

2022/23 Semester 1

IS3103 Information Systems Leadership and Communication

Lecture 7

An East-West Comparison of Leadership Approaches

A/Prof OH Lih Bin
ohl@comp.nus.edu.sg | 6516 3796 | COM2-0421

Department of Information Systems & Analytics
NUS School of Computing



Six Main Leadership Approaches

1. Traits approach (in-born traits)
2. Situational approach (vary from situations)
3. Functional approach (functions leaders perform)
4. Skills approach (abilities that leaders need to have to carry out leadership functions)
5. Relational approach (relationships between leaders and followers)
6. Transformational approach (inspire and help followers grow and develop into leaders) – *to be covered in Lecture 8*



Traits Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Early 20th century: leaders possessed unique physical and psychological characteristics that predisposed them to positions of influence
- ▶ Inconsistent research findings
 - ▶ Personality traits alone did not adequately explain leadership

Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.

—Vince Lombardi



Traits Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Recent research suggested that personal characteristics do have an influence on leadership behavior and perceptions
 - ▶ Cognitive abilities (intelligence; creative and divergent thinking)
 - ▶ Problem solving skills, expertise, and tacit knowledge
 - ▶ Motivation
 - ▶ Locus of control (internal or external)
 - ▶ Personality (extraversion – sociability; conscientiousness – organized and dependable; neuroticism – emotional stability; openness – creative and curious; agreeableness – trusting and nurturing)
 - ▶ Social appraisal (social intelligence): emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) is a subset of social intelligence quotient (SQ)



Situational Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Even leaders with desirable traits must meet the demands of the *situation*
- ▶ Also called contingency approach
 - ▶ leadership behavior is contingent on variations in the *situation* (that control the amount of influence a leader has over followers):
 - ▶ Position power (strong/weak)
 - ▶ Task structure (structured/unstructured)
 - ▶ Leader-member relations (good/poor)



Situational Approach to Leadership

▶ **Path-Goal Theory**

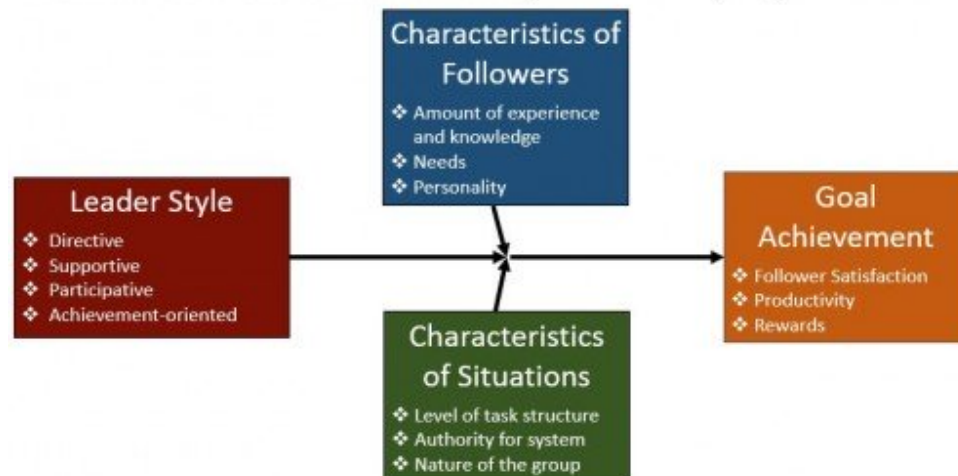
- ▶ based on Expectancy Theory
- ▶ followers are more motivated to be productive when they believe that successful task completion will provide a *path* to a valuable *goal*
- ▶ leaders play an important role in influencing follower perceptions of task paths and goal desirability
- ▶ communicate clearly what is expected of followers and what rewards can be anticipated when tasks are successfully completed
- ▶ theory attempts to explain follower motivation and satisfaction in terms of leader behavior and task structure



Situational Approach to Leadership

Communication Style	Achievement-Oriented	Participative	Supportive	Directive
Nature of Followers	Followers possess necessary skills and have high need to succeed.	Followers are unsure (particularly if uncertainty prompts apprehension) and have an internal locus of control.	Followers are skilled and have a need for affiliation.	Followers are inexperienced or unsure, have an external locus of control and a strong belief in authority.
Nature of Task	Task is unstructured and under the control of followers.	Task is unstructured.	Task is structured (particularly if task is stressful).	Task is unstructured.

House's Path-Goal Theory Summary Diagram



Good leadership consists of showing average people how to do the work of superior people.

