

## RETAILER: Developing your retail business

# MANAGEMENT

## Leadership

### Globalise Section 7 Topic 4

The RETAILER programme aims to provide practical resources for independent retailers in the Eastern region, backed by the support of intermediate mentors and the RETAILER website [www.independent-retailer.com](http://www.independent-retailer.com)

The RETAILER programme is supported financially by the European Social fund (ESF). Elements of the RETAILER programme build upon the APU SESAME programme. If you are interested in joining the RETAILER programme, please complete and return the form at the back of this document.

This RETAILER topic is based on Topic 4, *Leadership*, from Section 7, *Resources*, of the SESAME Globalise materials.

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## 7

## Topic 4 Leadership

Perhaps, as the owner of a small business, you have some difficulty thinking about yourself as a 'leader' – this might be especially true if you have just one or two employees working for you. But, the truth of the matter is that, within your business, you are the leader. You are the person who creates the vision for the business, makes the key decisions, plans for the future, co-ordinates and controls the current work and provides direction for the staff.

### The key tasks of a leader

Regardless of the size or type of business, as an owner/manager there are certain leadership tasks which are your responsibility. These include:

- developing plans and strategies for the future – deciding how the business should look in 2 years, 5 years, 10 years from now
- making decisions about what resources the business needs and how those resources will be paid for (how many staff, what type of equipment, premises, and vehicles)
- making decisions about how the work is delegated within the business (who does what? How? By when?)
- setting goals and targets for the business – deciding targets for sales and annual turnover and profit and loss margins
- setting quality standards for products and services provided by the business – deciding how well things are made, or how well tasks are completed
- leading the business from the front – setting an example to staff by demonstrating energy, enthusiasm, commitment, motivation, and encouraging team spirit and team work.

You don't lead by hitting people over the head ... that's assault, not leadership.

**Dwight D. Eisenhower**

### The key qualities of a leader

The most effective leaders, in any business, develop and demonstrate the following qualities:  
 adaptability•enthusiasm•calmness in a crisis•commitment•open-mindedness•determination•fairness  
 energy•decisiveness•ambition•confidence•flexibility•honesty•imagination•persistence•steadiness

### Practical leadership strategies

According to the situational leadership model developed by Hersey and Blanchard, leaders can select one of four different leadership approaches depending on the experience, skills, competence, commitment and motivation of staff involved.

The **DIRECTING** approach

For new, inexperienced, unskilled or unconfident staff, explain what needs to be done, how it should be done and give clear deadlines.

The **COACHING** approach

For staff who have skills but would benefit from encouragement and learning from more experienced colleagues, provide opportunities to watch and learn and key motivators-targets to aim for.

The **SUPPORTING** approach

For staff who are skilled and competent but need guidance and constructive feedback to carry out tasks fully, provide new challenges, but with plenty of guidance, support and encouragement.

The **DELEGATING** approach

For highly skilled, experienced staff who thrive on responsibility and challenges and produce high quality work on their own, specify the outcomes, provide the resources and authority and be available only when needed.

**Note:** Make a note of which leadership style you think would suit each of your staff.

# Check Point

This check point is designed to give you the opportunity to consider which, if any, leadership qualities you could usefully develop further so as to enable you to become a more effective leader within your business.

Consider each of the statements below and then tick the box that most closely matches your honest response to the statement.

Statements	Your response	<i>Tick one only</i>
I consider myself an adaptable and flexible kind of person who is able to respond to changes within the business, and the external business environment.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> It depends – sometimes I can be adaptable and flexible. <input type="radio"/> I have difficulty with this.	
I consider myself to be a steady kind of a person who is calm in a crisis.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> Most of the time. <input type="radio"/> Not really – I tend to get stressed when unexpected problems arise.	
I consider myself someone who is decisive – even when I have to make unpleasant decisions which affect other people.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> I can be fairly decisive when I have to. <input type="radio"/> I dislike making important or tough decisions.	
I have a clear vision for the future, and am totally committed to the business.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> I think so. <input type="radio"/> I’m not really sure where the business is going.	
I regard myself as someone who leads from the front and sets a good example to everyone else in the business.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> Most of the time. <input type="radio"/> I tend to get involved in tasks that could be done by others, and which sap my time and energy.	
I make sure that everyone in the business knows what I want and expect from them.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> I think so. <input type="radio"/> Not really, because I’m not too sure myself.	
I consider myself to be an excellent communicator and listener.	<input type="radio"/> Yes, absolutely. <input type="radio"/> I sometimes have difficulty making myself clear. <input type="radio"/> We seem to have a lot of confusion in the business which may stem from my poor communication.	

## CHECKLIST

Your responses to the check point statements may have highlighted some areas where you could further develop your leadership skills and qualities. Here are some ideas that you may find helpful:

- Talk to other owner/managers of small businesses, and learn from them.
- Find a mentor – someone who is particularly good at making decisions, or leading from the front, and ask them to coach, support and advise you.
- Take some time for yourself – do some reading, book yourself onto a course or just relax and wind down every now and then.

Use this check point for each of your staff to decide which leadership style will suit them best.

Name of employee	Leadership style required	<i>Tick one only</i>
	<input type="radio"/> New and inexperienced – directing style. <input type="radio"/> Needs opportunities to watch and learn – coaching style. <input type="radio"/> Skilled and competent but will benefit from constructive feedback – supporting style. <input type="radio"/> Highly skilled and experienced, can be trusted to work alone, use their initiative and make sound judgements – delegating style.	

Now that you've seen some of the RETAILER materials, would you like to benefit from the RETAILER programme?

Through the RETAILER programme, Anglia Polytechnic University offers Till Side Training for independent retailers in Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex employing less than 250 people.

The training is backed by practical materials, relevant resources, the support of experienced mentors and the RETAILER website.

Retailing is a 'people' business. Supermarkets, department stores and chains spend a significant amount of time and resources training their staff. Product knowledge, customer service, merchandising and selling are prerequisites for working in these companies, but training also:

- demonstrates commitment to their employees and their professional development (for many employees, the offer of training is the reason for deciding which company to work for)
- forms the principal rationale that supports all quality initiatives from simple Quality Control right up to Total Quality Management.

The RETAILER programme is supported financially by the European Social Fund, and is free to beneficiaries. The RETAILER programme is intended to train you, train your employees, and help you train future employees.

To find out more about the RETAILER programme please fill in your details below and send a copy of this page to:

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