

Lesson Three: **Discovering Your Path To Mastery of** **Situational Leadership**



- **Directive Style**
- **Guiding Style**
- **Supportive Style**
- **Delegative Style**

Learning Outcomes Desired: Help leaders avoid over or under leading individuals or groups they lead by being able to assess readiness of follower(s) to do a task and choosing the appropriate leadership style that matches. Able to ask the right probing questions to assess task readiness level.

Key Concepts:

1. Four leadership styles to use in various situations.
2. Four readiness levels of follower(s) based on ability/skill and motivation/will.
3. Probing questions to ask to determines task readiness.
4. Results of over or under leading individuals or groups.

Questions You Will Be Able To Answer

- What are the four styles of leadership in the Situational Leadership Model?
- When do you use each leadership style?
- How would you describe task readiness level: 1, 2, 3, & 4?
- What are the results of over or under leading?

Introduction

As leaders, do you think there is a difference between being busy and being effective? What's the difference?

Leaders put in a lot of hours to help their groups be successful. Some are less effective than others. Some have poorer results working with people. There is a reason for this. The focus of this lesson on Situational Leadership is to address this difference. It is important for you to know that good leaders are not born this way. You need to know what leadership is and skills needed. You will develop leadership skills for any situation you find yourself in. It will provide you a common sense logical model you can use to be effective either on the job or off the job.

Exercise 1

Before we get started with the lesson, let's do a short exercise. Think of one person in your past that you saw as an effective leader. Jot down on a sheet of paper some of the things he/she did to be an effective leader.

Exercise 2

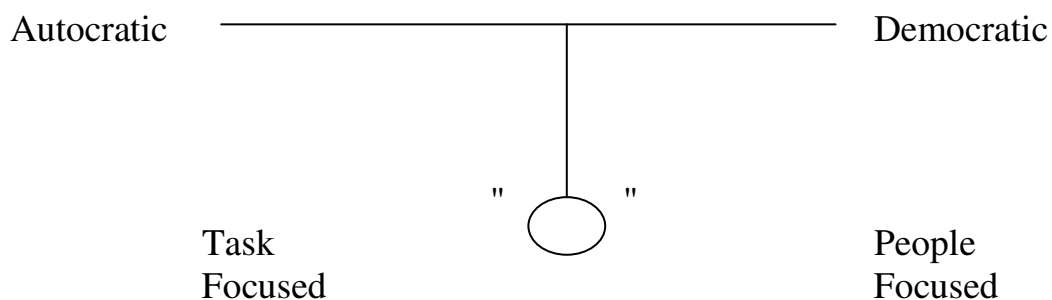
Now, think of two different situations in your past. One where you were over led by a leader and one where you were under led. Jot down on a sheet of paper how it made for feel.

What Is Leadership?

Let us begin with a brief overview of leadership and how concepts about it have evolved. How would you define the term leadership? Most efforts to define it can be boiled down to "ability to achieve things through others." Leaders are able to influence. Willing to take a risk. Their influencing may or may not work. Think of people you perceive to be leaders. Do they attempt to influence?

Much research has taken place in the past that has resulted in the evolution of leadership theory. About forty years ago, an Ohio State study was conducted to identify what made people effective leaders. What leadership style could get more productivity from their employees? Up to this time, a theory had been used that described managers on a horizontal scale called the "Traits Model." Autocratic was on one end and Democratic on the other end.