—John D. Rockefeller

Situational Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Choice of Communication Styles based on Path-Goal Theory
 - ▶ Selection based on nature of *followers* and *tasks*
 1. *Achievement-oriented leadership* — communication focusing on goal attainment and accomplishment, emphasizing the achievement of excellence by demonstrating confidence in the ability of followers to achieve their goals
 2. *Participative leadership* — communication designed to solicit opinions and ideas from followers for the purpose of involving followers in decision making
 3. *Supportive leadership* — interpersonal communication focusing on concern for the needs and well-being of followers and the facilitation of a desirable climate for interaction
 4. *Directive leadership* — procedure-related communication behavior that includes planning and organizing, task coordination, policy setting, and other forms of specific guidance



Experience Reflection

- ▶ Reflect on a time when you were part of a successful (or unsuccessful) group.
- ▶ Apply path-goal theory to account for the group's success or failure.
- ▶ What was the nature of the task and the makeup of group members?
- ▶ What obstacles did the group face and how did the leader help the group overcome these barriers?
- ▶ What leadership style did the leader use and was it effective? Why or why not?



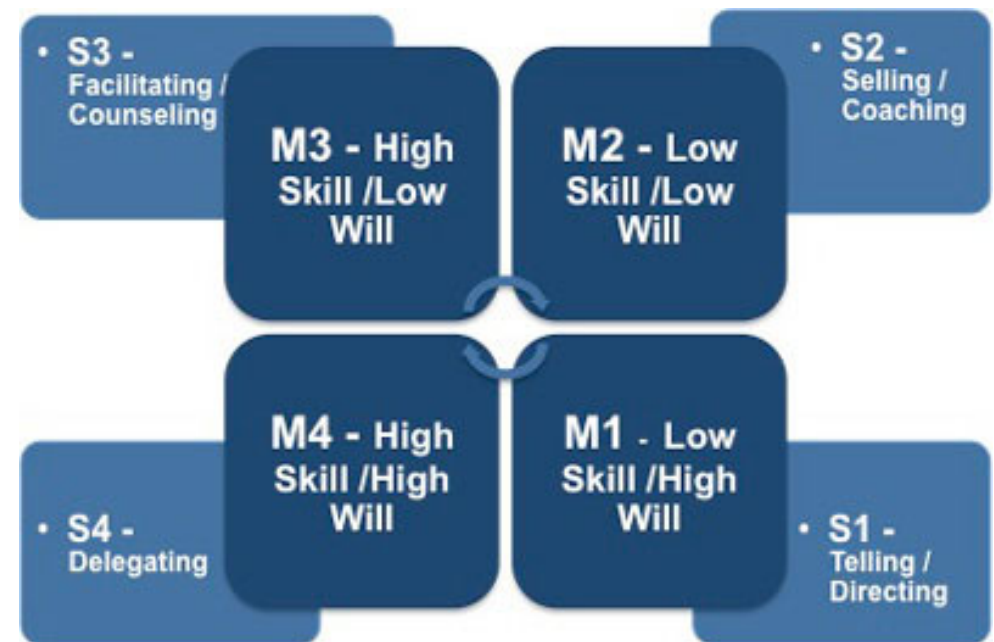
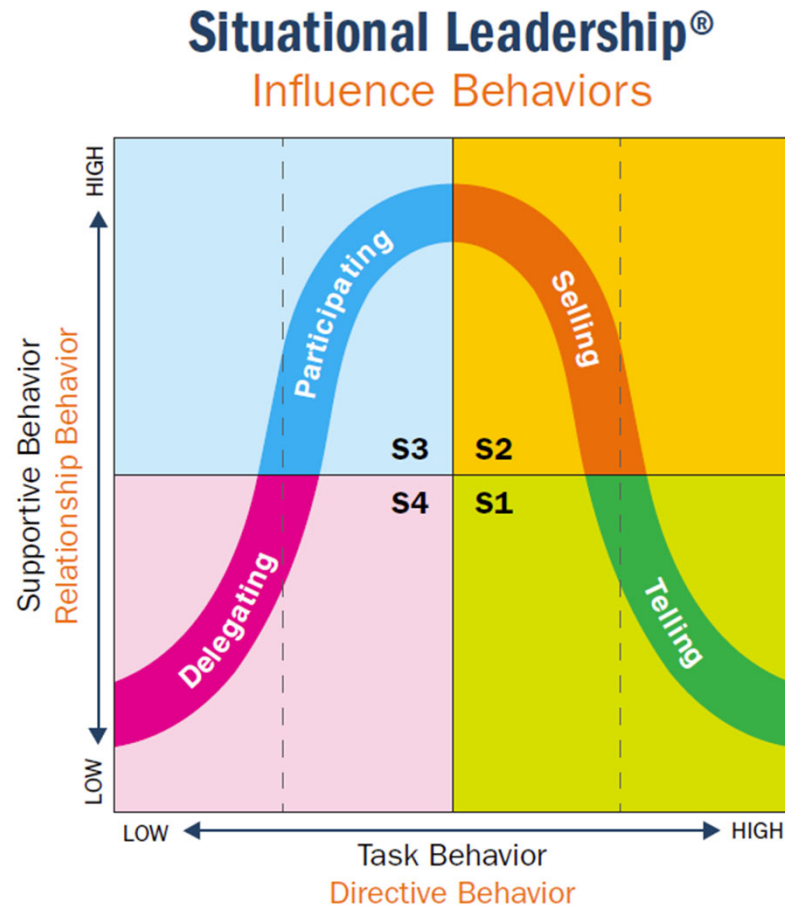
Situational Approach to Leadership

