Situational Leadership

Source: Ken Blanchard & Paul Hersey
Presented By: The Cumberland Group
Overview

- What is Situational Leadership?
- Leadership Model History
- Why is it popular among managers?
- Leadership Behaviors & Styles
- Development Levels
- Practical Examples and Application
What is Situational Leadership?

- This is a term that can be applied generically to a style of leadership, but that also refers to a recognized, and useful, leadership model.

- In simple terms, a situational leader is one who can adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation.
Leadership Model History

- Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey created a model for Situational Leadership in the late 1960's that allows you to analyze the needs of the situation you're dealing with, and then adopt the most appropriate leadership style.
Why is it popular?

- It's proved popular with managers over the years because it passes the two basic tests of such models: it's simple to understand, and it works in most environments for most people.

- The model doesn't just apply to people in leadership or management positions: we all lead others at work and at home.
Leadership Behavior

Blanchard and Hersey characterized leadership style in terms of the amount of direction and of support that the leader gives to his or her followers, and so created a simple grid.

- **S1: Directing**
  - Structure, Control, Supervise
  - For people who have:
    - Low Competence
    - High Commitment
    - Unable and Unwilling and/or Insecure

- **S2: Coaching**
  - Direct and Support
  - For people who have:
    - Some Competence
    - Some Commitment
    - Unable but Willing and/or Motivated

- **S3: Supporting**
  - Praise, Listen, Facilitate
  - For people who have:
    - High Competence
    - Variable Commitment
    - Able but Unwilling or Insecure

- **S4: Delegating**
  - Turning over responsibility for day-to-day decision making
  - For people who have:
    - High Competence
    - High Commitment
    - Able and Willing and/or Motivated
S1: Directing

- Directing Leaders define the roles and tasks of the 'follower', and supervise them closely.

- Decisions are made by the leader and announced, so communication is largely one-way.

Structure, Control and Supervise
S2: Coaching

- Coaching Leaders still define roles and tasks, but seeks ideas and suggestions from the follower.

- Decisions remain the leader's prerogative, but communication is much more two-way.
S3: Supporting

- Leaders pass day-to-day decisions, such as task allocation and processes, to the follower.

- The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the follower.

Praise, Listen and Facilitate
S4: Delegating

- Delegating Leaders are still involved in decisions and problem-solving, but control is with the follower.

- The follower decides when and how the leader will be involved.

*Turning over responsibility for day-to-day decision making*
Finding The Right Style

- Effective leaders are versatile in being able to move around the grid according to the situation, so there is no one right style.

- However, we tend to have a preferred style, and in applying Situational Leadership you need to know which one that is for you.
Developmental Level: The Follower

- Clearly the right leadership style will depend very much on the person being led - the follower.

- The leader's style should be driven by the Competence and Commitment of the follower based on four levels:
D4: High Competence - High Commitment

- Experienced at the job, and comfortable with their own ability to do it well. May even be more skilled than the leader.

Able and Willing and/or Motivated
D3: High Competence - Variable Commitment

- Experienced and capable, but may lack the confidence to go it alone, or the motivation to do it well / quickly
D2: Some Competence - Low Commitment

- May have some relevant skills, but won't be able to do the job without help. The task or the situation may be new to them.

Unable but Willing and/or Motivated
D1: Low Competence - Low Commitment

- Generally lacking the specific skills required for the job in hand, and lacks any confidence and/or motivation to tackle it.

Unable and Unwilling and/or Insecure
Development Levels are Situational

- I might be generally skilled, confident and motivated in my job, but would still drop into Level D1 when faced, say, with a task requiring skills I don't possess.

- For example, lots of managers are D4 when dealing with the day-to-day running of their department, but move to D1 or D2 when dealing with a sensitive employee issue.
Where is this going?

- Blanchard and Hersey said that the Leadership Style (S1 - S4) of the leader must correspond to the Development level (D1 - D4) of the follower - and it's the leader who adapts.
Examples: New Employee

- A new person joins your team and you're asked to help them through the first few days.

- You sit them in front of a PC, tell them they need to create login accounts on various tools, and push off to a meeting. They're at level D1, and you've adopted S4.

- Everyone loses because the new person feels helpless and unmotivated, and they don't complete the deliverable.
Examples: Colleague

- You're handing over to an experienced colleague before you leave for a holiday.
- You've listed all the tasks that need to be done, and a set of instructions on how to carry out each one.
- They're at level D4, and you've adopted S1. The work will probably get done, but not the way you expected, and your colleague despises you for treating them like an idiot.
Appropriate Response

- **New Employee:** Leave detailed instructions and a checklist for the new person, and they'll thank you for it.
  - Leadership Style – S1 : Development Level – D1

- **Colleague:** Give a quick chat and a few notes before you go on holiday, and everything will be fine.
  - Leadership Style – S4 : Development Level – D4
Leadership Style & Development

- By adopting the right style to suit the follower's development level, work gets done, relationships are built up, and most importantly, the follower's development level will rise to D4, to everyone's benefit.
Situational Leadership Grid

S3: Supporting
Praise, Listen, Facilitate

For people who have/are:
• High Competence
• Variable Commitment
• Able but Unwilling or Insecure

S2: Coaching
Direct and Support

For people who have/are:
• Some Competence
• Some Commitment
• Unable but Willing and/or Motivated

S4: Delegating
Turning over Responsibility for Day-to-Day Decision Making

For people who have/are:
• High Competence
• High Commitment
• Able and Willing and/or Motivated

S1: Directing
Structure, Control, Supervise

For people who have/are:
• Low Competence
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