TRAITS MODEL



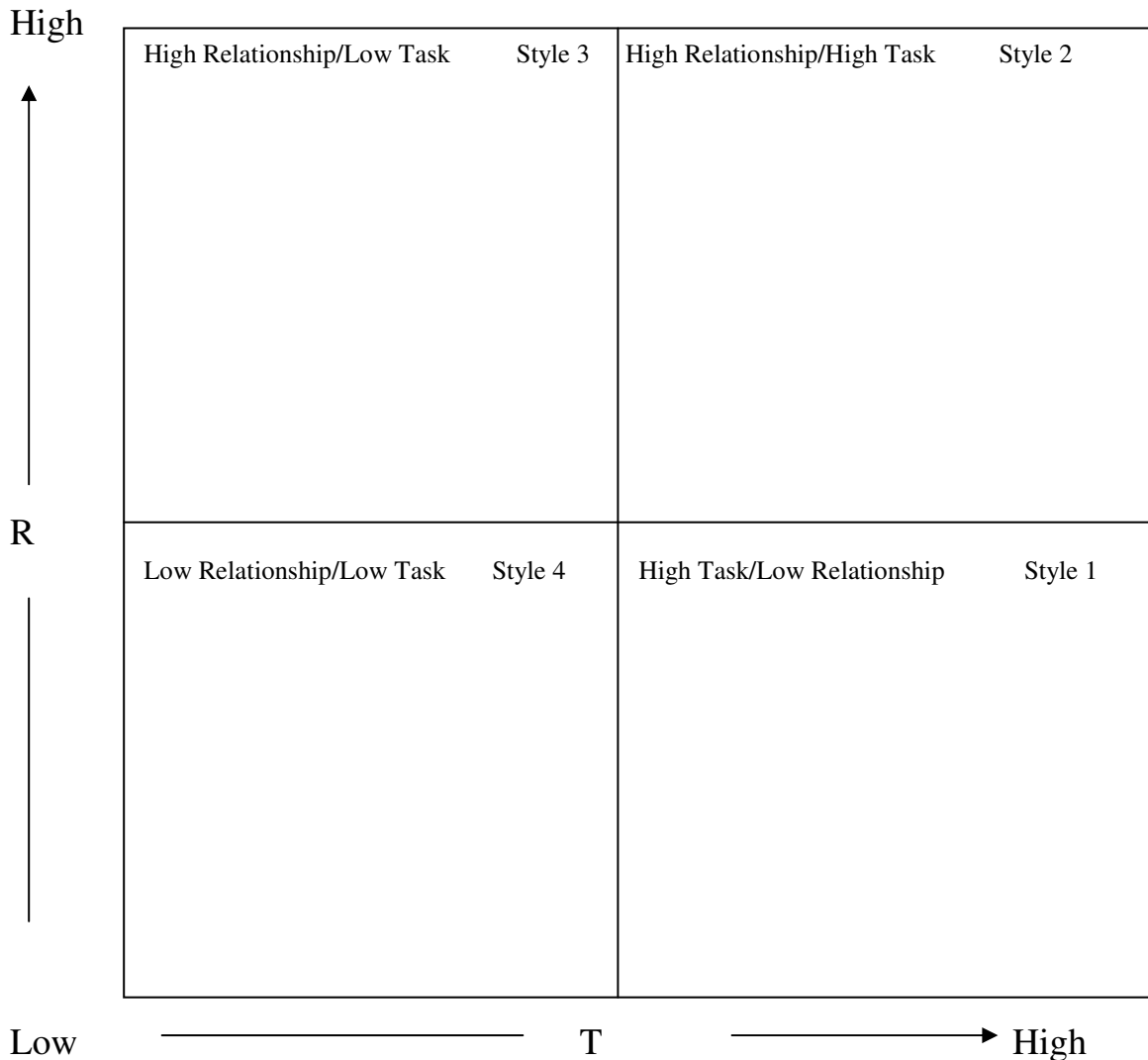
Democratic leaders spent more time on relationship building behavior with the "people" they led. Those who were Autocratic were productivity oriented and devoted most of their time and energy to "task" and being directive - telling followers what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. And yet others were somewhere between being somewhat directive while still being somewhat supportive. The people at Ohio State said this model was not complete. Task and relationship behaviors were not mutually exclusive. You can have high amounts of task and relationship behavior as a leader at the same time. They questioned the Traits Scale Model as a good way to describe leadership. They went out and held a series of interviews on leadership effectiveness at different companies. What style would you think people would say back in the 1950's was the most effective and why? With a strong military influence, most people thought the researcher would find the directive style to be the most effective. What they discovered was quite different. They found very effective autocratic leaders and very effective democratic leaders. There were however some that stood out above these which the next models we will learn about will help you understand why - how they behaved differently.

So the Ohio State team set up one scale to record the amount of task behavior used by the leader, which they defined as engaging in high amounts of directing -- that is, telling followers what to do, when to do it, and how to do it. (When engaging in this behavior, leaders typically use one-way communication.) An independent scale was developed to record the amount of relationship behavior used by the leader.