▶ **Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Approach**

- ▶ different situations call for different styles of leadership
- ▶ *readiness level of followers* plays an important role in selecting appropriate leadership behavior
 1. Ability/competence: skills, knowledge, and experience
 2. Willingness/commitment: feelings of confidence and motivation



Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Approach



Functional Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Looks at the communicative *behavior* of leaders
 - ▶ the ability to communicate like a leader and perform the functions of a leader determines leadership
- ▶ Three types of functional roles in groups
 1. Task-related
 2. Group building and maintenance
 3. Individual



Functional Approach to Leadership

► Task-related Roles

- 6 roles that contribute to the organization and completion of group tasks:
 1. *The initiator*: defines the problem, establishes the agenda and procedures, and proposes innovative strategies and solutions
 2. *The information/opinion seeker*: solicits ideas, asks questions about information provided by others, and asks for evaluations of information and procedure
 3. *The information/opinion giver*: presents and evaluates facts and information and evaluates procedure
 4. *The elaborator*: provides examples and background as a means for clarifying ideas and speculates how proposed solutions might work
 5. *The orienter/coordinator*: summarizes interaction, looks for relationships among ideas and suggestions, and focuses group members on specific issues and tasks
 6. *The energizer*: stimulates or arouses the group to achieve excellence and promotes activity and excitement



Functional Approach to Leadership

▶ Group-building and Maintenance Roles

- ▶ 4 roles contribute to the development and maintenance of open, supportive, and healthy interpersonal relationships among group members:

1. *The encourager*: supports and praises the contributions of others, communicates a sense of belonging and solidarity among group members, and accepts and appreciates divergent viewpoints
 2. *The harmonizer/compromiser*: mediates conflict, reduces tension through joking, and attempts to bring group members with opposing points of view closer together
 3. *The gatekeeper*: encourages the involvement of shy or uninvolved group members and proposes regulations of the flow of communication through means such as time and topic limitation
 4. *The standard-setter*: expresses group values and standards and applies standards to the evaluation of the group process
-



Functional Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Individual Roles (Undesirable)
 - ▶ Not supportive of task or group relationships
 - ▶ 5 individual-centered disruptive behaviors in a group that can minimize group effectiveness:
 1. *The aggressor*: attacks the ideas, opinions, and values of others; uses aggressive humor; and makes personal judgments
 2. *The blocker*: resists the ideas and opinions of others and brings up “dead” issues after the group has rejected them
 3. *The recognition-seeker*: relates personal accomplishments to the group and claims to be more expert and knowledgeable than other group members on virtually every topic
 4. *The player*: maintains a noncaring or cynical attitude and makes jokes at inappropriate times
 5. *The dominator*: lacks respect for the views of others, disconfirms the ideas and opinions of others, and frequently interrupts



Functional Approach to Leadership

- ▶ By engaging in **task-related** and **group-building/maintenance** role behaviors (and avoiding individual role behavior), a group member can perform leadership functions and increase the likelihood that he or she will achieve leadership status within the group
- ▶ *Be mindful of and apply these roles in your school projects and future workplace*



