diagnostic information as to which styles are effective and ineffective in relation to the

postholder's role. The reliability of the instrument is illustrated by extensive testing of leaders and followers by the Hay Acquisition Company (2002), and is illustrated as Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. These coefficients stem from the Hay Group's testing of some 25000 'self ' and 110,000 'others' responses to the instrument between 1996 and 2002. The coercive style of leadership achieved a 0.7066 coefficient for self and 0.7451 coefficient for others. The authoritative style was less reliable than the leadership style for self (0.6507) but more reliable for others (0.8014). The affiliative style was less reliable than the two styles referred to thus far in terms of self, but more reliable than both for others (0.8248). The democratic style was the least reliable of all styles for self (0.4657) and achieved a coefficient of 0.6320 for others. Pacesetting and coaching styles achieved 0.5055 and 0.6826 coefficients for self and 0.6201 and 0.7957 respectively for others

Procedures

The *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)* was sent electronically via email to the participants. They were asked to complete the instrument electronically and to send it back to the main researcher for statistical analyses. Regional Development Officers (RDOs) were asked to rate the leadership styles of Regional Development Managers (RDMs) (or equivalent) on the *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)*. In turn, RDMs (or equivalent) were asked to report on the *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)* their own leadership styles in their capacity as employers of the National Governing Body as an organisation. The self-reported leadership styles of the RDMs (expressed by behaviours) indicate their own styles demonstrated in the workplace. These are the leader's intended styles – they may not be what others experience. The dominant leadership styles of the RDMs, as experienced and rated by the RDOs, indicate the way the leaders (RDMs) come across in practice to their followers (RDOs).

Results

The Regional Development Officers (RDOs) (n = 58), as followers, rated the leadership styles of Regional Development Managers (RDMs) (or equivalent) on the *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)*. The RDMs (or equivalent) (n=18) reported on the *Leadership Style Inventory (LSI)* their own leadership styles in their capacity as employers of the National Governing Body as an organisation. Table 2 shows the means ($\bar{x}$), standard deviations (s), ranges (r) and variances (v) of the two data sets (RDOs and RDMs).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Participants	N	$\bar{x}$	s	v	r
Directive (RDMs)	18	37.58	19.09	364.26	73.5
Directive (DOs)	58	40.20	22.71	515.61	76.5
Visionary (RDMs)	18	60.84	21.88	478.78	65.9
Visionary (DOs)	58	71.36	19.83	393.11	66.9
Affiliative (RDMs)	18	67.08	25.47	648.64	78
Affiliative (DOs)	58	71.87	21.32	454.33	75.4
Democratic (RDMs)	18	64.65	21.95	481.84	70.4
Democratic (DOs)	58	75.38	12.12	147.00	44.7
Pacesetting (RDMs)	18	32.10	19.82	392.66	58.6
Pacesetting (DOs)	58	26.18	19.38	375.46	69.3
Coaching (RDMs)	18	49.54	21.03	442.13	69
Coaching (DOs)	58	78.19	13.94	194.25	52.7

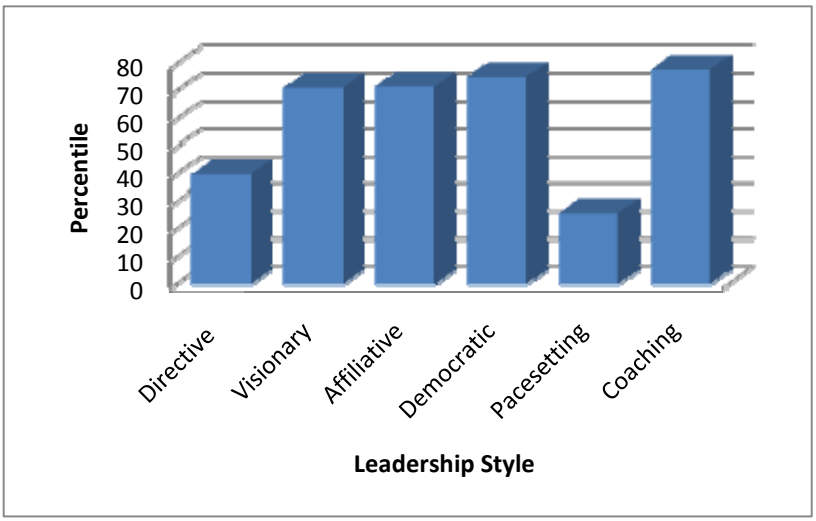


Figure 1: RDMs Leadership Styles as rated by the (RDOs) (n = 58).

