Principles of Developing, Managing and Leading Individuals and Teams to Achieve Success

Lesson 2

WESTON COLLEGE | Mindful Education

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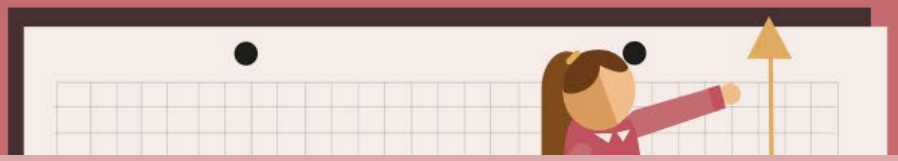


Team Management Styles

Adapting management styles to meet changing needs

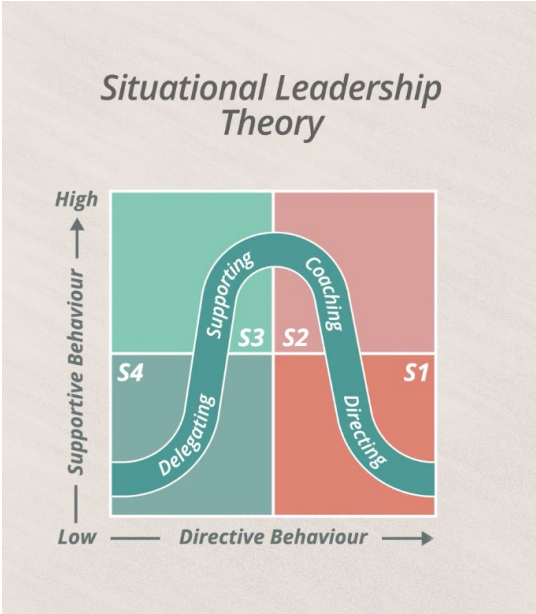
Balancing needs

Skills and attributes of effective team leaders

Situational Leadership Theory

In our first lesson, we touched on how your approach to managing a team may be influenced by how long its members have been working together.

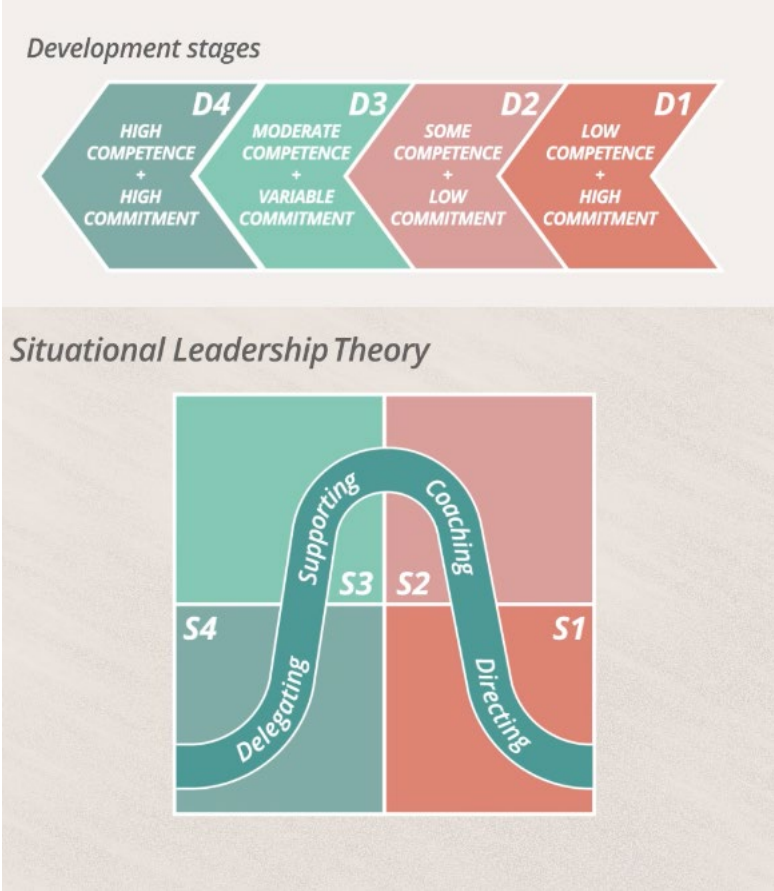
This idea is central to the work of management experts Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard and their **Situational Leadership Theory.** This model proposes that leaders should adapt their management style according to the circumstances of their team. In particular, it suggests that managers should consider whether their team members have the ability, motivation and commitment to accomplish the team's task. Each of these factors will change over time as the team matures - and the manager's leadership style should change to match each stage.