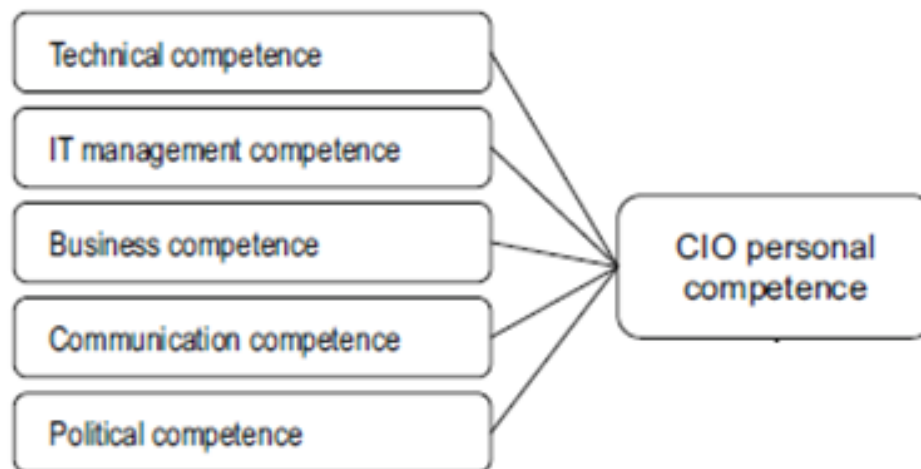
Skills Approach to Leadership

- ▶ fills in some of the gaps of the functional approach by identifying the *abilities* leaders need to carry out their functions
- ▶ **Effectiveness** is the key criteria for skills theorists and researchers
- ▶ Based on the premise that unlike traits, skills can be developed
 - ▶ Fixed and Growth mindset



The Three-Skill Model

- ▶ Importance of skills varies at different organizational levels
 - ▶ Technical skill (things)
 - ▶ Human skill (people)
 - ▶ Conceptual skill (ideas): “big picture” thinking



