

Another contemporary leadership principle that I used was Affiliative leadership. An Affiliative leader is someone who “connects people to each other, thereby creating teamwork and harmony. This principle promotes collaboration and relationships which indirectly drive better performance, loyalty, and commitment” (resource 2). Affiliative leadership can be used to help solve participant conflicts or used as a guiding principle to form positive inclusive team relationships by making sure followers feel connected to each other. This principle is also very useful for team building. I practiced this leadership technique during our fourth session with the juniors by having smaller teams consisting of about 6 or 7 students. In session 4 we decided to split the whole group into four teams and have a little tournament. Because of the smaller teams it meant that communication and teamwork was a huge part of the games/activities set, whereas in previous sessions the group was divided in half and there appeared to be too many people so everyone just booted the ball up field. By having smaller teams and a shorter field the juniors were required to pass the ball if they wanted to score goals and have a good time. They were also required to communicate with each other more often as there was less of them. Smaller number also meant a greater connectivity between participants. With a reduced number of people in each team the students couldn't afford to be fussy about who they passed to. This ultimately resulted in the juniors meeting new people who they wouldn't normally get to know if they were on the same team as all their friends and just passed to them. When we set up two games side by side with smaller teams, I noticed that some students got themselves into a bad mood because their team wasn't winning or the other kids were giving them a hard time when they made mistakes.

1

Money-Zine.com describes one of the benefits of the affiliative leadership principle as, 'The affiliative principle is thought to be most effective when morale is low' (resource 3). One team in particular expressed disinterest in the game they were involved in, a lack of motivation and at one point a kid named Scott came up to me during a game and told me he was 'bored'. All the other teams appeared to be enjoying themselves and after watching the team that didn't seem to be having a very good time I noticed that they weren't working together as a team and as a result they were losing. Using the Affiliative leadership principle I praised students, who kicked the ball well, got a goal or basically anything else they did that wasn't too bad. I noticed a positive effect in their attitude towards each other and also in their performance since they were communicating with each other and working together. This was useful for football as it got the team to work better together and their performances got better meaning that they got a greater skill set and greater affirmation from their peers about their performance.

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Two disadvantages of using the contemporary leadership principle of affiliative leadership is that poor performance can go unchecked as having lots of small teams meant that I could not keep a check on all performances at one time. I really question that the leader doesn't truly lead. Using this principle the leader generally steps back and leaves the 'team members to determine the goals and objectives of the project,' (resource 4). It makes me feel that I am not in control of the group as a leader. Is this a good thing to leave this to the team?

4

In my opinion this leadership technique is extremely valuable because the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Because the followers really like their leader, they are loyal, share information, and have high trust, all of which helps climate. The Affiliative leader gives frequent positive feedback, helping to keep everyone on course', (resource 5). This style of leading was very beneficial when it came to holding soccer games with year nines because the first year of college is always difficult and helping them form positive relationships with kids who enjoy the same things as them (soccer), makes me feel like I am helping them out in some way.

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