

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SERIES

Understanding and Leveraging Your Leadership Style

Which Moods are Influencing Your Leadership Style and Performance?

It is not uncommon to experience a range of moods throughout any given day, however; we are seldom aware of their impact on us, as well as those we lead, and those we want to positively influence, e.g., key stakeholders.

Please review the chart below to determine which moods might be creating barriers in your leadership performance. On the reverse side of this handout, please consider which moods might be helping you achieve desired outcomes and positively influence your leadership style.

Note: this is not a complete list of moods, however; it may help you recognize the types of moods that might be influencing and shaping your leadership style.

Unproductive moods

Negative internal dialogue

Confusion	I don't understand what's going on here. I am feeling stuck and I don't know what to do next. The correct answers are not obvious to me. I need to get out of this situation to avoid embarrassment.
Resignation	I am never going to be able to do this, so what's the point? This is impossible. It has always been this way, and it's never going to change. This is a waste of my time and attention.
Defensiveness	It's not my fault! They don't know what they're doing, and I'm going to be blamed. I did what was asked of me, you need to talk to....?
Arrogance	I already know this. My way is better. You don't know what you're talking about. I can't believe I have to work with you. What are you thinking?
Impatience	(Often coupled with arrogance) There is no value in what we are doing here. We need to move on. Hurry up and get to the point; is there a point? This is a waste of time! I don't have time for this.
Frustration	I tried to do this, but it failed. I expected to be able to do this already. This is impossible. It's never going to work. I give up; I'm leaving.
Boredom	There is nothing of value for me here. I already heard about this, must we go over this again?
Fear/Anxiety	I don't know how to do this. I'm going to fail or look like an idiot. I'm afraid of failing. I don't know what to do and I'm worried!
Overwhelm	(Often coupled with frustration) There is so much that I don't know here, and it feels like I can't keep up. There is no one I can ask for help. I just have to work harder and harder, but I'll probably still fail because there isn't enough time.
Insecurity	I am not competent in this area. I've never done this before. I can't do this. I am not good enough to be in this role. I am never going to get this. People are going to find out that I'm not qualified to do this.
Distrust or Skepticism	I don't trust you and/or this team. This is never going to work, we are wasting our time. What's your real motive? You're going to throw me under the bus, I just know it!

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Productive Moods

Positive internal dialogue

Curiosity	<p>I'm not sure I understand, or know what's going on, but I recognize there could be opportunities here. Even though I don't understand, I trust there's something for me to learn which could expand my leadership capacity, therefore I will remain curious.</p> <p><i>Unlike a mood of confusion, when one is in a mood of curiosity – not knowing –, there's a new frontier to explore where learning is inspiring, and not something to be embarrassed by, or to be avoided.</i></p>
Perseverance	<p>I am not sure that I know what to do here, but I'm going to keep an open mind so I can discover new opportunities. I am not going to avoid feelings of discomfort and will stick with this until I persevere.</p>
Acceptance	<p>I accept that the past is the past, and it is not in my control. I accept that the future is uncertain and that it will be full of surprises, which I cannot predict. Both good and bad will come unexpectedly.</p> <p><i>Unlike resignation, when we are in a mood of acceptance, we accept the past as the past, but we are not resigned about our future possibilities, and we are equally free to take action, or walk away.</i></p>
Patience	<p>I accept that learning requires that I continuously practice over a long period of time. I understand that this is the way learning works.</p>
Ambition	<p>I see opportunities here. I may not be fully prepared, and I am not certain of everything that may unfold, but I am convinced that my full commitment is valuable. I am committed to taking action.</p> <p><i>When we are in a mood of ambition, setbacks show up as challenges to navigate and master, not as evidence that what we set out to accomplish is not possible, as they might be interpreted by someone who is in a mood of resignation, insecurity or anxiety, for example.</i></p>
Resolution	<p>I see opportunities here and I am going to take action right now.</p>
Confidence	<p>I have experience and have achieved some success in this area. I am competent to act in this situation. I have been able to learn new things in the past and can do it again. I have people that I can ask for help.</p> <p><i>When in a mood of confidence, lack of competence shows up as something to master, not as a reason to give up.</i></p>
Trust	<p>I am willing to trust this individual/team/project and give them the benefit of the doubt. I will give them time to learn and adjust their behavior. Perhaps I missed or mis-read intentions in the past. I'm open to discovering personal blindspots which may have contributed to a lack of trust.</p> <p><i>Note: Trusting requires courage, authenticity, flexibility and remaining open-minded.</i></p>

Information based on: Gloria P. Flores, "Learning to Learn and the Navigation of Moods," 2016