SKILLS FRAMEWORK FOR ICT

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

MAIN VIEW

TRACKS

DATA AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

INFRASTRUCTURE

SOFTWARE AND APPLICATIONS

STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE

OPERATIONS AND SUPPORT

CYBER SECURITY

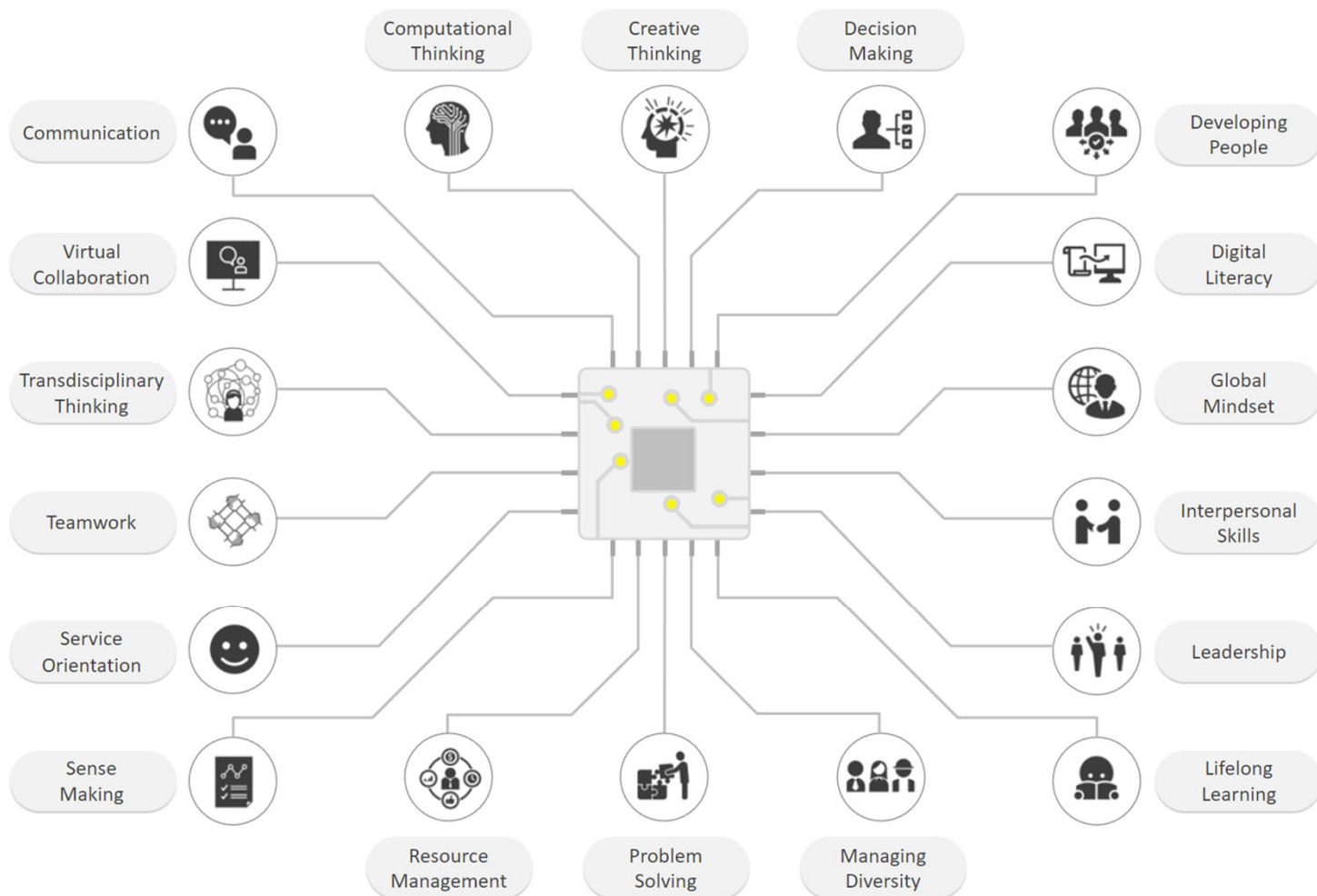
SALES AND MARKETING

TECHNICAL SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

GENERIC SKILLS & COMPETENCIES



SKILLSfuture SG



Leader Competencies

▶ Task-Based Competencies

▶ Leading Oneself

- ▶ self-awareness, balance conflicting demands, ability to learn, leadership values

▶ Leading Others

- ▶ build and maintain relationships, build effective work groups, communication skills, ability to develop others

▶ Leading the Organization

- ▶ management skills, think and act strategically, think creatively, initiate and implement change



Problem-Solving Capabilities

- ▶ Leadership is “an ongoing process of solving complex, ill-defined problems” (Mumford et al.)
- ▶ Three skills key to solving complex dilemmas
 1. Problem-solving skills
 2. Solution construction skills
 3. Social judgment skills (for implementation)
- × No universally accepted set of leadership *skills*



Relational Approach to Leadership

- ▶ shifts the focus from the characteristics of leaders and followers (traits and situational) and leadership behaviors (skills and functional) to the *relationships* among leaders and followers
- ▶ Two types of relationships
 - ▶ Members of the “in-group” play the role of assistant, lieutenant, or advisor to a leader..”
 - ▶ The remaining followers will be members of the “out-group”
- ▶ Leaders make choices regarding inclusion of followers in both the groups
- ▶ High levels of trust, mutual influence, and support characterize *in-group* exchanges
- ▶ Low levels of trust and support characterize *out-group* exchanges



Relational Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory
 - ▶ focuses on the *quality of the relationship* between an individual leader and follower rather than on categorizing followers as either a member of the in-group or the out-group
 - ▶ Research found link between relational quality and personal and organizational effectiveness
 - ▶ Leaders should attempt to build high-quality *partnerships* with all their followers, not just a chosen few



Relational Approach to Leadership

- ▶ Three-phase model of Leadership-Making Process
 - ▶ *Stranger*
 - ▶ role and task-based interactions
 - ▶ *Acquaintanceship*
 - ▶ start building more productive working relationship; share social and task information
 - ▶ *Partnership*
 - ▶ leaders and followers exert mutual influence on one another, sharing a wide range of task and social information
 - ▶ enjoy a high level of mutual trust, respect, and sense of obligation
 - ▶ each feels empowered to provide criticism and support to the other



The Art of Leadership: Lessons from the Ancient Chinese

- ▶ Examining the evolution of Chinese culture and philosophy of life over the past 4,000 to 5,000 years can clue us in on good leadership and contemporary organisational and management practices.
- ▶ The “Renaissance of the Chinese” took place in the space of approximately 550 years between 770 and 221 BC when China experienced a long period of warring states
- ▶ During this chaotic period, two great philosophers, Lao Tzu (Laozi) and Confucius (Kongzi) were born



Table 1: The Three Schools of Thought

No. of Years	Period	Dynasties	Chinese Philosophers (4 schools of thought)
400	2500–2100 BC	The Five Emperors (Huangdi, Zhuan Xu, Di Ku, and Shun)	Confucianism (Humanism) Confucius - 551–479 BC Mencius - 372–289 BC Legalism Xunzi - 313 BC–238 BC Han Fei Zi - 280 BC (born) Daoism (Naturalism) Lao Zi - 5 th century BC Zhuang Zi - 3 rd to 4 th century BC
500	2100–1600 BC	Xia (the founder, Yu the Great)	
500	1600–1100 BC	Shang	
330	1100–771 BC	Western Zhou	
550	770–221 BC	Eastern Zhou, Spring & Autumn Period and Warring States	
14	221–207 BC	Qin (1 st Emperor of China)	

Highlights of Confucianism

仁 义 礼 智 信

Humanness

Righteousness

Proper Rite

Knowledge

Integrity

“学而不思则罔，思而不学则殆”

"Study without thought is vain; thought without study is dangerous."

