The definition of leadership continuously evolves, as each situation requires a different leader- the characterization of a leader thus changes. Subsequently, the question becomes what makes a leader? There is no strict formula or academic classes that can automatically create a leader, rather leaders are a culmination of experiences and knowledge gathered, an attitude for the daring and a personality that inspires. Upon reading Eddie Goldenberg’s, *The Way it Works*, we discover former Prime Minister of Canada Jean Chrétien’s leadership traits, styles and decision-making techniques. Within the book we learn how the former Prime Minister leadership parallels these characteristics.

To evaluate the numerous leadership techniques utilized during his time as Prime Minister, House and Mitchell’s four leadership styles, can be used to illustrate how leaders can ideally choose the style depending on the situational requirements.

The first is the supportive leadership where the leader considers the needs of the follower by showing concern for employee welfare and creating a friendly working environment. Jean Chrétien demonstrated this style during his speech with his Ministers and Deputy Ministers and their working relationship with the public servants. Chrétien told the deputy ministers, as he had told the Cabinet at its first meeting the previous day, that he had learned from his experience in the Pearson and Trudeau Cabinets that governments only succeed when they trust the public service, and when the politicians and the public servants respect one another’s roles, and then work seamlessly together. By using the supportive leader style, Chrétien was attempting to develop an engaged, enthusiastic and trusting environment. As eloquently indicated by Goldenberg, The success or failure of a government is dependent to a great extent on the quality and cohesiveness of the management team.

The second style is the directive leadership style, which tells followers, what needs to be done and gives appropriate guidance along the way. The goal is to increase the follower's sense of security and control. Chrétien established this in the selection of his Ministers. He wanted them to be autonomous and seek assistance only when required. A Prime Minister has a lot of decisions to make all the time, and must know how to delegate and create and efficient team. Recalling a conversation with Pierre Trudeau, Jean Chrétien aimed to develop a team of Ministers who required little advice and worked hard at their own portfolios. “, “Jean, are you mad at me? You haven’t called or asked to see me in a year.” He replied, “No, I’m not mad at you. I’m just doing my job, and presume if you have problems with my work, you will call me.” Trudeau responded, “I wish I had more ministers like you”. Chrétien knew the role and decision making of the Prime Minister was to look at the big picture with the Ministers focusing on the details.

The next style identified by House and Mitchell is the participative leader, when the leader consults with followers and take followers ideas into account when making decisions and/or taking particular actions. This approach is best when the followers are experts and their input is needed and has a desire to be heard.  Throughout Chrétien’s tenure, he valued all his colleagues’ expert opinions. While the input of Prime Minister is definitive, by surrounding himself with great colleagues, he could rely on their input as professional. This is evident in his relationship with Eddie Goldenberg, his Senior Policy Advisor. From asking Goldenberg to assist in the production of countless speeches, to heading the negotiation of the softwood lumber dispute with the US, to informing him of more personal matters- Goldenberg became a sounding board and confidant. This leadership style benefited Chrétien when there was a need to creatively solve complex problems; one of the best ways to get such work done is through people and asking them for their suggestions.

Finally, there is the Achievement-oriented leadership where leaders set challenging goals, both in work and in self-improvement The leader expects high performance from the followers and shows them faith in their capabilities to succeed. Yet again, Chrétien demonstrated this leadership style throughout his tenure, one example being Stéphane Dion’s assignment in the Clarity Act. Chrétien trusted and respected Dion and knew the importance of drafting the bill could be handled appropriately in Dion’s capable hands. He knew the stakes were high for all of Canada. Against the conventional wisdom and the private views of many of Cabinet colleagues, Dion drafted the Clarity Act-, which became law in June 2000. By utilizing achievement-based leadership, Chrétien showed confidence in those he chose to lead projects.

A quality leader will utilize the above leadership styles and adapt them to the situations. There is no simple equation for success in leading. Rather it is adapting and evolving to the challenge that can lead to a more positive outcome. Mistakes are made, as Chrétien learned a number of times during his tenure, such as his appointment of George Radwanski as privacy commissioner who later misused his power. However, through these experiences and the knowledge gathered future decisions are improved. Chrétien recognized that, the power of Prime Minister requires many leadership styles, cognizant or not, he evoked all of the various styles- however; it was his characteristic of pushing limits that also showed true leadership. His risk taking was calculated- but nonetheless revolutionary. From the moment he first stepped into the political circle Chrétien strategized. While respecting his Ministers and the Canadian public he followed his instincts, and pushed Canada into new frontiers. From, his leadership of successfully avoiding the separation of Quebec from Canada, to the Clarity Act, September 11th 2001, the softwood lumber negotiations, and Canada’s educational reform, Chrétien faced many difficult challenges. However, the great leaders take those calculated risks and push the boundaries. When thinking of Jean Chrétien leadership, a quote from another president effectively illustrates his time as Prime Minister.

*It's not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or when the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worth cause; who at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat.* Theodore Roosevelt

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