

2. “It’s an abuse of power to use it only for your own ends. To be ethical as a leader you need to teach others how to lead. You will be really strong when you make your followers strong. To do this, encourage them to think critically and creatively. You can only accomplish this by developing them to be independent and to question your views.”

The paradox was not lost on Chris. In order for her subordinates to be strong, she had to be open enough to solicit and learn from their criticisms of her style and her point of view. Together she and Mary used *tough love* (Chris’ term) as a framework for coaching. They drew skills from a study on forceful and enabling leadership. A leader who is too forceful is insensitive and callous. A leader who accommodates too easily is nice to people at the expense of the work. One who is both forceful and enabling makes tough calls when necessary—even when it affects people adversely—but is also compassionate and responds to people’s needs and feelings.

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Practicing these tough love skills began to break down Chris’ either/or mentality and she learned to see more nuances. Before, she had seen weakness as the only alternative to strength. Now she saw the mutual strength in cooperation. She still reverted to her old win/lose tactics, though, when she negotiated with vendors. Mary and Chris rehearsed with Fisher and Ury’s *Getting to Yes* audiotapes to help Chris focus on principles (“What is your objective in pushing for this option?”) instead of positions (“No, we’ve got to do it this way”). They laughed aloud at the program’s subtitle: “How to Negotiate Agreement Without Giving In.”

Coaching Style Eight

With all Enneagram styles, you can earn trust quickly when you acknowledge and validate their worldview. One way to do this is to use language familiar to your clients. We’ve suggested, for example, that you match Fives early in the coaching process by using intellectual words. With Twos you need to start with relational language. Eights can be brusque, tough, somewhat loud, what-you-see-is-what-you-get people. They also have tender hearts, sometimes carefully hidden. You want to show Eights the same consideration that you would with any client. But if you get too flowery or long-winded or act intimidated, they may see you as weak. Then you aren’t as likely to develop the deep rapport that leads to transformational coaching.

There is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many.

Emerson

Buddy Halstrom called Mary and said, “I need someone to teach my people how to stand up to me.” Mary guessed he might be an Eight. Buddy’s trusted

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aide had told him people on his team found him too aggressive, controlling, and intimidating. Consequently, when he confronted them, they tended to beat around the bush. Buddy knew he could intimidate people. In fact, he sometimes reveled in that. But he didn't realize how much his own behavior invited the response he most despised. He wanted them to "tell it like it is!" Yet he pushed and challenged everyone, inviting them to "waffle," as he called it. Then he would see them as "wimps" and reassure himself that his view of the world was accurate: "I have to be strong. There's nobody else."

Chris Johnson loved getting the teddy bear with teeth. Buddy had a similar reaction after Mary talked to his team and reported back: "People shrivel up like raisins in your presence." He grinned at that. He looked a lot more uncomfortable when he shook her hand as she was leaving, looked her directly in the eye, and said, "Thank you for caring." He saw that she knew him and liked him just the way he was. Paradoxically, feeling known and appreciated as we are allows us to envision changing. When we don't have to defend ourselves, anything becomes possible.

Eights who seek coaching will most likely be locked into a power-seeking, war mentality. As you bring out their best, they will become more compassionate and just.

Preoccupied with Power

Not everyone relishes being in charge, but Eights usually do. They are natural leaders. They prefer to be on top, in control, and making things happen the way they want them to happen. They gravitate toward action, power, and aggression. Their style might be called Euclidian: "The shortest distance between two points is a straight line." In-the-box Eights don't finesse, they don't schmooze, they don't ask. In business, they typically claim power and use it directly, without worrying whether people like it or not. They don't pussyfoot around, and *wimp* is their term of ultimate scorn. The Eight's power is visible, like a holstered gun in a western movie. They are not fond of taking prisoners. Their posture is frequently "in your face," and their speech direct, blunt, clear, and loud.

Eights can contaminate their love of power with a suspicion that others are not handling power well. They are sensitive to all forms of power: information, relationships, expertise, money, talent, and energy. If anyone on their team (read: under their command) abuses any form of power, they take it as a personal betrayal and deal with the issue quickly and forthrightly. Typically, they only share information if it won't weaken their power base. They demand more information than most styles. Because they experience themselves as larger than life, they

Pay attention to these four habits of in-the-box Eights:

Is preoccupied with power

Uses toggle-switch thinking

Confronts as search for truth

Fails to distinguish revenge from justice