Learning Objectives

When you have completed this workshop, you should be able to:

1) Develop the essential skills of diagnosis, flexibility, and partnering as they relate to supervision and leadership;

2) Identify four (4) distinct employee developmental levels and the associated characteristics of each level;

3) Recognize four (4) different leadership styles that they may be required to use in order to be an effective leader;

4) Understand the importance of matching their leadership styles to the task-specific developmental level of each of their employees.

Some Key Points

1. Job # 1 for supervisors is to_________________________________________________________.

2. It is not about ______________________________, you have to tailor your leadership style to_______________________________________________.

3. Leadership is _________________specific.
Flexible Leadership

For over 30 years, the Situational Leadership Model™ has proven to be an effective tool for supervisors who work with employees on a day-to-day basis. Learning how to match the appropriate leadership style to the employee's development level is an important skill – one which will provide a better organizational climate and a more productive workplace.

When you've completed this workshop, you will be able to:

- Explain the three skills all good leaders need.
- Distinguish between the two types of leadership behavior – directive and supportive.
- Explain the four development levels in the Model.
- Determine the appropriate leadership style to use with the development levels of employees.

™ Dr. Paul Hersey and Dr. Kenneth Blanchard, 1985
Situational Leadership

The Three Skills of a Situational Leader

1. Diagnosis
2. Flexibility
3. Partnering for Performance

Skill 1: Diagnosis

Successful leaders are able to adapt their style to fit requirements of the situation. The amount of direction or support that a leader should provide depends on the development level that the follower exhibits on a specific task, function, or objective that the leader is attempting to accomplish through the individual or group. To avoid using the wrong style at the wrong time with a particular person on a particular task, you need to diagnose his/her development level. The two dimensions of developmental levels are:

COMPETENCE  
A function of a person’s:
- **knowledge**, 
- **skills**, and **experience**, developed through training and experience.

COMMITMENT  
A function of a person’s:
- **motivation**, or **interest** in doing the task well, and **confidence**, his/her feeling of self-assuredness.
Skill 1: Diagnosis

The Four Development Levels

**DEVELOPMENT LEVEL 1**
Employees are low on competence and high on commitment; insecure regarding tasks and do not have the knowledge or skill to perform the task. Need to be told what to do, how to do it, when to do it. They are *unconsciously incompetent* on this particular task.

**DEVELOPMENT LEVEL 2**
At this level employees have some competence but low commitment; need moderate supervision for task completion and is capable of learning more. Low commitment may be due to lack of certainty that the job is a good fit, lack of being given more challenging assignments, or lack of confidence. They are *consciously incompetent* on this particular task.

**DEVELOPMENT LEVEL 3**
Employees at this level are high on competence but have variable commitment. They are able to do the task with general direction and feedback but might be somewhat insecure about their capacity to perform. They want to be involved and able to give their ideas about the work. They are *consciously competent* on this particular task.

**DEVELOPMENT LEVEL 4**
Expert performers are high on commitment and competence. They have considerable knowledge about tasks and the approach to completing them but want control and authority over how the tasks are done. They are *unconsciously competent* on this particular task.
Skill 1: Diagnosis

CHECK YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Development Levels

True/False

_____  1. At D1, a person has low competence and low commitment.

_____  2. At D2, a person has some competence, but usually has low commitment.

_____  3. At D3, a person has moderate to high competence, but has variable commitment.

_____  4. At D4, a person has high on competence and high commitment.

Self-Assessment Answers

1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. True
1. There are Four Basic Leadership Styles

You must adapt your leadership style to the developmental level of the employee on specific tasks in order to be an effective supervisor.

Remember that people are not “fully developed” or “under-developed.” In other words, development level is not a global concept; it is a task specific concept. People tend to be at different levels of development depending on the specific task, function, or objective that they are assigned.
Skill 2: Flexibility

MATCHING LEADERSHIP STYLE TO DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

Mismatches in leadership style and development level can result in frustration –

If you over-supervise, you frustrate your employees.
If you under-supervise, you frustrate yourself.

Knowing which style to use when is the key.

