

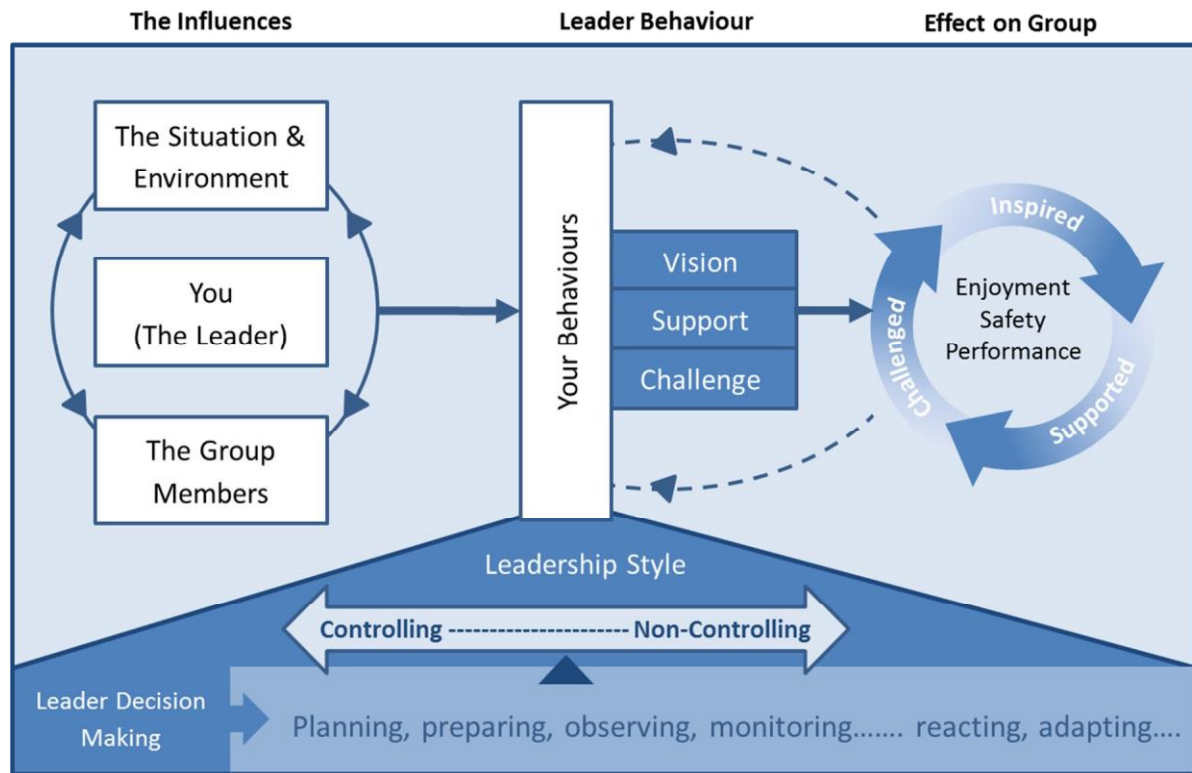
## **Leadership in the Challenging World of Paddlesports**

Where shall I go? When should I go? How fast/far should I go? What should I take? How do I ensure my group has fun yet stays safe? How can I meet my group's expectations? What happens if the weather/conditions change?

To lead in our ever changing, water-based environment poses a lot of questions for the leader; no doubt you can relate to many of the above questions and add a lot more. From each of these questions follows a decision to be made, each one of the decisions leading to a successful day out or a day that could have perhaps been better. We know good leadership is all about keeping people safe, yet it is far more than that. We want to influence and motivate our group towards communal or individual goals, we want to inspire and, of course, we want them to develop that passion for paddlesport. To do this we must have good interpersonal skills, be able to communicate, show empathy and understand all those around us. Leadership is essentially all about our behaviours; our actions are always going to be remembered more than our status or name.

So how do we do it or, more importantly, how could we do it better? What influences our behaviours and critically how should I behave? How should I answer all those questions and what style should I adopt when I am leading? British Canoeing Awarding Body has been playing with a model to help answer just those questions, and considering it may not just make us safe leaders but perhaps make us inspirational leaders. Let's have a look at it...

## British Canoeing Awarding Body Model of Leadership Principles



### Influences on Leadership Behaviour

For us to know how best to behave and then decide how best to therefore lead, we must first understand what influences our leadership behaviours. These influences are critical as it is these that dictate our behaviour; ignore them and poor results will follow. Respond and adapt to them and your paddlers will be having fun, achieving success and enjoying being led by you!

