Situational Leadership:
The Who, What, Where, When and Why

Brought to you by...

Maya Ardon
and
Kip Sorgen
Managers vs. Leaders

“Not all leaders are managers, nor are all managers leaders.”

- Managers are persons whose influence on others is limited to the appointed managerial authority of their positions.

- Leaders are persons with power who can influence others to perform actions beyond managerial authority.

Characteristics of a good leader

- Knowledgeable
- Good teacher
- Clear sense of mission or objectives
- Feedback designed to enhance performance
- Get "the best" out of their people (motivator)
- Utilize positive discipline
  - Timely
  - Focus on performance (not personality)
  - Be specific (avoid generalities)
  - Keep it private

Situational Leadership

- Focuses on leadership in situation
- As situations change, different styles become appropriate
- To be an effective leader requires that an individual adapt his/her style to the demands of different situations
- Situational leadership suggests that leaders should vary their behavior in order to meet the changing needs of their followers
- Adapting to the readiness of followers is crucial

Leadership Styles and Behavior

Components of Situational Leadership

- Two types of leader behavior
  - Directive of Task
  - Support of Relationship

- Two types of follower readiness
  - Ability – Does one have the capacity
  - Willingness – Does one have the desire

Directive Behavior

Amount of guidance required

- Extent to which the leader structures the task and provides oversight
- Assist group members in goal accomplishment by giving directions, establishing goals and methods of evaluation, setting timelines, defining roles, and showing how the goals are to be achieved
- Tend to clarify using one-way communication

Supportive Behavior

Amount of support required

- Helps group members feel comfortable

- Involves two-way communication and responses that show social and emotional support to others

- Demands clarity from the leader and good listening skills.

Leadership Styles and Behavior

Source: Adapted from Paul Hersey, Situational Selling (Escondido, CA: Center for Leadership Studies, 1985), p. 19.
Telling

- The leader defines the roles and routines and tells the followers what, how, when, and where to do the task and then supervises them carefully.
- Leader focuses communication on goal achievement and spends a smaller amount of time using supportive behaviors.

Selling

- The leader provides both directive and supportive behavior
- Leader focuses communication on both goal achievement and maintenance of subordinates’ socio-emotional needs
- Giving encouragement and soliciting followers input
- Still requires the leader make the final decision of the what and how of goal accomplishment.

Participating

- Shared decision making with followers, focused on facilitation and support
- Leader does not focus exclusively on goals but uses supportive behaviors that bring out the followers' skills around the task to be accomplished
- Give followers control for day to day decisions but remains available to facilitate problem solving

Delegating

- Lessens involvement in planning, control of details and goal clarification
- Offers less task input and social support, facilitating followers confidence and motivation in reference to the task
- After agreeing on the definition of what they are to do, this style lets followers take responsibility for getting the job done the way they see fit.

Readiness of Followers

- The extent to which the follower has the ability and willingness to perform a specific task
- Not a personal trait
- Varies with the job
- Different combinations of ability and willingness

As people grow in their readiness, the action they need from the leader changes.

Follower Readiness as it relates to Leadership Styles

**Applying Leadership Styles**

- **Participating** works best (followers are able to do the job but require emotional support)
- **Delegating** works best (followers are able to do the job, and know how to go about it)
- **Selling** works best (followers are neither willing nor able to do the job)
- **Telling** works best (followers are willing to do the job, but don’t know how to do it)

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Applying Theory to Practice

Now it’s your turn!
How to improve your leadership skills...

- **Skill 1 - Think Like a Leader**
  - identify what is happening
  - explain why it is happening
  - decide what you are going to do about it

- **Skill 2 - Use an appropriate leadership style**
  - leaders usually fit their style to the situation
  - different leadership styles are appropriate to different situations

- **Skill 3 - Pick the right leadership situation**
  - gravitate toward leadership situations that fit your favored leadership style

How to improve your leadership skills...

- **Skill 4 – Build your power base**
  - bolster your leadership potential by enhancing your authority (increasing your power)

- **Skill 5 – Exercise better judgment**
  - decisiveness and good judgment are important leadership traits.

- **Skill 6 – Improve leadership traits and skills**
  - exhibit self-confidence
  - display honesty and integrity
  - increase your knowledge of the organization

References