For example, imagine you are handing over your duties to an experienced colleague before you leave for a vacation. You've listed all the tasks that need to be done and given him a detailed set of instructions on how to carry out each one. He is at level D4, and you've adopted S1. The work will probably get done, but your colleague will not appreciate being treated like someone who has never worked in the organization before.

There is no need to leave detailed instructions and a checklist for the person. Give your colleague a quick chat and a few notes before you go on vacation, and everything will be fine. By adopting the right style to suite the follower's development level, work gets done, relationships are built, and most importantly, the follower's development level will rise, to everyone's benefit.

The key is to match the appropriate leadership style to the appropriate development level of the follower. Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of each leadership style and how they can be applied to a given work situation is critical to the success of implementing situational leadership.

It's also important for supervisors to recognize their predominant leadership style because that will often be the leadership style they will fall back into in times of stress.

What is your predominant style? With which group(s) do you prefer working? Why?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Follower Readiness Level Explained</th>
<th>Appropriate Leadership Approach</th>
<th>Appropriate Leadership Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enthusiastic Beginner (D 1)</strong></td>
<td>Directing</td>
<td>Very directive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Insecure regarding a task.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tells employee the “what,” “where,” “when,” and “how” to complete the job task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does not have requisite knowledge, skill, or motivation to perform the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Detailed instructions needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Constant feedback and correction required to ensure adequate performance.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disillusioned Learner (D 2)</strong></td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Explain your decisions and provide opportunities for clarification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unable to complete task without moderate supervision.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Focus on the “why” of the job task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Motivated to do the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Invite the follower to “buy into” or “own” the task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capable of learning and completing the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reward follower for increasing ability and willingness to perform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capable but Cautious Performer (D 3)</strong></td>
<td>Supporting</td>
<td>Act like a colleague in discussing the job with follower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able to do the task with general direction and feedback.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Decisions shared equally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Might be insecure about their capacity to perform.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaboration about “how” the task can be done, allow for innovation by the follower.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variable commitment levels to tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reward being self-motivated and self-regulating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wants to have a dialogue about their ideas related to the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Reliant Achiever (D 4)</strong></td>
<td>Delegating</td>
<td>Allow them to do the job their way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able and willing to do the task.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Step in only when they need support of some kind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Considerable knowledge about the task and the approach to completing it.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor with very limited supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wants control and authority over how the task is done.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reward results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trustworthy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skill 2: Flexibility

MATCHING LEADERSHIP STYLE TO DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

Indicate whether the appropriate leadership style was used for the person's level of development or if it is an example of over-supervision or under-supervision.

Circle your answer.

1. Your employee has done extremely well with almost no supervision from you. While you are working closely with the other employees who report to you, this employee didn’t even ask for your help when he had to make a fairly important strategic decision. You were pleased he handled the crises so well. Now that you have more time, you’re concerned you haven’t been giving him enough time. So, you set up a meeting to advise him on how to make some upcoming project decisions in an area in which he has a great deal of experience.
   a. Match b. Over-supervision c. Under-supervision

2. Your employee comes to you quite often for advice. He works very hard and long hours. He stands up to really tough issues but usually not until after consulting you. You believe he has the ability to be an outstanding manager. Today he came to you with a different problem he’d never handled before. You listen to him, praise his accomplishments and potential and try to build his confidence by asking questions to facilitate his problem-solving and decision-making.
   a. Match b. Over-supervision c. Under-supervision

3. Your employee and you often work on projects that are quite similar, although you have several more years of experience. You each can handle several projects at a time. You have a solid relationship, similar training, and she has been quite successful. She has just started another project. This project has features that are unlike others she has attempted. When she told you about it, you assured her that you had a lot of confidence in her capabilities and returned to work on your project to ensure that it was completed before the impending deadline.
   a. Match b. Over-supervision c. Under-supervision

Self-Assessment Answers

Skill 2: Flexibility

An effective situational leader learns how to use “Different Strokes for Different Folks.” In other words, different leadership styles are needed in response to peoples’ needs for varying degrees of direction and support.