Consider these three key areas:

Note that **bold type** has been used within the text to refer to elements of the model on page 1.

### **The Situation and Environment:**

For example: the weather, water conditions/seriousness, the goals of the group, the type of task, and the social/cultural norms.

Considerations: these factors will often dictate the leader to a specific type of **required behaviour** to manage the situation. This has obvious links to safety, but can also impact on the group members' performance on the water.

### **The Group Members:**

For example: individuals' different characteristics, personality, need for achievement, need for affiliation, ability/skill and arousal/anxiety levels relative to the task in hand, attitude towards authority, preference for specific leadership behaviours.

Considerations: how do you think the group/individual's **preferred behaviour** is going to influence what you do? How do you make sure your group members get the most out of the situation? How does this link to changes in the situation and environment?

### **You (The Leader):**

For example: your personality, expertise, experience, philosophy, personal values and beliefs.

Considerations: this will be the starting point to how you **want** to lead. However, it is critical this is constantly monitored and adapted based on the other two influences to ensure your **actual behaviour** delivered to the group has considered the situation and environment, along with the group members' preferences.

## **Your Leadership Behaviour**

Your behaviour is what the group sees and experiences, it is in essence what you are as a leader and from this how successful you will be. Your behaviour must be adaptable, reactive and in a constant state of being self-monitored. This process is fed by bearing in mind the influences outlined. What underpins all of this 'adaptive' behaviour is important; this is the 'magic stardust' that supports you being effective and inspirational. We can think about this through three simple things that can be applied to leadership everywhere you go and with everyone you lead:

- Vision
- Support
- Challenge

**Vision:** Being a positive role model and aiming to inspire others; Supporting and developing the group's vision; Engendering the trust and respect of others, articulating and acting on the leader's personally held value system; Articulating a compelling vision of what is possible, thinking the best of everyone, and showing optimism and enthusiasm about what others can accomplish:

- Lead by example; behave like you want the group members to behave... care about and respect the environment, the group, the sport, fair play, other people;
- Show passion and enthusiasm for paddlesport, for the activity, for the task at hand, and for what others can/have achieved;
- Articulate, support and develop the individual's/group's vision;
- Develop a strong team attitude and spirit;
- Get the group to work together towards shared goals;
- See the best in people, think the best of people;
- Show optimism and enthusiasm about what others can achieve.

**Support:** Recognise individual differences and demonstrate concern for the development of the group members. Provide empathetic, social support in a positive atmosphere:

- Recognise, and pay attention to, individual needs, strengths and abilities;
- Treat each team member as an individual;
- Help people develop their strengths and to solve their problems;
- Create an atmosphere where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities;
- Seek/praise positives from unsuccessful outcomes;
- Provide encouragement and support to help recover from mistakes;
- Be clear about any ground rules (what should/should not be done);
- Help group members get on well together;
- Care about the group members' personal welfare/wellbeing;
- Show interest in the things the group members care about;
- Display acts of kindness;
- Openly compliment things done well;
- Praise improvements in performance;
- Reward hard work, effort, good decisions, problem solving, coping strategies, error recovery;
- Praise mainly outcomes that are the result of hard work and effort;
- Recognise achievements, visibly celebrate success - whoop, clap, thumbs up;
- Recognise and thank individuals for their contributions to the success of the group/others;
- Pass on positive feedback to others.

**Challenge:** Supporting appropriately challenging experiences; encouraging paddlers to solve their own problems; and actively involving paddlers in the decision making process:

- Understand and aim to align activity to individual motivations;
- Agree group goals (where to go, how far, how difficult, how fast to travel);

- Help individuals set appropriate levels of challenge;
- Support appropriately challenging experiences;
- Encourage paddlers to solve their own problems;
- Actively involve paddlers in the decision making process.

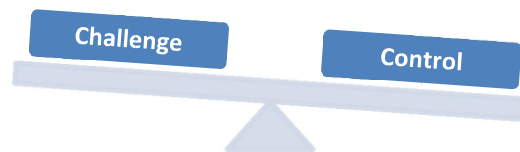
## Leadership Style

The amount of control that you choose to maintain/hand over within your leadership style is a critical element for you to consider. Different leadership styles give the leader/participants varying levels of control within the decision making process. The choice should be based on the influences (i.e. the **Situation and Environment**, the **Group Members**, and **You, the Leader**) and by paying attention to the effects (i.e. the **Group's Enjoyment, Safety and Performance**).