As can be seen from Table 2 and Figure 1, according to the RDOs the directive ($\bar{x}$ = 40.2) and pacesetting ($\bar{x}$ = 26.18) leadership styles are less used by the RDMs. According to the RDOs, two leadership styles mostly displayed by the RDMs (according to behavioural rating) are the coaching style ($\bar{x}$ = 78.19) and the democratic style ($\bar{x}$ = 75.38), followed by the affiliative style ($\bar{x}$ = 71.87) and visionary $\bar{x}$ = 71.36 styles. For each of the two less preferred styles s = 22.71 for the directive style compared to s = 19.38 for the pacesetting style. For the preferred styles of coaching, democratic, affiliative and visionary, s =13.94,

12.12, 21.32 and 19.83 respectively. There were no complementary styles to consider.

Similar studies, e.g. Bracken, Timmreck and Church (2000), suggest that in the case of the directive leadership style, the RDMs may be failing to set clear standards of performance and are indecisive in terms of key decisions to be made. Shim, Lusch and Goldsberry (2002) indicates that when the employment of the pacesetting style is less preferred, there is potential for a leader (such as an RDM) to fail in undertaking all his own work personally, whilst failing to give his followers appropriate direction, development and co-ordination. Northouse (1997) refers to the style approach to leadership as focusing on what leaders do and how they act, and indeed what the RRDMs do and how they act appears to be an instrumental factor in the perceptions of the RDOs.

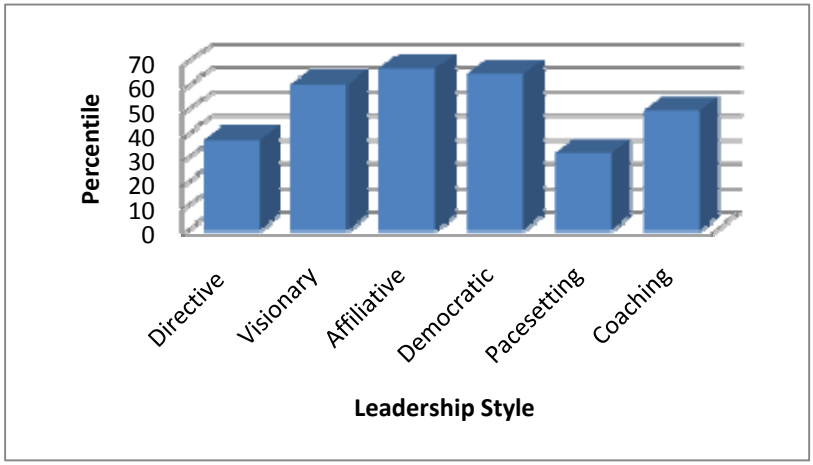


Figure 2: RDMs Self-Rated Leadership Styles (n = 18).

As can be seen from Table 2 and Figure 2, the RDMs self-rated their leadership styles as follows: the directive and pacesetting styles of leadership were less preferred with scores of $\bar{x}$ = 37.58 and $\bar{x}$ = 32.1 respectively. For each of the two less preferred styles, s = 19.09 for the directive style compared with 19.82 for the pacesetting style. The RDMs deemed the affiliative style $\bar{x}$ = 67.08 to be the most preferred style, followed by the democratic ($\bar{x}$ = 64.65), the visionary ($\bar{x}$ = 60.84) and coaching ($\bar{x}$ = 49.54) styles. Note that the latter coaching style is deemed to be a back-up style by the RDMs, but the most preferred style ($\bar{x}$ = 78.19) by those who work to them. The RDMs rated the affiliative style as the most preferred style in their repertoire, indicating that the RFU as an organization seeks to create an environment where staff and their leaders work in harmony in a culture of professional development encompassing consistent support and feedback (Daft, 1999; Shim et al., 2002).