“三人行，必有我师焉。”

As three men are walking together, one of them is bound to be good enough to act as my teacher.

中

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MEAN

庸

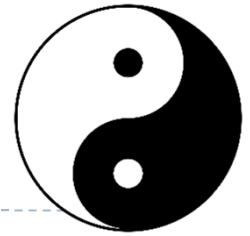


Confucianism and Chinese Leadership

- ▶ In today's rapid dynamic business environment, it is still important for the leader to preserve some of these Confucian values and ethics like loyalty and morality, courage and righteousness, faithfulness and honesty, benevolence and compassion, conscientiousness and altruism as well as considerateness and courtesy, just to name a few.
 - ▶ Five key dimensions of the Confucian values and ethics have been applied to the contemporary leaders' behaviours that are **moral character, human-heartedness, human relationship, lifelong learning, and moderation.**
-



Naturalism and Chinese leadership



- ▶ **Naturalism** is put forward by Laozi.
- ▶ To be naturalistic, a wise leader is characterised as having a profound understanding, with deep insights into nature and humans.
- ▶ He/she is able to perceive the principles of nature and their application.
- ▶ Wisdom according to the natural approach includes:
 - Self-knowledge and self-understanding
 - Understanding and being able to see the *interconnectivity of things*
 - Keeping thinking *holistic*
 - The use of soft-thinking
 - The use of *paradoxical* thinking in enhancing creativity in the digital age.



Chinese Leadership

- ▶ Chinese leaders who are influenced by **Daoism (Taoism)** philosophy are more likely to practice (1) laissez-faire leadership, (2) servant leadership, (3) authentic leadership, or (4) paradoxical leadership.
- ▶ Chinese leaders who are influenced by **Confucianism** are more likely to practice (1) transformational leadership, (2) paternalistic leadership, (3) leader–member exchange, and (4) individualized consideration toward subordinates.
- ▶ Leaders who are influenced by **Legalism** are more likely to practice (1) initiating structure, (2) path–goal leadership, (3) transactional leadership, and (4) bureaucratic leadership.





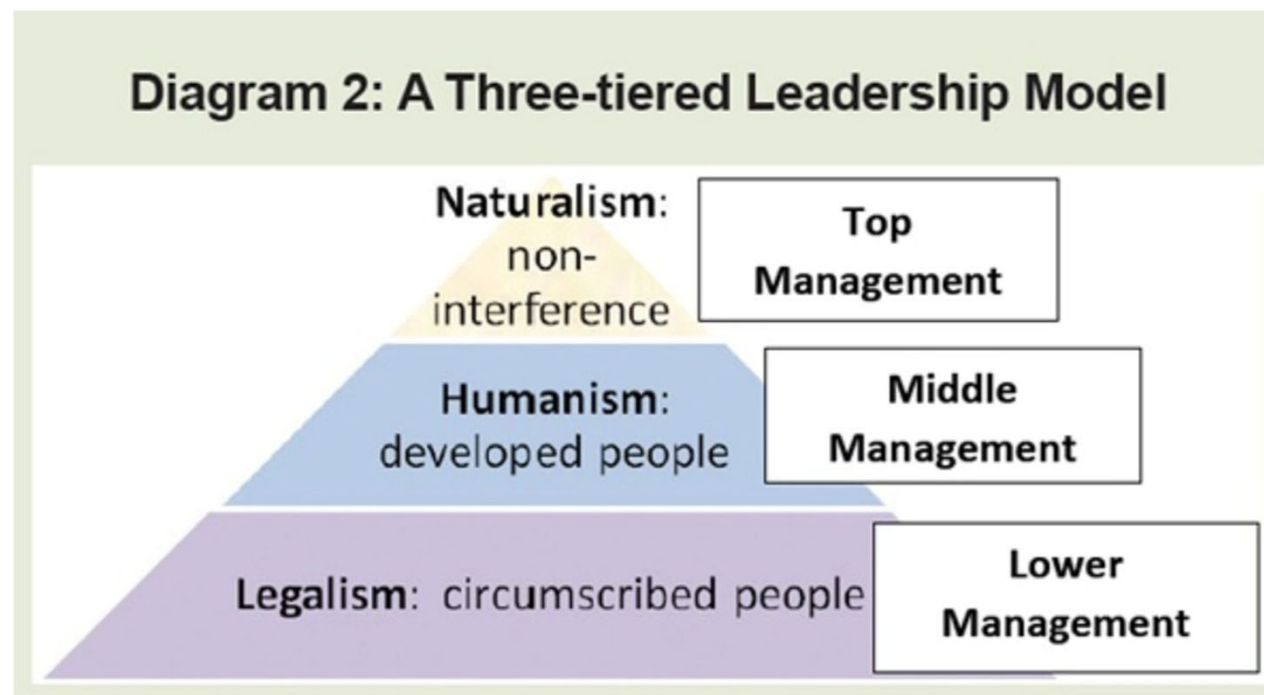
Table 1
Leadership and three traditional Chinese philosophies.