We can consider it as a spectrum:



Research suggests that non-controlling leadership behaviours result in improved performance and psychological wellbeing. This empowering and supportive style ensures that the group members are central to, and actively involved in, the process. If controlling behaviours are felt necessary for safety reasons or because they are the preferred leadership style of the group, members check to ensure you have not set the challenge too high. Can you manipulate the level of challenge in order that you can hand over more control to the group members? Can you challenge the individual through the use of non-controlling behaviours, rather than stretching their skills through higher risk activities? Can you find the balance?



Controlling ←	→ Non-controlling
Leader has control over decisions with little input from group.	Members participate in the decision making process.
Typical Behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prescriptive</li> <li>- Makes independent decisions without group members' involvement</li> <li>- Does not explain actions</li> <li>- Little compromise</li> <li>- Speaks and presents ideas with authority</li> <li>- Expects compliance</li> <li>- Indifferent to people's feelings or level of enjoyment</li> <li>- Attempts to control group members' behaviour and activity</li> </ul>	Typical Behaviour: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asks for group member opinions</li> <li>- Gets group approval on important matters</li> <li>- Let's group members make own decisions/share in the decision-making process</li> <li>- Encourages group members to make suggestions</li> <li>- Let's group set own goals</li> <li>- Gives group members space to try their own way</li> <li>- Allows group members to work at own speed</li> <li>- See the merits of others' ideas when they differ from the Leader's</li> <li>- Encourages people to find their own solutions</li> <li>- Encourages people to find their own learning from mistakes</li> <li>- Includes group members in the risk management decisions</li> </ul>

## Leader Decision Making

Our decisions are crucial and are happening all the time while we are leading; when planning, doing and reflecting these decisions should be informed by the influences, the behaviour and the effect. Constantly observe and monitor to feed these decisions and always be prepared to react and then adapt when out leading based on these decisions. This will require some well thought through decisions, and some quick decisions in time pressured situations.

## Planning and Preparation (information gathering, decision making, communication)

Within the planning of a trip, aim to match the trip/location/conditions, etc. to the group's aims, aspirations, enjoyment and safety. To find the right balance it is important to consider the influencing factors. For example:

Situation and Environment - gather comprehensive information on the:

- Weather/water conditions;
- Venue(s) you plan to use;
- Goals of the group;
- Character/nature of the trip (e.g. length, seriousness).

The Group Members - gather comprehensive information on the:

- Group/individual's personalities, aspirations, motivations and expectations;
- Group/individual's abilities and past experiences.

The ability to access and interpret a range of weather forecasts (e.g. wind, temperature, visibility and rainfall), information on river levels, tidal information (e.g. height, flow) is critical to the leader's skill set. Accurate interpretation of this information is required to plan where to go and what to take, it will also provide foresight into what should be expected and will have a significant impact on the overall enjoyment, safety and quality of the trip.

Considering the influences of the situation and environment, plan the journey (venue, difficulty, length, etc.) so that you meet the individual/group needs and are able to balance the level of challenge with an appropriate level of control.

You may also need to plan alternatives to deal with predictable/changeable factors that may compromise participants' safety, enjoyment or learning (e.g. alternative venues, activities or leadership style).

### **Once on the Water:**

#### **(Information gathering, observation, monitoring, reacting, adapting):**

- Pay attention to the members' response to the activity; the social environment, the physical environment and your leadership style;



- Monitor and pay attention to the triggers that help you read the group members' response to the situation and their performance (e.g. technical, tactical, physiological, psychological);
- Keep a vigilant and watchful eye on the conditions and group response;
- Adapt your level of control to suit the situation;
- Match the level of challenge to the level of the group members;
- Alter plans due to unforeseen events;
- Respond appropriately when outcomes are not as desired.

### **Off the Water:**

- Reflect to inform future decisions.

### **The Effect...**

To know if our behaviour is inspirational, that our style is appropriate and that the group are getting what they want, then we have to monitor the effect we are having. This is simple...

**Are the group enjoying the experience?**

**Is their performance meeting the demands required of it?**

**Is safety being managed appropriately?**

By constantly asking yourself these questions, then adapting accordingly will ensure great leadership. How do you adapt – well go back to the influences, check the vision, challenge and support is in place and then consider the style being used. The need for some skilful balancing!