Now the Ohio State people really had something. Using two dimensions, they had created a way of classifying leader behavior in four basic ways:

- One style could describe leaders who used low amount of relationship behavior, and high amounts of task behavior.
- Second category showed a basic leadership style that contained both high amounts of both task and relationship behavior.
- A third basic leadership style could depict leaders who used high amounts of relationship behavior, but low amounts of task behavior.
- And a fourth basic style was used to describe leaders who used low amounts of both task and relationship behavior.

Behavior Model



What would style 1 (directive) look like? Very directive, with no questions about who is in charge, what this person is supposed to accomplish, or exactly how the job should be done. Just a straightforward direction to the person -- telling what to do, when, where, and how to do it. Below average relationship behavior is used in style 1 -- below average amounts of two-way communication, or praising, or listening to the person led.

Example: "Now Steve, about improving productivity in your area, I think we ought to start with an analysis of the training needs of all your

people. I'd like you to look at the performance sheets for, say, the past two years, and see who's available to take some further training."

In style two (guiding), the leader gives above average amounts of direction to follower(s) -- that is, high amounts of task behavior but also high amounts of relationship behavior. Style two is still plenty directive: there is no doubt what this leader wants. But the behavior is also very supportive, too, especially in explaining why the extra effort is needed, and giving the follower an opportunity to ask questions.

Example: "Tom, I'd like you to have the inventory report ready by Friday instead of next week, because I need to review it over the weekend. I know you can do it. Your analysis was excellent. Let's spend the next half hour going over all the specifics. That way if you have any questions, I can explain why we're doing it this way."

In style 3 (supportive), the leadership style concentrates on relationship behavior from the leader, but does not use above average amounts of directive task behavior.

Example: "Fellows, I've got a problem, and I need your help in solving it. Let's discuss it. You guys are really good at coming up with creative solutions to this kind of problem."

Style three is supportive, or inclusive. The leader uses high amounts of participation. Then, because style three involves low amounts of directive behavior, the manager asks the employees to participate in finding a solution.

In style 4 (delegative), the leader simply delegates responsibility for carrying out the task.

Example: "Okay, staff meetings beginning Monday. Now, who does what between now and then?"

Style four involves lower than average amounts of task and relationship behavior.

Now that they had a working model for describing leader behavior, the Ohio State people knew what they wanted to do with it. By selecting a

group of very successful leaders, in actual industry settings, they could watch how these individuals handled their people, and determine which basic style would be most effective. Even before they began the study, the professors had a theory about which basic style would be the most effective style to do. They figured that followers would respond best to high task and high relationship leader styles, and that leaders who used this style would be more effective.

But they were in for a surprise, because in analyzing effective leaders, they found all four styles used. They found some leaders who were very directive, with lots of task behavior and low amounts of relationship behavior. They found some leaders using style two -- high amounts of both task and relationship behavior. Then there were leaders who were giving their people lots of support, but relatively low amounts of directive task behavior. And finally, there were some leaders who delegated assignments to their people. The research showed that there were effective leaders using each of the styles.

How could this be? Is it possible that each of the four basic leadership styles is useful in helping a leader get what he/she wants? Could it be that each style has its special use? Those Ohio State professors looking for one best leadership style found that all four styles could be effective.

Leader Attitudes

Early researchers had concentrated exclusively on leader behavior -- what the leader does when dealing with people. But there's another factor to consider: Besides analyzing what the leader does, it is also helpful to consider the attitudes he/she projects in leading subordinates.

The work of Robert Blake and Jane Mouton -- the Managerial Grid -- added an important new dimension to the study of leadership. Basing their work on the accepted Ohio State model, which concentrated on the four quadrants of leader behavior, they developed a way of looking specifically at the attitudes of a leader. The Managerial Grid developed by Blake and Mouton used a nine-point scale in either direction, for a total of eighty-one separate categories for describing a leader's attitudes.

Since they were analyzing concerns instead of behavior, Blake and Mouton had to change the names of the axes in their model. The two axes were "Concern for Production" and "Concern for People".