Situational Leadership Theory (cont.)

The model suggests that teams typically develop through four stages of maturity. You may see these development stages denoted in illustrations as D1 to D4.

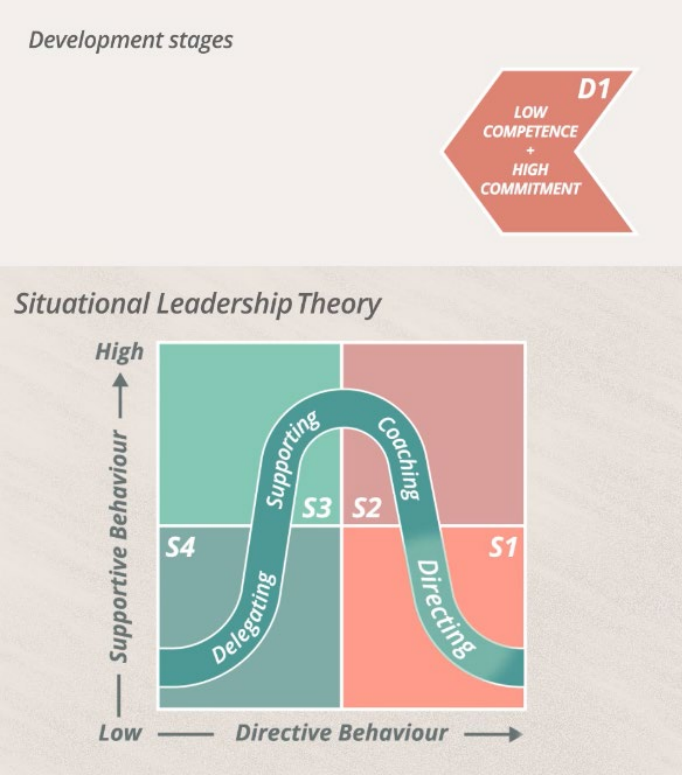
According to Hersey and Blanchard, there are also four different leadership styles, which should correspond to the four stages of team maturity. Each style varies in terms of how much **direction** and **support** the manager should give the team. Directive management generally involves telling people what to do and what is expected of them. Supportive management involves more of a two-way relationship, where employees are encouraged to ask questions and contribute ideas.



Situational Leadership Theory (cont.)

At D1, a stage of low team maturity, team members may be new to their task. They're committed to their work but they may not know how to do it or may not have the skills it requires.

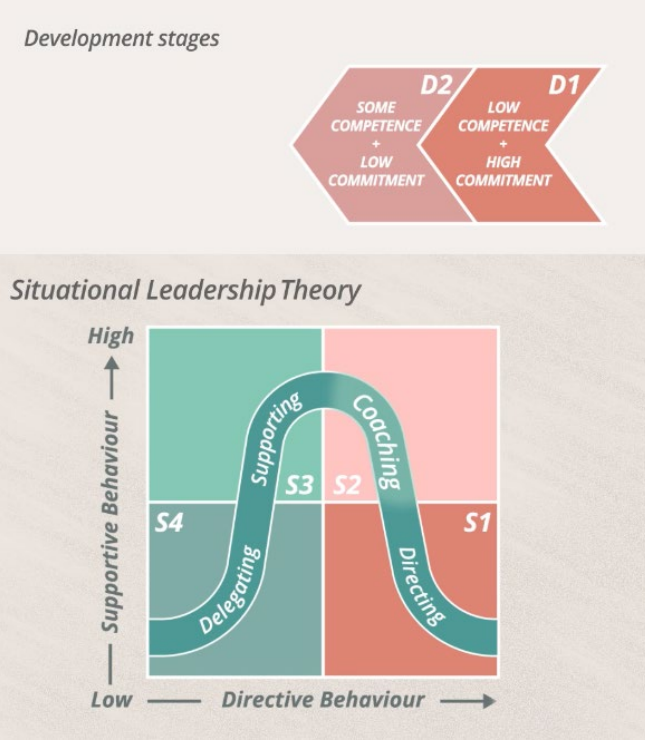
At this stage, a Directing management style is most appropriate. This involves giving high levels of direction and low levels of support. A directing manager clearly defines roles and tasks for their team and closely monitors them, without asking for their input.