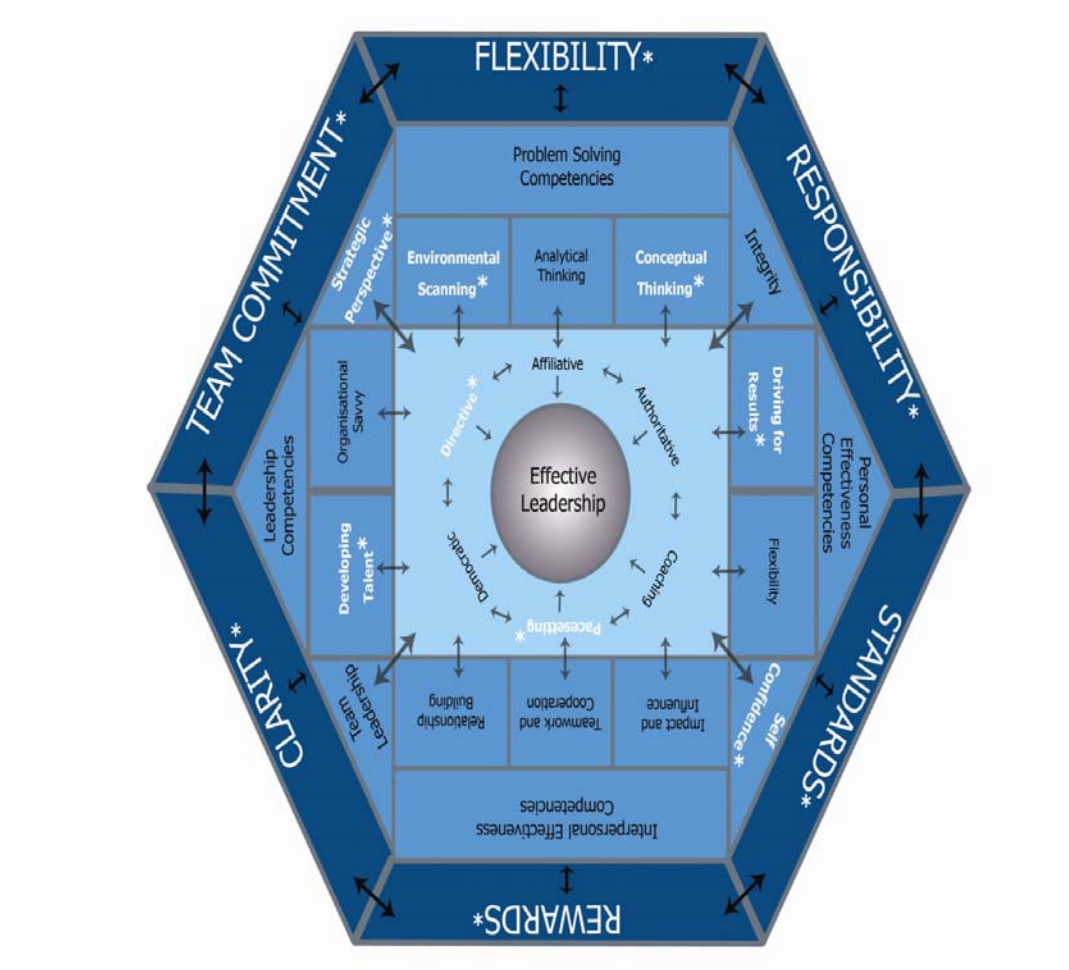


Figure 3: Proposed Leadership Styles Competency Framework for Governing Bodies in Sport.

Proposed Leadership Styles Competency Framework

Based on the findings of this investigation, and in line with relevant theories and models in literature, the researchers propose the leadership styles competency framework for Governing Bodies in Sport in Figure 3. The different dimensions on the Framework represent priority development areas for National Governing Bodies as organisations, as well as for RDMs. The Framework is a summary of the literature and different empirical components of the larger study that was conducted, including the findings of the empirical section of this article. The wider study was founded on the hypothesis that effective leadership hinged on the concepts of leadership styles, personal competencies and organisational climate working symbiotically. In this context, leadership styles were deemed to impact on staff performance by creating an environment in which staff work, which in turn influenced their discretionary effort (Hay McBer, 1998; Northouse, 1997). There is no one 'best' style, and such styles refer to the patterns of

behaviour a leader adopts to plan, organise, motivate, control and the extent to which the leader listens, sets goals and standards, develops action plans, directs others and gives feedback (Prewit, 2003; Ready, 2004; Smith, 2000). Personal competencies were investigated from a position that a competency is deemed to be a measurable characteristic of a person that is related to effective performance in a specific job role (Hay McBer, 1998; Pegg, 1989; Smith, 2000). Such competencies were organised in clusters and treated from a position that not every one of them must be mastered to achieve leadership effectiveness (Stein & Book, 2000; Szilagyi & Wallace, 1990). The rationale is that depending on the situation (as with leadership styles) there is a combination of competencies that will help most leaders achieve effectiveness (Gardner, 1997; Kilpatrick & Locke, 1991; Pierce & Newstrom, 2006).

The phenomenon of organisational climate was investigated in the context of referring to an individual's perception(s) of those aspects of their environment that directly impacted on how well they could fulfil the demands of their role (Dunphy, Griffiths, & Benn, 2003 ; Hesselbein et al., 1996; Hooper & Potter, 1997). Research conducted by the Hay McBer (1998) revealed that organisational climate directly impacted on the amount of discretionary effort and commitment employees actually made. Similar findings by Cherniss and Coleman (2001), reinforces the notion that competency and behavioural leadership concepts affect organisational climate.

