1.3 Leadership Styles and Theories of Leadership

Total Marks

AQA 7132 · Calculators not allowed · about 50 minutes · Write-in edition

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Use full sentences for the longer responses (questions 13 and 14). Show any brief reasoning for 2 or 3 mark explain answers. Time guidance: 50 minutes.

1 Which one of the following best describes an autocratic leadership style in a business context?

- ☐ A) Leaders involve employees in decisions and seek consensus
- ☐ B) Leaders make decisions alone and instruct employees what to do
- ☐ C) Leaders act as a friendly parent, making decisions but caring for staff
- ☐ D) Leaders give staff freedom to make their own decisions

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

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2 Define the autocratic leadership style, as used in organisations.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

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3 Define the democratic (participative) leadership style in a workplace.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

4 Define the paternalistic leadership style as it applies to managers and staff.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Define the laissez-faire leadership style in an organisational setting.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

6 State one key assumption of McGregor's Theory X about workers, used here as a lens on leadership assumptions.

(Total for Question 6 is 1 mark)

7 State one key assumption of McGregor's Theory Y about workers, used as an alternative leadership lens.

(Total for Question 7 is 1 mark)

8 State two situational factors a leader should consider when choosing a leadership style.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

9 Explain how a workforce with high skill and experience would influence a manager to choose a particular leadership style. Give one effect.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

10 Explain one likely effect of paternalistic leadership on staff turnover in a medium-sized retail business.

(Total for Question 10 is 2 marks)

11 Explain one likely effect of an autocratic leadership style on employee morale in a small, stable manufacturing firm.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

12 Explain one likely effect of a democratic leadership style on the speed of decision-making in a busy customer-service organisation.

(Total for Question 12 is 2 marks)

13 Identify the likely leadership style used by the manager in this scenario and explain one likely effect on organisational performance. Scenario: In a small tech start-up, the founder rarely checks daily work, gives teams autonomy to choose tools and priorities, and only intervenes for quarterly strategy reviews.

(Total for Question 13 is 6 marks)

14 Evaluate whether one leadership style is always the most effective for a business. Make a judgement supported by evidence and situational reasoning from business contexts.

(Total for Question 14 is 9 marks)

Mark scheme · 1.3 Leadership Styles and Theories of Leadership

Question 1

B cao **B1**

Answer: B

Question 2

states that the leader makes decisions themselves and gives orders to staff **B1**

may include close supervision and little input from employees, oe **B1**

Answer: A leader makes decisions themselves and gives orders to staff, often with close supervision and little employee input.

Question 3

states that the leader involves employees in decision-making and seeks input or consensus **B1**

may include delegation and shared responsibility, oe **B1**

Answer: A leader involves employees in decisions, seeks input or consensus, and often delegates responsibility.

Question 4

states leader acts like a parent, taking decisions but showing concern for employee welfare **B1**

may combine firm direction with support or benefits for staff, oe **B1**

Answer: A leader who makes decisions for the business but shows concern for employee welfare, combining direction with supportive actions.

Question 5

states that the leader gives employees freedom to make decisions and minimal direction **B1**

may include hands-off approach and high delegation, oe **B1**

Answer: A hands-off leader who gives employees freedom to make decisions, providing minimal direct instruction and high delegation.

Question 6

workers are assumed to dislike work and avoid responsibility, requiring close supervision **B1**

Answer: Workers are assumed to dislike work and avoid responsibility, needing close supervision.

Question 7

workers are assumed to be motivated, to accept responsibility and to seek fulfilment at work **B1**

Answer: Workers are assumed to be motivated, accept responsibility and seek fulfilment at work.

Question 8

workforce skill and experience, or seniority **B1**

urgency of tasks/deadline pressure, or organisational culture **B1**

Answer: Any two, e.g. workforce skill and experience; task urgency or organisational culture.

Question 9

identifies that high skill suggests a more participative or laissez-faire style, e.g. greater delegation **B1**

explains effect, e.g. increased autonomy can raise motivation and productivity, since skilled staff are trusted **B1**

Answer: High skill and experience make delegation or laissez-faire appropriate, because trusting staff with decisions can raise motivation and productivity.

Question 10

identifies an effect, e.g. reduced turnover or increased loyalty **B1**

develops the point, e.g. because staff feel cared for and supported, increasing retention **B1**

Answer: Paternalistic leadership can reduce staff turnover because employees feel cared for and supported, which increases loyalty and retention.

Question 11

identifies an effect, e.g. lower morale or reduced job satisfaction for some employees **B1**

develops reasoning, e.g. because employees have little input and feel undervalued, which may reduce motivation **B1**

Answer: Autocratic leadership can lower morale because employees have little input and may feel undervalued, reducing motivation and job satisfaction.

Question 12

identifies an effect, e.g. slower decision-making or longer discussions **B1**

develops reasoning, e.g. because involving staff and seeking consensus takes time, which can delay urgent decisions **B1**

Answer: Democratic leadership can slow decision-making because involving staff and seeking consensus takes time, delaying urgent choices.

Question 13

identifies the style as laissez-faire, cao **B1**

identifies a plausible effect on performance, e.g. higher innovation or variable performance **B1**

explains how autonomy can increase creativity and rapid problem-solving, improving innovation **B1**

offers a further developed point, e.g. lack of oversight can lead to inconsistent quality or missed deadlines **B1**

links the inconsistent quality point to an outcome for overall organisational performance **B1**

provides coherent application to the start-up context, showing both positive and negative effects **B1**

Answer: The style is laissez-faire. Autonomy can boost innovation and quick problem-solving, improving product development, but lack of oversight can produce inconsistent quality or missed deadlines, harming overall performance.

Question 14

Level 1 Offers simple, undeveloped assertions about leadership styles, with little or no situational application and no clear judgement.	**1-3**
Level 2 Gives developed points about one or two styles and some situational evidence, but the analysis is partial and the judgement is not fully justified.	**4-6**
Level 3 Weighs strengths and weaknesses of different styles with clear situational application and reaches a balanced, justified conclusion about whether a single style can be always effective.	**7-9**

Indicative content:

- Arguments that no single style is always best: effectiveness depends on task urgency, workforce skill, organisational culture, business size and external pressures, so situational flexibility is needed.
- Examples where autocratic can be most effective: emergency situations, simple routine tasks, low-skilled workforce or tight deadlines where fast, centralised decisions are critical.
- Examples where democratic is most effective: knowledge-based teams, complex decisions requiring buy-in, where employee engagement improves innovation and quality.
- Examples where paternalistic can be effective: organisations valuing loyalty and long-term retention, where staff respond to leaders who provide support and clear direction.
- Examples where laissez-faire can be effective: highly skilled, creative teams, research and development units where autonomy fosters innovation, but risks inconsistent standards.
- Consideration of McGregor Theory X and Y assumptions: a Theory X view may favour autocratic control, while Theory Y supports participative approaches; matching assumptions to reality matters.
- Evaluation may conclude that no one style is always most effective; instead, leaders who adapt style to context and who combine elements of styles tend to be more effective.
- Judgement should be supported with reasoned examples and a clear final stance, for example endorsing flexible, contingent leadership rather than a single permanent style.