	Daoism	Confucianism	Legalism
Title of original treatise	Dao De Jing (aka Tao Te Ching).	The Analects. A record of dialogues with Confucius, written by his students.	Hanfeizi
Founding philosopher or "teacher"	Lao Zi (aka Li Dan, Li Er, Lao-Tzu, Lao-Tsu, Lao-tze)	Confucius (aka Kong Qiu, Kong Zi, Kong Fuzi, K'ung Fu-tzu, the Master)	Han Fei (aka Han Fei Zi)
Birth, death, relationship to the other two philosophers	B. circa 571 BCE D. circa 471 BCE Oldest of the three	B. 551 BCE D. 479 BCE 20 years younger than Lao Zi who answered Confucius's questions regarding rituals.	B. 281 BCE D. 233 BCE (about 300 years after Lao Zi). Learned from Xun Zi, a student of Confucianism.
Target	Born rulers	Born rulers, officers, and ordinary people	Born rulers and officers
Basic leadership arguments	No over-leading, no action, empower subordinates to lead, balance and avoid extremes, selflessness	Establish healthy virtuous climate through learning, meditation, and self-reflection. Differentiate benevolence, respect, and ritual to encourage followers. Promote and praise followers.	Use power to exercise influence. Establish laws and use contingent awards to fit human nature. Implement rules universally, no personalized approach, promote by experience.
Most relevant current leadership models	Laissez-faire Servant leadership Authentic leadership Empowering leadership Paradoxical leadership	Transformational leadership Paternalistic leadership Leader-member exchange Individual consideration	Initiating structure Transactional leadership Path-goal leadership

