What Does This Moment Need From Me?

Leader Rebellion · Leadership styles as choices in context

A deliberate leadership approach, its likely cost, and a plan to check the effect.

Open the web tool

Start here

Begin with the situation and ask what is needed. Avoid assigning yourself a permanent leadership type.

Explore the six approaches, including their possible costs. Clear direction and participation can coexist when boundaries are honest.

Try one behavior, check its effect, and change approach if the situation calls for it.

Six approaches to consider

Coercive/directive: give clear instructions when immediate coordination is necessary. Explain the boundary and return choice as soon as possible. Routine control can suppress useful information.

Authoritative/visionary: connect the work to a purpose and outcome. Leave room over the route where possible; explain what is fixed.

Affiliative: acknowledge strain and rebuild connection. Care should not leave expectations or difficult issues permanently unclear.

Democratic: seek people's knowledge and options where they can influence the work. Be honest about who decides and how input will be used.

Pacesetting: demonstrate a standard with capable colleagues. Check whether the pace, resources, and expectations are sustainable rather than assuming everyone can follow.

Coaching: help someone develop through questions, practice, feedback, and time. Do not use coaching questions to avoid giving essential information.

What is happening now?

Describe the work, urgency, experience available, and room for others to influence the response.

What do people need from your role?

Ask about direction, coordination, care, participation, standards, or coaching. Do not assume they need the approach you prefer.

Choose an approach to try

Use the six approach descriptions in the reference section as prompts. Name the behavior you will use, not a fixed identity or a label for the team.

Check the cost and the boundary

What could this approach silence, delay, rush, or leave unclear? Who might experience it differently?

Make the behavior visible

Write the opening or action. Include who gets a voice, the decision boundary, and what support you provide.

Ask what effect it had

Choose a moment to ask and be willing to switch approach. An intended benefit is not the same as the other person's experience.

A question to keep

What feedback would tell me that the approach I intended as helpful is not helping?

Worked example — fictional

What is happening now?

A capable team is trying a new service. The outcome is clear, but the best way to deliver it is uncertain.

What do people need from your role?

They need a clear purpose and boundary, then room to test options. They do not need me to prescribe every step.

Choose an approach to try

Visionary direction plus participation: explain the service outcome and constraints, then invite the team's options.

Check the cost and the boundary

My invitation could sound open while I already favor one option. I will say which decisions are genuinely open and explain my own preference as a proposal.

Make the behavior visible

"The outcome is a useful first response within one working day. Privacy and service continuity are fixed constraints. The workflow is open. What options should we test, and what support do you need from me?"

Ask what effect it had

After the first trial, ask whether the direction was clear and the choice real. If people are stuck for lack of expertise, arrange coaching rather than demanding faster ideas.

Behind the tool

The Lauren Adelle Coaching leadership-styles handout draws on Daniel Goleman's six-style account: coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting, and coaching. This original practice uses plain-language prompts for those approaches and asks about effects on working conditions. It is not a style test or a claim that one style predicts results.

Daniel Goleman · Leadership That Gets Results

Leadership is experienced through what your behavior makes possible. Check who can speak, decide, learn, and ask for help under the approach you choose.

You Have a Culture Problem — Nic Payne

Keep only notes that are useful and appropriate to share.

Hope is rebellious.