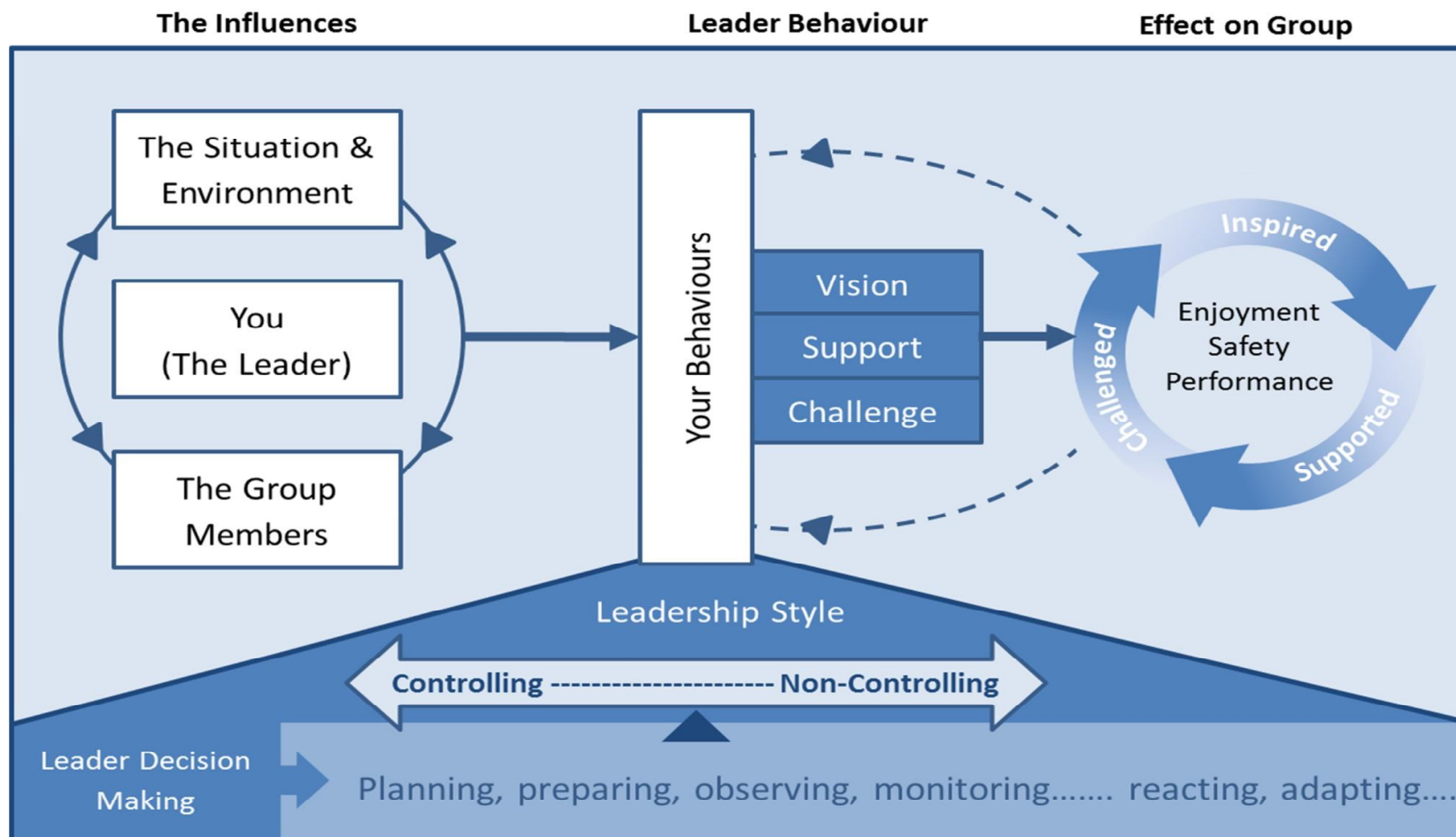
So hopefully the challenging world of paddlesport leadership might just become a little easier to understand. More importantly, our behaviours and actions that we will always be remembered by will be inspirational to those we lead.

### **Further Reading**

If you have enjoyed this article, you may be interested in reading further about some of the theories that have been used to underpin it:

- Transformational Leadership;
- Multi-dimensional Model of Leadership;
- Achievement Goal Theory.