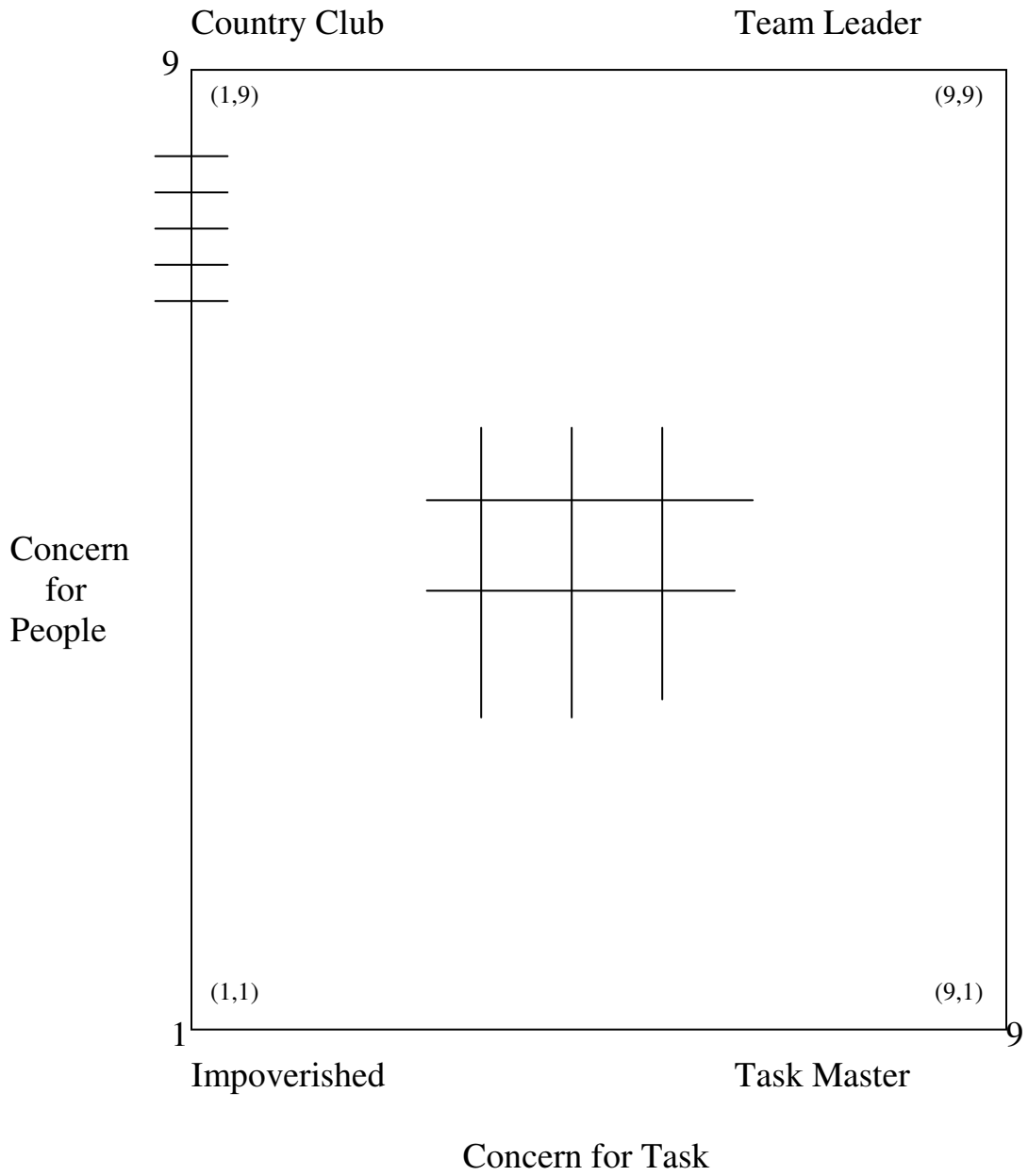
Finally, Blake and Mouton assigned some basic definitions to describe the attitudes of leaders:

- To describe a leader who cared a great deal about production and had a very low concern for people, they used the term "Task Master". Since this extreme position could be plotted in the "one" box on the "Concern for People" scale, and the "nine" box on the "Concern for Production" scale, Blake and Mouton used the numerical value of nine-one to describe a "Task Master" (see model diagram on the next page).
- Moving to the opposite end of the scale, they found the "Country Club" leader -- very high concern for people, and very low concern for production. The numerical value of a "Country Club" leader is one-nine on the model.
- To characterize a leader with high concern for both people and production -- the nine-nine leader -- they used the term "Team Leader".
- And to describe a leader with very little concern for people or production, they coined the term "Impoverished".
- Finally, they used the phrase "Middle of the Road" to describe a leader who had moderate amounts of concern for both people and production, and called this leader a five-five.