The four styles vary in three ways:

1. The amount of **directive** behavior used by the supervisor.

2. The amount of **supportive** behavior used by the supervisor.

3. The amount of **involvement in problem solving and decision making** by the supervisor.
Skill 2: Flexibility

People in the D1 and D2 stages get High levels of Directive Behavior

People in the D2 and D3 stages get High levels of Supportive Behavior

People in the D3 and D4 stages get High levels of Involvement Behavior
AMOUNT OF DIRECTIVE BEHAVIOR USED BY THE LEADER

Directive behavior is the extent to which a leader:

- Engages in one-way communication.
- Spells out the follower(s) role.
- Tells the follower what to do, where to do it, when to do it, and how to do it.
- Closely supervises performance.

This behavior is focused on **tasks**.

Four words to describe directive behavior: **Structure; Teach; Organize; and Supervise**

As managers change their leadership style from Directing to Coaching to Supporting to Delegating they use **less directive** behavior.

**Directing Style – High Directive Behavior**

**Coaching Style – High Directive Behavior**

**Supportive Style – Low Directive Behavior**

**Delegating Style – Low Directive Behavior**

Directive Behavior includes:

- Sets goals or objectives
- Plans & organizes work
- Identifies job priorities
- Clarifies roles
- Establishes timelines
- Determines evaluation methods
- Checks work
- Teaches
- Supervises progress
Skill 2: Flexibility

3 P + E for OJT

Many organizations rely on “On-The-Job” (OJT) training to prepare associates to do their jobs successfully. However, most organizations do not do have a systematic approach to how they go about their OJT. In fact, it is often left up to individual supervisors to decide how to deliver this vital training. As a result, things often don’t go the way we think that they should go.

A simple approach to follow is the 3 P + E approach.

Present

Practice

Perform

Evaluate

You need to be very careful with your language if you want this process to go well. For example, when presenting, don’t ask “Do you have any questions?” Instead try, “Would you like to see it again? Show them as many examples as they need to be comfortable. They will let you know when they are ready to move on.

During practice you should encourage persistence, acknowledge improvements and gently correct when things get off-track. Build self-reliance by asking questions like “What needs to happen next?” or “Tell me what your thought process was when you were doing that?”

At the early part of the perform stage, think about breaking the task into manageable parts and let them complete the parts before checking with you. As they get more comfortable, ask questions like “Can you walk me through the task before you do it so that I can be sure that I haven’t forgotten to tell you anything?”

Always be clear about what a “good job” looks like when assigning a task. Evaluation is always a smoother process when expectations have been made clear. Consider asking “How do you think it went?” or “Is there anything you would do differently?” before offering your opinions on performance.
Skill 2: Flexibility

AMOUNT OF SUPPORTIVE BEHAVIOR USED BY THE LEADER

Supportive behavior is the extent to which a leader:
- Engages in two-way communication.
- Listens.
- Provides support and encouragement.
- Facilitates interaction.
- Involves the follower in decision making.

This behavior is focused on relationships.

Four words to describe supportive behavior: Encourage; Ask; Listen; and Explain

When a manager changes from Directing to Coaching to Supporting to Delegating they increase and decrease the amount of support they provide.

Directing Style – Low Supportive Behavior

Coaching Style – High Supportive Behavior

Supportive Style – High Supportive Behavior

Delegating Style – Low Supportive Behavior

Supportive Behavior includes:

- Encourages, reassures, praises
- Listens
- Asks for suggestions or input
- Explains why
- Encourages self-reliant problem solving
- Makes information available
- Discloses information about self
Skill 2: Flexibility

AMOUNT OF INVOLVEMENT IN PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING OF LEADER

Directing Style
Problem solving and decision making are initiated solely by the leader. Solutions and decisions are announced; communication is largely one-way, and implementation is closely supervised.

Coaching Style
The leader still provides a great deal of direction and leads with his/her ideas, but he or she also attempts to hear the followers' feelings about decisions as well as their ideas and suggestions. While two-way communication and support are increased, control over decision making remains with the leader.

Supporting Style
The locus of control for day-to-day decision making and problem solving shifts from leader to follower. The leader's role is to provide recognition and to actively listen and facilitate problem solving决策 making on the part of the follower. The follower has the ability and knowledge to do the task.

Delegating Style
Followers are allowed to “run their own show” because they have both the confidence and competence to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. If needed, the leader discusses problems with the employee until joint agreement is achieved on problem definition and the decision making process is delegated totally to the follower. It is the employee who has significant control for deciding how tasks are to be accomplished.
Check Your Knowledge

Test your knowledge by answering the following questions about Situational Leadership.