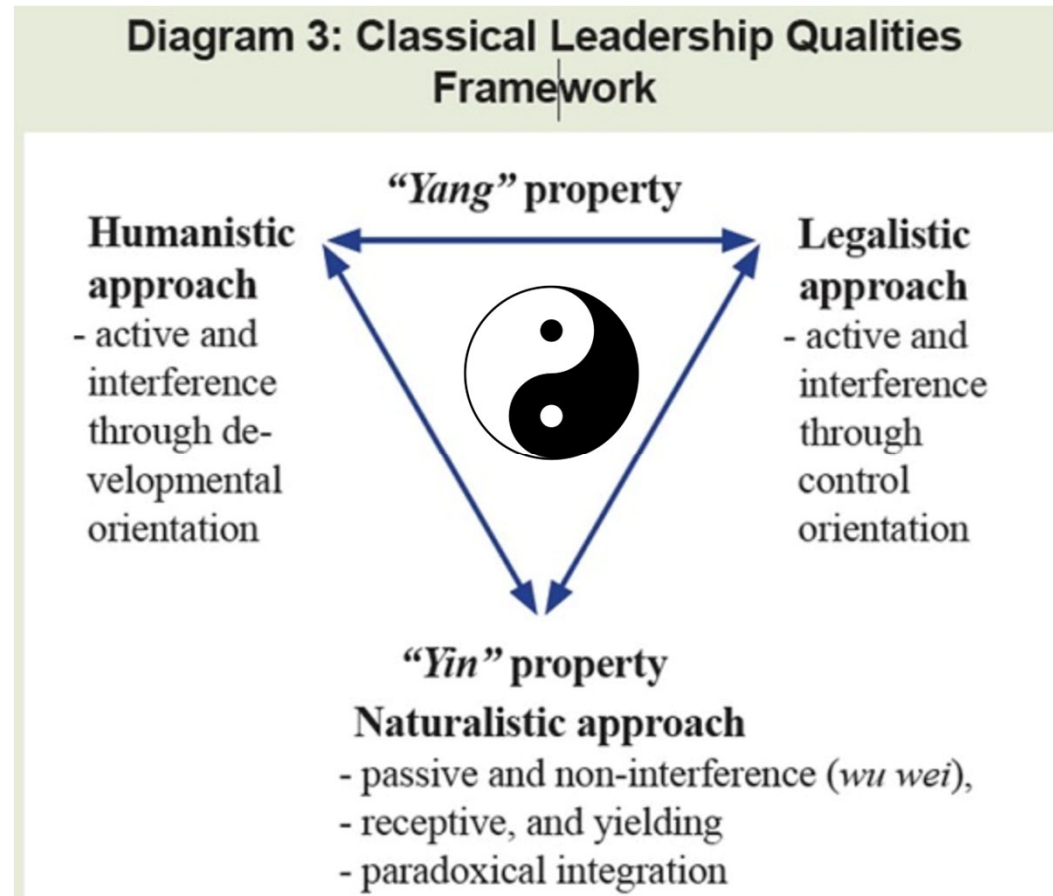


Chinese Leadership and Management

- Based on some literature review of the ancient Chinese three major schools of thought of legalism, humanism, and naturalism, a three-tiered leadership model has been put forward.



The three-tiered leadership model can be categorised into the *Yin* and *Yang* properties of the leadership qualities and characteristics.

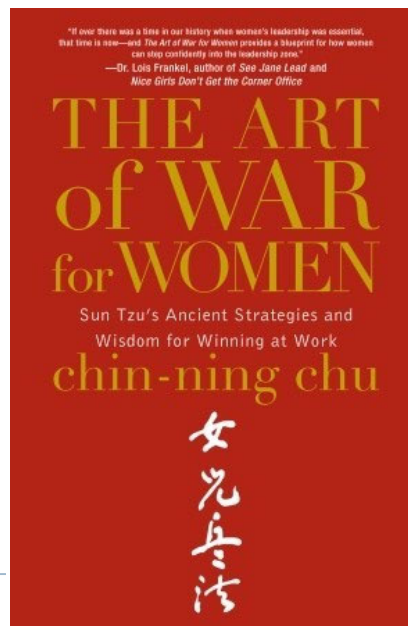
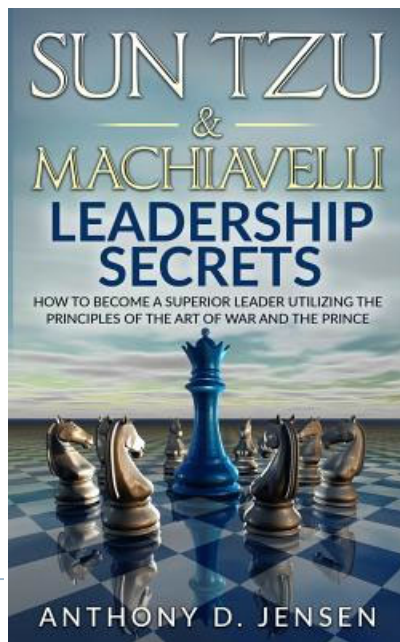


Sun Tzu's THE ART OF WAR

孫子兵法



Copyright 2004
Gary Legland



Sun Tzu The Art of War for Business Strategies

The way to Enterprise Survival

Lin You-Tya & Jeff Cherng



Steve Jobs Minicase Discussion

- ▶ How does Jobs demonstrate key elements of the communication approach to charismatic leadership?
- ▶ Would Jobs have succeeded without having a “bad” side along with his “good” side?
- ▶ Do you think that all charismatic leaders have to distort reality in order to be effective?
- ▶ Would you have liked to work for Steve Jobs? Why or why not?
- ▶ Do you think that Apple will be as successful under new leadership? What steps can the company take to ensure that it continues to be innovative?



Key Takeaways and Reflection Points from Lecture 7

- ▶ What are the main approaches to understand leadership?
- ▶ What are the strengths and limitations of each leadership approach?
- ▶ What is the role of followers in each of the leadership approach?
- ▶ What are the ancient Chinese philosophical approaches to leadership?
- ▶ How can we synthesize the different eastern and western leadership approaches to more holistically understand leadership?
- ▶ What do you learn from the leadership behaviors of Steve Jobs?