With these categories, they now had an attitudinal model. We can ask the question, "Is there one best attitude for a leader to have in dealing with subordinates?"

Blake and Mouton say the answer is yes, and they point to the nine-nine "Team Leader" as the best attitudinal framework for a leader -- high concern for both production and people.

ATTITUDINAL MODEL



Readiness

Up to now we have been focusing on the leader. Lets now shift to the follower. What is there about the follower that governs leadership style?

It is helpful to examine the follower's behavior before deciding which leadership style to use. The answer lies in a concept called "readiness". There are two key elements in the concept of readiness -- ability and motivation.

Ability has four ingredients to be examined by the leader:

- Experience - has the follower completed the same or similar tasks before?
- Education - has the follower received formal or informal task training?
- Understanding/Knowledge - what the task requires - what needs doing - what is expected of them.
- Role Perception - except task is part of their job - meaningful priority in total scope of their job. (Do we usually sit down and tell people what we expect of them?)

Motivation or Will side ingredients to probe for as a leader are:

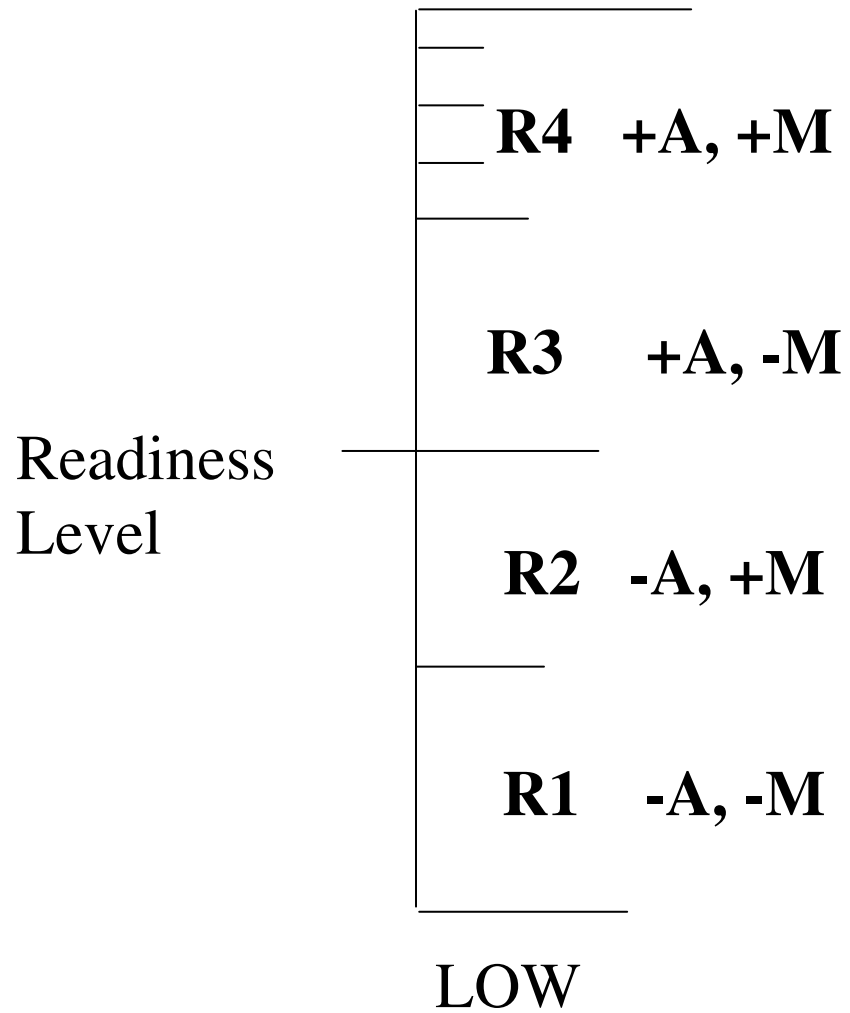
- Incentive - what's in it for me? (Incentives vary depending on the individual led - often inappropriate consequences)
- Security - level of security in performing the task - will I get hurt or will I screw up and look bad to peers, boss?
- Confidence - can I perform it well enough?
- Willingness to tackle a given task. (May be excited to do some tasks but not others)

One final point about ability and motivation. All of these characteristics are interdependent - they affect each other either positively or negatively and determine readiness level of follower to perform a certain task.