## British Canoeing Awarding Body Model of Leadership Principles



## **Background Theory**

### **Introduction**

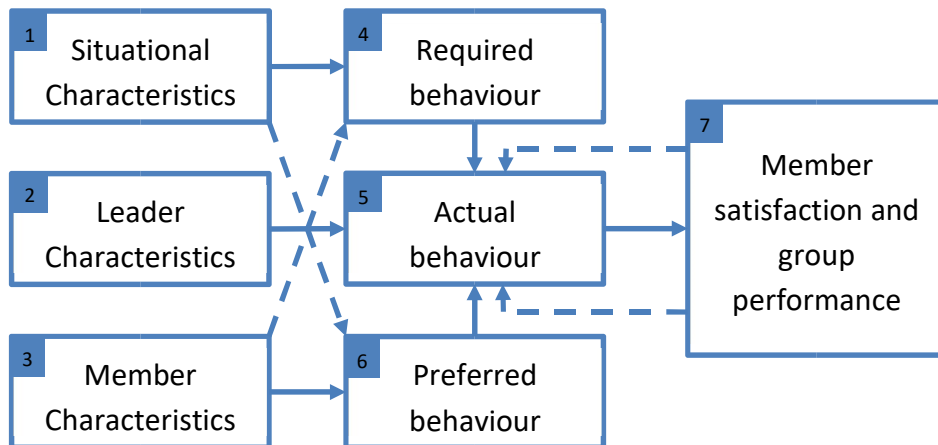
There are many different theories and models of leadership that have been developed over the years. For example, mediational model of leadership (Smith & Smoll, 1984), the motivational model of the coach athlete relationship (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003), coach-created motivational climate (Duda & Balaguer, 1999), and coaching efficacy (Feltz et al., 1999). Historically, one of the most influential models of leadership in sport is the multi-dimensional model of leadership (MML) (Chelladurai, 1978, 1990) and, more recently, transformational leadership behaviour (TLB) (Bass, 1985) has become influential within the sport domain.

At British Canoeing Awarding Body we have chosen to underpin our leadership principles by the MML and TLB. This document will provide some background to the theories and highlight how we have integrated and applied the key principles of these theories into the leadership content promoted within the British Canoeing Awarding Body Leadership Awards.

We feel these two background theories support us in developing inspirational and safe leaders, whose groups should enjoy being led by them and are able to perform well under their leadership. This, in turn, supporting our underpinning core values.

### **Multidimensional Model of Leadership (MML)**

The Multi-dimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai, 1978, 1990) has a strong influence within our leadership principles (see fig. 1). The model is a synthesis and reconciliation of other models from business and industry. It has an extensive research base, has had a significant influence in shaping the understanding of leadership in sport and is considered both relevant and useful today.



**Fig. 1. Chelladurai (1978) - Multidimensional Model of Leadership**

Tenenbaum, G., & Eklund, R. (2007). Handbook of Sport Psychology, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York: Wiley. p117.

MML is embed within the Social Cognitive domain (i.e. this holds that we learn by observing others within the context of social interactions and experiences). The model highlights some key factors to be considered within leadership. These include:

- The situational characteristics (box 1);
- The leader's individual characteristics (box 2);
- The group member characteristics (box 3).

These three factors combine to determine the optimum leader behaviours (box 5) to be displayed in order to be effective (box 7).

A further contribution that the MML made to the leadership literature was the development of the congruence hypothesis. This hypothesis predicts that the greater the similarity (congruence) between required behaviour and actual behaviour leads to enhanced performance, whilst the greater the congruence between actual and athlete preferred behaviours leads to greater athlete satisfaction.

Whilst the MML has made a significant contribution to the literature, there are several limitations that need to be acknowledged; there is very little in the way of guidance with regards to how exactly leader/member/situational characteristics impact on effectiveness. There is also very little direction with regard to what exactly the required behaviour is. The model is supported by the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS); this was developed in conjunction with the MML to enable the measurement of leadership behaviours and tests the constructs of the model. It is worth noting that the behaviours captured within the LSS are fairly narrow in scope. Given some of the limitation range of leader behaviours identified within MML, we have chosen to supplement our content with transformational leadership; this identifies a broader range of arguably more pertinent and important behaviours.

It is also worth mentioning that, at one point, Chelladurai added transformational leadership to his MML model. This addition has been challenged as it does not make conceptual sense and has led to confusion in the literature. We have based our work on the initial MML and have linked transformational leadership differently to Chelladurai. Those wishing to explore MML further are advised to refer to earlier literature that uses Chelladurai's model, as illustrated in figure 1.

