Many of us choose to be in social groups because there are number of benefits that we receive as members. We may choose to be in a group for instrumental (or task) reasons so that the other group members can help us accomplish something. Or, we may choose to be in a group for expressive (or emotional) reasons so that the other group members can provide us with companionship, love, and security.

Think about our social groups in the context of leadership. There are typically two types of leadership: instrumental and expressive. **Instrumental leadership** focuses on achieving goals. Leaders who are dominantly instrumental work to maintain productivity and ensure that tasks are completed. They make good managers because they get the job done. However, they are often so focused on the task that they can alienate other members of the group.

**Expressive leadership**, on the other hand, focuses on maintaining [group cohesion](https://study.com/academy/lesson/group-cohesion-theory-definition-quiz.html). Leaders who are dominantly expressive work to maintain warm, friendly relationships and ensure the collective well-being of the group. They make good bosses because they truly care for their employees. However, they are sometimes lacking efficiency and organizational skills.

Although most leaders are dominantly instrumental or expressive, both styles are needed for groups to work effectively. So, the most effective leaders have the ability to use the style that best fits the situation. They can switch from being instrumental and focusing on the task, to being expressive and focusing on collaboration, whenever they see a need.

**Authoritarian Decision-Making**

Beyond dominant leadership types and abilities, leaders also vary in their decision-making styles. There are three basic styles of leadership decision-making: authoritarian, democratic, and *laissez-faire*.

Leaders who use **authoritarian decision-making** make all the major group decisions and demand compliance from the group members. Authoritarian leaders typically make decisions on their own and tell other group members what to do and how to do it. Authoritarian leadership can be beneficial when a decision needs to be made quickly or when a project or situation is particularly stressful.

For example, imagine you're a member of the Greek army during the Trojan War. It would have been beneficial for Odysseus to practice authoritarian decision-making in order to determine who would perform each task of building the Trojan Horse. You and the other soldiers would not have had to worry about making complex decisions, but instead, you could focus on your individual tasks. Imagine what would have happened if all of those soldiers had spent days debating while in the midst of a war!

While authoritarian leadership can be beneficial at times, it is often the case that it's more problematic. This type of decision-making is easily abused, and authoritarian leaders are often viewed as bossy and controlling. Because authoritarian leaders make decisions without consulting the group, many group members may resent the leader because they are unable to contribute ideas.

**Democratic Decision-Making**

The next type of leadership decision-making is democratic. Leaders who use **democratic decision-making** encourage group discussion and believe in decision-making through consensus. Democratic leaders still make the final decision, but do so only after carefully considering what other group members have said. Usually, their decision goes with the majority. Democratic leaders are generally the most popular. They make members of the group feel included and promote teamwork and creativity.

For example, think about [King Arthur](https://study.com/academy/lesson/who-was-king-arthur-legend-knights-court.html) and his knights. Most of us are familiar with the famous round table, where all of the knights plus King Arthur would sit in equal status. They would discuss problems in the kingdom together and come to a consensus before King Arthur would take action.

**Kung Fu Panda**

**Po**, a clumsy panda, is a kung fu fanatic who lives in the Valley of Peace and works in his goose father **Mr. Ping**'s noodle shop, unable to realize his dream of learning kung fu. One day, a kung fu tournament is held for the elderly spiritual leader of the valley, **Grand Master Oogway**, to determine the identity of the Dragon Warrior, the one kung fu master capable of understanding the secret of the Dragon Scroll, which is said to contain the key to limitless power. Everyone in the valley expects the Dragon Warrior to be one of the **Furious Five—Tigress, Monkey, Mantis, Viper, and Crane**—a quintet of kung fu warriors trained by **Master Shifu** to protect the valley. To everyone's surprise, Oogway chooses Po, who had accidentally stumbled into the tournament arena after arriving late via fireworks explosion.

Refusing to believe that Po can be the Dragon Warrior, Shifu subjects Po to torturous training exercises in order to discourage him into quitting. Determined to change himself into someone he can respect, Po perseveres in his training and befriends the Furious Five, who had previously mocked Po for his lack of skill in kung fu. Po soon learns that Tai Lung is approaching the Valley, an evil kung fu warrior who has escaped from prison to take revenge for being denied the Dragon Scroll, and despairs he will be unable to defeat him. However, Shifu discovers that Po is capable of martial arts when motivated by food, and successfully trains him to learn kung fu. After his training is complete, Po is given the Dragon Scroll, which he discovers to be blank. However, Po realizes that the key to limitless power lies within himself, allowing him to defeat Tai Lung and restore peace to the valley.