There are four task readiness level that a leader might find through their probing - asking questions to the follower(s). These are represented by the following readiness model.

Readiness Model

High



READINESS

(TASK SPECIFIC ABILITY & MOTIVATION)

ABILITY (+ or -)

EXPERIENCE

- Have they done the task successfully before?

TRAINING

- Have they been trained to do the task?

UNDERSTANDING

- Do they know what to do and how to do it?
- Can they explain it?

ROLE PERCEPTION

- Do they understand and accept that it is their job?

MOTIVATION (+ or -)

CONFIDENCE

- Do they feel they can succeed in the task?

SECURITY

- Are they secure in their job?

INCENTIVE

- Is there "something-in-it-for them"?

ACHIEVEMENT

MOTIVATION

- Do they have the desire to achieve the task?

ASSESSING TASK READINESS LEVEL

Situational Leaders probe for readiness level by asking the right questions to their follower(s).

OPEN QUESTIONS

- Allows follower to express himself/herself without restriction
- Usually begins with "How," "What," "Why."

For Example:

- How are you doing?
- What do you think the problem is?
- How do you feel about the task?

USE OPEN QUESTIONS

- To begin your assessment of readiness
- If the follower has a high readiness

CLOSED QUESTIONS

- Used to get specific information
- Questions which often get a yes, a no, or a fact for an answer
- Sometimes used to gain control of the conversation

For Example:

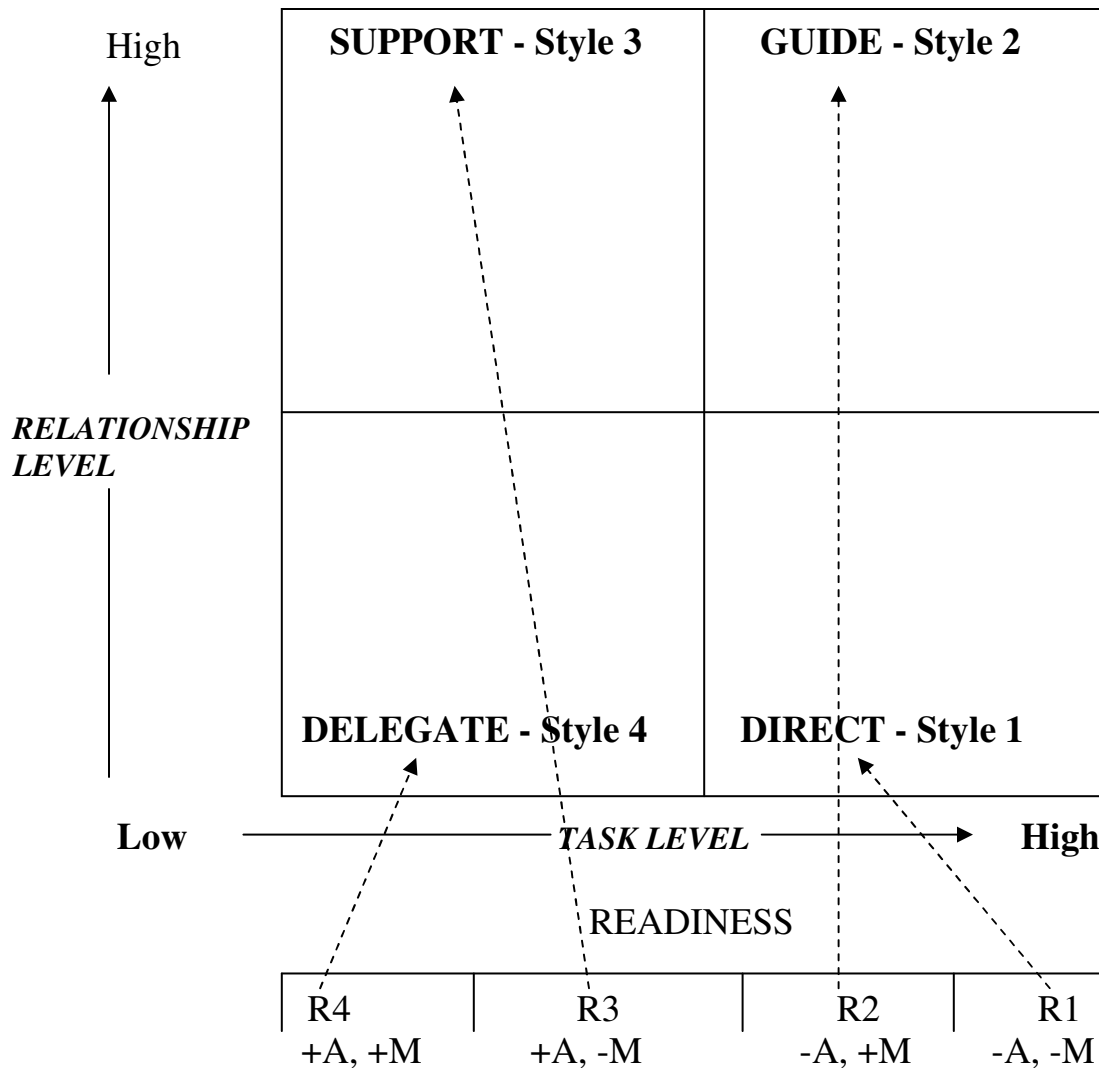
- Have you ever done this task before?
- Have you been trained for this task?
- How, specifically, would you do that?
- Do you want to do this task?
- Do you believe you can do the task up to standard?