### **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership specifies leader behaviours that aim to get the best out of those being led and to enhance follower motivation. It is primarily a behavioural approach to leadership (i.e. if you behave this way you can become transformational). The original proponents of transformational leadership specified that transformational leadership would have universally positive effects on followers. The vast range of research evidence to date would seem to support this view. A major strength of the transformational approach is that it identifies and theoretically develops the behaviours that leaders ought to display to be effective.

**“Transformational leadership takes place when leaders go beyond their own self-interests and inspire, encourage, and stimulate others to exceed minimally expected standards” (Beauchamp, 2014)**

Whilst there is wide agreement in the positive effects of transformational leadership, there is not such consensus regarding how it is operationalised, that is what the specific behaviours are that make up transformational leadership. A number of researchers have developed conceptual models of transformational leadership behaviours. We have chosen to use a sport specific model by Arthur and colleagues (developed from the early work of Bass). We feel that this encompasses transformational leadership in a way that fits paddlesport leadership and can be used to support the education and development of paddlesport leaders.

Arthur and colleagues refined the behaviours of transformational leadership to reflect the provision of three core components; vision, support and challenge. That is, the transformational leader behaviours provide their followers with vision, support and challenge:

1. Vision – creating an inspirational vision of the future;
2. Support – providing the necessary support to achieve the vision;
3. Challenge – providing the challenge to achieve the vision.

A major limitation of the theory is that it pretty much ignores situational and group member differences/influences. This is why we have chosen to link transformational leadership with MML. The MML identifies situational and follower characteristics as important influences in the leadership process but only identified a limited range of leader behaviours, whereas TLB identifies a broader range of arguably more pertinent/important leader behaviours.

More detail to this work by Arthur and colleagues can be represented through the following table:

	<b>Leader Behaviours</b>	<b>Predicted Result</b>
Inspirational Motivation	Developing and articulating a positive vision of the future, inspiring others to achieve that vision, and expressing belief in followers that they can achieve the vision	<b>Vision</b>  Performers having an inspirational vision of the future
Appropriate Role Modelling	Behaviour by the leader that sets an example for others to follow which is consistent with the values that the leader/organisation espouses	
Foster acceptance of group goals	Behaviour by the leader aimed at promoting cooperation among followers, getting them to work together towards a common goal, and developing teamwork	
Individual consideration	Behaviour by the leader that recognises individual differences and demonstrates concern for the development of followers	<b>Support</b>  Performers having the necessary support to achieve the vision
Contingent Reward	Provision of positive reinforcement to followers in return for appropriate follower behaviour	
Intellectual Stimulation	Behaviour by the leader that challenges followers to re-examine old problems in new ways	<b>Challenge</b>



High Performance Expectations	Behaviour by the leader that demonstrates his or her expectations for excellence in followers	Performers being challenged to achieve their vision
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Arthur, C. A., Hardy, L., & Woodman, T. (2012). Realising the Olympic dream: Vision, Support and Challenge. **Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 1-8.**

### Useful Resources to Support Theoretical Understanding

A 10-minute YouTube clip that explains the Multi-dimensional Model of Leadership. It is pitched at 'A' Level PE students and uses sports (and outdoor) examples:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MiN6ycsgWmw>

Transformational Leadership YouTube clip 43-minutes – Calum Arthur:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tqr5w5Bn5n0>

Chelladurai, P. & Saleh, S.D. (1980) Dimensions of Leader Behaviour in Sports: Development of a Leadership Scale. Journal of Sport Psychology 2(1), Page(s): 34-45. Available from:

[https://uwwebpro.uwinnipeg.ca/faculty/pass/kah/faculty/sterichowparrott/Leadership/http://www.humankinetics.com\\_eJournalMedia\\_pdfs\\_8585.pdf.pdf](https://uwwebpro.uwinnipeg.ca/faculty/pass/kah/faculty/sterichowparrott/Leadership/http://www.humankinetics.com_eJournalMedia_pdfs_8585.pdf.pdf)

LSS Questionnaire available from:

[http://sportpsych.mcgill.ca/pdf/coaching/Leadership\\_Scale\\_for\\_Sports%20LSS\\_.pdf](http://sportpsych.mcgill.ca/pdf/coaching/Leadership_Scale_for_Sports%20LSS_.pdf)

Arthur, C. A. & Lynn, A. (2015). Transformational Leadership in Coaching. In R. Thelwell, C. Harwood, & I. Greenlees (eds.), The Psychology of Coaches: A Contemporary Review. Routledge.