LEADERSHIP STYLES

1. As managers change their leadership style from Directing to Coaching to Supporting to Delegating, the amount of follower involvement in decision making:
   a. Increases  b. Decreases  c. Stays the same

2. With a Directing leadership style, the __________ is in charge.
   a. Follower  b. Leader  c. Someone Else

3. With a Coaching leadership style, the follower is more involved in decision-making, but when push comes to shove, the __________ makes decisions.
   a. Follower  b. Leader  c. Someone Else

4. With a Supporting leadership style, the __________ role is to decide how the job is to be done. The leader’s role is to listen, provide assurance and support.
   a. Follower  b. Leader  c. Someone Else

5. When a Delegating leadership style is used, the _______ decides how, where, and with whom the goal is to be accomplished.
   a. Follower  b. Leader  c. Someone Else

Self-Assessment Answers

Check Your Knowledge

Test your knowledge by answering the following questions about Situational Leadership.

Answer these blanks with either “True” or False:"

6. In using a Directing leadership style (Style 1), the manager is High on Directive and Low on Supportive Behavior.
   a. True    b. False

7. In using a Coaching leadership style (Style 2), the manager is Low on both dimensions.
   a. True    b. False

8. In using a Supporting leadership style (Style 3), the manager is High on Supportive Behavior, and High on Directive Behavior.
   a. True    b. False

9. In using a Delegating leadership style (Style 4), the manager is Low on both dimensions.
   a. True    b. False

10. In choosing an appropriate leadership style, the manager is flexible on both dimensions according to the followers developmental level.
    a. True    b. False

Self-Assessment Answers

Skill 3: Partnering for Leadership Style

The third skill of Situational Leadership –

PARTNERING FOR LEADERSHIP STYLE

1. Agree on goals that you need to achieve.
2. Determine development level of the employee.
3. Agree on appropriate leadership style that you need to demonstrate.
4. Plan for how you are going to work together throughout the task.
5. Deliver the appropriate leadership style (appropriate amounts of directive and supportive behaviors).
6. Follow through by keeping your commitments and monitoring outcomes of the process. Provide additional assistance when necessary.
Exercises

1. Olivia directs a group of three people. Vonetta is very knowledgeable about all areas of the work in the unit. She consistently completes assignments accurately and on time, even if she has to work overtime. She works independently and rarely needs help with any of her responsibilities. Curtis is new to the unit, but has been with the department for several years. He works hard, but lacks the skill required to complete all of the reports. He has asked for assistance on a couple of occasions, but Olivia hasn’t had enough time to thoroughly answer all of his questions. The third member of the group, Stan, is experienced and knowledgeable in report writing. However, Olivia is reluctant to delegate those types of tasks to him because she feels that he can be careless at times and turns in reports with unexplained errors.

Questions:

Where would you place each of these three employees on the readiness scale relative to report writing tasks?

What does Olivia need to be careful about when managing report assignments in her unit?

2. Gino is a new supervisor in the IT unit. The previous supervisor was the “do it yourself” type who rarely delegated important assignments. As a result, many employees had too little to do, while the supervisor was always swamped with work. Gino decided he was going to begin to delegate assignments that his predecessor had performed herself. He was shocked at the results. His employees seemed to think that he was making them do his work. Many complained that they were not paid or trained to do his job. It was not uncommon for them to bring problems arising from their assignments to him for solutions. They didn’t seem to understand his request to “bring him solutions, not problems.”

Questions:

What has Gino overlooked in his approach to this situation?

What are some things he can do to improve employee readiness?
Summarizing the Situation Leadership Model

Major Benefits:

- Gives you an indication of the amount of Directive behavior you need to use to ensure the task is completed correctly.

- Gives you an indication of the amount of Supportive behavior necessary to ensure that the employee can perform effectively.

- Allows you to match your leadership style to the readiness level of the employee.

- Helps you make decisions about coaching, training, participation, and delegation.

Write a brief action plan for yourself that describes how you can adjust your leadership approach by using the Situational Leadership® method in your day-to-day interactions with your employees.