USE CLOSED QUESTIONS

- If open questions don't reveal the task readiness
- If follower is low in readiness

The following Situational Leadership Model combines the Ohio State Behavioral Model and the Readiness Model into a common sense one that a leader can use to determine appropriate leadership style to use for a specific task readiness level of a follower(s).

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL



To avoid over or under leading for a specific task, a leader should use the directive style 1 with a follower with a readiness level 1, low ability and low motivation to do the task. Guiding style 2 with readiness level 2, low ability and higher motivation. Supportive style 3 with readiness level 3,

high ability but low motivation. And delegative style 4 with readiness level 4, high ability and high motivation.

The Four Leadership Styles and Their Effective Uses Are:

Style 1 Directing

High Task & Low Relationship

The leader provides specific direction and supervises closely when necessary. The leader makes rules clearly understood and maintains tight controls when needed.

Style 1 fits Readiness Level R1

Style 2 Guiding, Coaching

High Task & High Relationship

The leader provides direction and supervision while encouraging the other person's involvement. The leader provides coaching and takes the time to answer questions and explain decisions.

Style 2 fits Readiness Level R2

Style 3 Supporting, Participating

Low Task & High Relationship

The leader collaborates with the other person in setting objectives. The leader encourages participation in decision-making and gives personal support when it is needed. May have to determine what is hurting person's motivation.

Style 3 fits Readiness Level R3

Style 4 Delegating

Low Task & Low Relationship

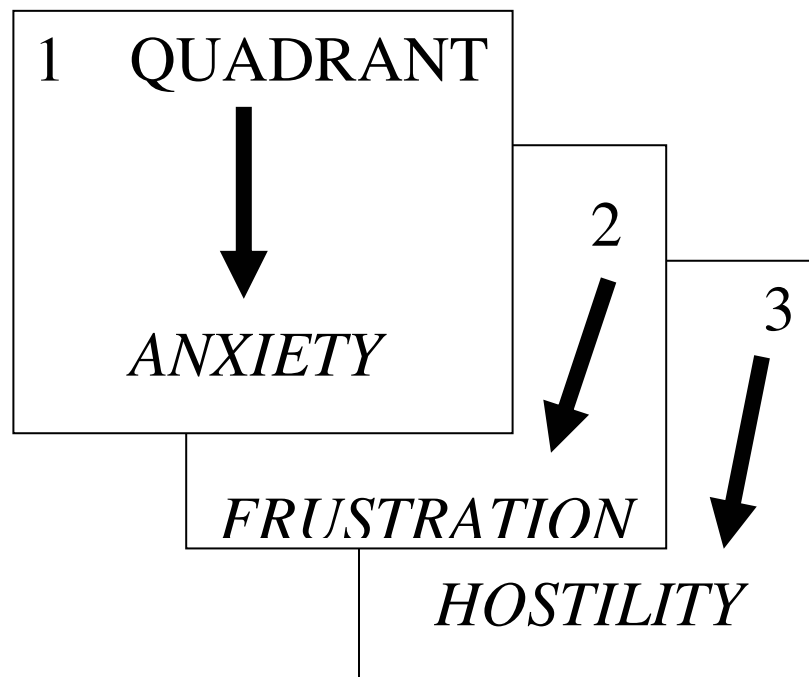
The leader gives the other person the freedom to do their job and encouragement to take as much responsibility as they can handle. The leader takes appropriate risks in letting others make decisions.

