

## Insight Twelve

### Recalibrating my leadership style

*Most people have evolved their own, authentic leadership style. Changes in roles or organisations are typical triggers to refine or recalibrate specific aspects.*



Irina joined a global business after building her career as specialised consultant. She had become used to leading in a collegiate but spontaneous way with autonomous experts who needed little direction. She now found herself in charge of several large teams who were looking for something completely different. They wanted clarity and orchestration; they also needed a demanding leadership style and close monitoring in order to raise performance standards. Irina and her coach agreed that this would need to be made very explicit at first until the teams' performance was at an acceptable level. As time went by, Irina was able to trust her people more and give them more autonomy, returning to most of her preferred leadership style, but still emphasising the orchestration and planning of activities.

Hamid is a national of an Arabian Gulf state with a higher degree obtained in the UK, and fluent English. As commercial director, he had seven managers in his team, some based in the Gulf and others in the Netherlands. The majority were Dutch nationals - also fluent English speakers. When he met his coach he described how incredibly difficult he found it to get people to follow his instructions and how, sometimes, the message did not seem to get through at all. His coach asked him to draft an email about a current situation requiring quick action from one of his direct reports. It began with a preamble about the weekend, his family and other pleasantries. It then asked questions in an ultra-polite, elliptical way. The coach challenged him to re-write it and send it in a very direct style with no pleasantries. Back came an immediate and positive response. Hamid then adopted the same brisk, no-nonsense style to meetings and phone calls with his Dutch colleagues. The ultimate test of the style change was annual performance reviews!