The proposed framework (Figure 3) illustrates the priority areas for the NGB in relation to leadership styles, personal competencies and organisational climate. As highlighted earlier, the wider study was founded on the hypothesis that effective leadership hinged on the concepts of leadership styles, personal competencies and organisational climate working symbiotically. Leadership styles have already been discussed. Personal competencies e.g. developing talent, organisational savvy, analytical thinking are deemed important because a competency is deemed to be a measurable characteristic of a leader that is related to their effective performance in a given role i.e. in the context of this study, the RDM. Not every competency has to be mastered to achieve leadership effectiveness. Depending on the situation, there is a combination of competencies that will help most leaders achieve effectiveness. As illustrated in the figure, the strategic perspective, environmental scanning, conceptual thinking, driving for results, self confidence and developing talent competencies are not deemed to be strengths in relation to the body of RDMs in general. The NGB as an organisation also needs to consider how it can promote a more positive organisational climate in relation to the dimensions of flexibility, responsibility, standards, rewards, clarity and team commitment, whilst accommodating individual leaders' developmental needs across the range of dimensions. Flexibility, for example, refers to the perception staff have about constraints in the organisation and the degree to which they perceive that there

are unnecessary rules, procedures, systems of administration (including meetings and paperwork, policies, and practices that interfere with task accomplishment), and that new ideas are easy to get accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The empirical section of this article forms part of a wider study which aim was to determine the effect of leadership styles competency frameworks on the leadership effectiveness of RDM's, and to investigate the impact of organisational climate on the role of the RDM and those who they lead. To achieve this aim, key personnel at the NGB were analysed as to their leadership styles employed, their range of competencies (measurable characteristics of a person that are related to effective performance) exhibited, and the organisational climate that they created. These findings, together with relevant literature, were used to identify key components of leadership development. This knowledge was integrated and used to develop a leadership styles competency framework for Governing Bodies in Sport (Figure 3).

According to the RDOs the directive and pacesetting leadership styles are less used by the RDMs, and the coaching and the democratic style the dominant styles RDMs use. The RDMs self-rated their leadership styles as follows: the directive and pacesetting styles of leadership were less preferred, while their highest preferences are for the affiliative and democratic styles.

Whilst some RDMs and similar positions were perceived as employing the directive style of leadership as a preferred option, the NGB as an organisation and the majority of subjects analysed were perceived as employing it as a less preferred leadership style. The NGB as an organisation and most RDMs or similar positions were perceived as employing the visionary style of leadership as a preferred style. Some RDMs or similar positions were perceived as lacking a visionary leadership style. The NGB as an organisation and most RDMs or similar positions were perceived as employing the affiliative style of leadership. Some RDMs or similar positions were perceived as lacking an affiliative leadership style as a preferred option. The NGB as an organisation and most RDMs or similar positions were perceived as employing the democratic style of leadership as a preferred style of leadership. Some RDMs or similar positions were perceived as employing a democratic leadership style as a less preferred style. Whilst some RDMs and similar positions were perceived as employing a pacesetting style of leadership as a preferred style, the NGB as an organisation and the majority of subjects analysed were perceived as lacking an effective pacesetting leadership style as a preferred style. The NGB as an organisation and most RDMs or similar positions were perceived as employing the coaching style of leadership as a preferred style. Some RDMs or similar positions were perceived as lacking a coaching leadership style as a preferred style.

The coercive leadership style is most effective when employed in crises situations, or if lack of adherence to NGB policies and procedures would result in serious issues (e.g. failing to implement codes of conduct when working with children) in coaching settings. To develop this style, development programmes could focus on creating opportunities for participants to find their own answers to problems and to learn from each other's perspectives, successes and mistakes in an encouraging climate where participants will both support and challenge each other. Programme content must allow delegates to refrain from displaying their own knowledge and understanding, and challenging individual and group assumptions. They must be encouraged to provide difficult feedback to colleagues, asking questions that assist them in exploring the reasoning behind their assumptions, whilst acknowledging mistakes publicly and framing them as learning experiences. No leader has all of the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective, and indeed most leaders have multiple development needs in the quest to be 'effective'.

The NGB as an organisation should focus on how it can promote the effective employment of the directive and pacesetting leadership styles in general terms, whilst accommodating individual leader's development needs across the range of leadership styles. The findings of this study depict that the NGB needs to consider a leadership development programme that promotes effective use of the directive and pacesetting leadership styles. Regular (annual) employment of an LSI for all RDMs is needed in the quest to provide diagnostic information as to which styles are effective and ineffective in relation to the RDM's role. The ideal would be that the RDM would acquire styles in their repertoire that are both complementary and compensatory. The NGB needs to develop a leadership development programme for the RDMs that incorporate a continuous process of education, training, learning and support activities that take place in work-based or other settings. The programme should focus on promoting the learning and development of professionally appropriate knowledge, skills and values. The appropriate diet of leadership development activities/tasks, tailored to the needs of each delegate, should promote the growth of effective leaders.

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