Style 4 fits Readiness level R4

What happens when a leader does not use the appropriate leadership style match with the readiness level of the follower(s) in accomplishing a task through others? The following diagram shows the follower(s) reaction:

WHEN YOU MISS

RIGHT STYLE BY



Some specific examples are: if you use a guiding style with a readiness level 1 follower, it can result in anxiety because they are not prepared for much two-way discussion about a task they know little about. If a delegative style is used with a readiness level 2 follower (-Ability, +Motivation), it will result in frustration because they want to do the task well but they need more direction - under leading. If a directive style is used often with a readiness level 4 follower, the result will be hostility - way too much over leading when the follower is high in ability and motivation to do a task - the leader needs to get out of their way.

Using the right leadership style with the readiness level of the follower(s) to do a task will **increase the probability of successful influence** by the leader and successful task completion. If you are not sure where the

person is (readiness level), what do you think you should do? Ask the person to describe the steps they would use to complete the task. A good rule of thumb is to always go to the lower style if you are not sure. It is easier to take away structure, but hard to go back and change to more - people see it as punitive.

27 COMMON LEADERSHIP TASKS

The next page has a list of the 27 most common tasks that leaders have to perform. Their behaviors used in performing them are crucial to their success. Rate yourself in regard to knowledge and use of the best behaviors to perform these tasks. You may also want to let your followers make the same rating. If you wish to get a more accurate assessment than this, you can contact the following firm to get a Leatherman Leadership Questionnaire that tests your proficiency in using the right behaviors that support successful leadership task completion. Following the assessment, you can get a self-study manual called the LLQ Development Manual and work on your gap areas. Persons doing this self-study method for their development of task leadership behaviors have found it also helpful to discuss them with someone that is already proficient at behaving this way.

Assessment Instrument & Self-Study Manual Contact:

International Training Consultants, Inc.
Post Office Box 35613
Richmond, Virginia 23235
(804) 320-2415
(800) 998-8764

(Assess Current Proficiency Level)

LEADER TASK	NEED	OK	STRONG
Assigning Work			
Career Counseling			
Coaching Employees			
Oral (One-On-One) Communication			
Managing Change			
Handling Employee Complaints			
Dealing With Employee Conflicts			
Counseling Employees On Attendance, Performance, And Habits			
Helping An Employee Make A Decision			
Delegating			
Taking Disciplinary Action			
Handling Emotional Situations			
Setting Goals And Objectives, And Planning With Employees			
Handling Employee Grievances			
Conducting Employee Meetings			
Giving Positive Feedback			
Negotiating			
Conducting Performance Appraisals			
Establishing Performance Standards			
Persuading/ Influencing Employees			
Making Presentations			
Problem Solving With Employees			
Conducting Selection Interviews			
Team Building			
Conducting Termination Interviews			
Helping An Employee Manage Time			
One-On-One Training			

EXERCISE:

In order to help you internalize the concepts you have just learned in the Situational Leadership Model on leadership style and assessing task readiness level, it is recommended that you rent and watch the video "Karate Kid". Watch the readiness level of Daniel, the karate student, at the beginning of the movie, and then watch how it changes over time. Also, watch what leadership style Mr. Miyagi, the karate teacher uses, when Daniel's readiness level to perform karate changes. The movie does an excellent job portraying all four readiness levels and all four styles of leadership.