Situational Leadership Theory (cont.)

At D2, when the team has reached a stage of low to moderate maturity, team members start to gain the relevant skills needed to perform the task. Although they are starting to become more competent at this stage, the team may still be unable to perform their task to a high level, which could cause them to lose motivation.

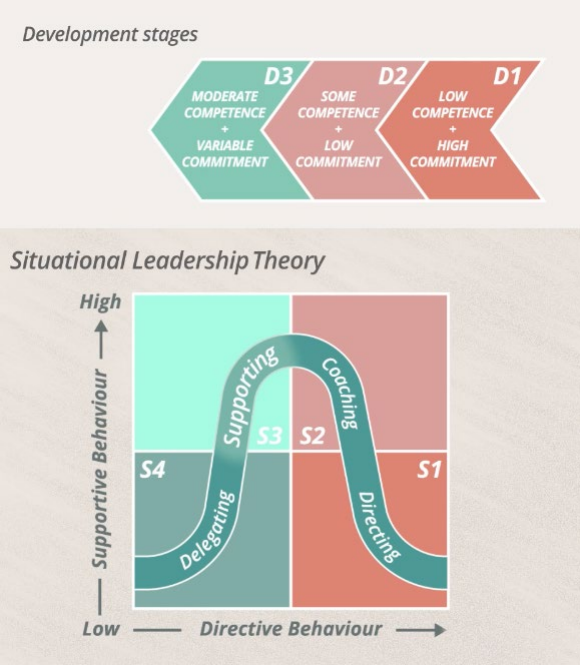
Here, a Coaching style is best. This involves giving high levels of both direction and support: the manager defines roles and tasks, but they also encourage team members to ask questions and contribute their own ideas.



Situational Leadership Theory (cont.)

Once the team has reached moderate to high maturity - at stage D3 - its members have developed the skills required to perform their task effectively. At this point, continuing to use a highly directive style of management could cause resentment within the team and they may lose commitment.

This is where leaders may want to switch to a Supporting style. This is characterised by giving low levels of direction and high levels of support. The manager and their employees are beginning to collaborate: they are sharing ideas and making decisions together.

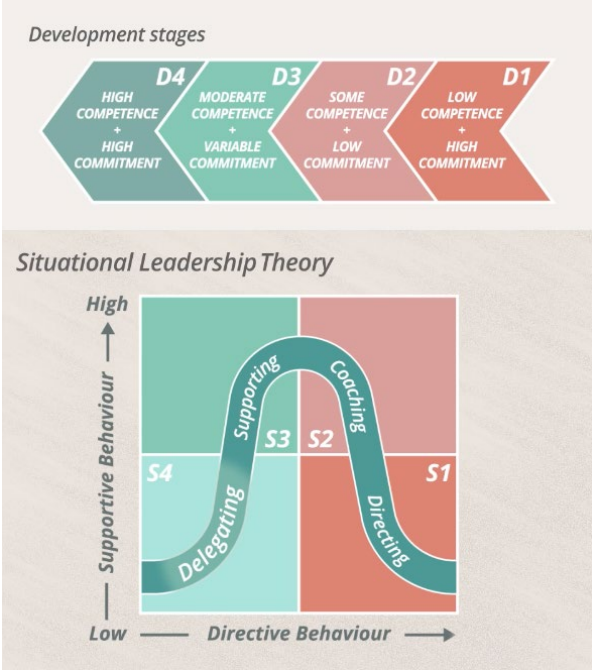


Situational Leadership Theory (cont.)

Finally, at D4, the team is fully mature and its team members are competent and committed to completing their task.

Here, a Delegating style is most appropriate. This involves giving low levels of support and direction; effectively, a delegating manager passes all responsibility for decisions and implementation to their team members. They trust their team to get the job done.

At this point, the team has been empowered to complete the task with little-to-no supervision from their manager. The team takes responsibility for the success - or failure - of its efforts.



Situational Leadership Theory - Example

Let's look at how this might work in practice.

Lin is a senior manager at an ice cream factory, and she has been put in charge of a brand new team. The team has been given a month to develop new flavour combinations for the following summer season.

To begin with, the team has no idea where to start - so Lin adopts a Directing style. She develops a list of possible flavours for the team to use and instructs them to try each one in turn, carry out some tasting sessions and record the results.

Situational Leadership Theory - Example (cont.)

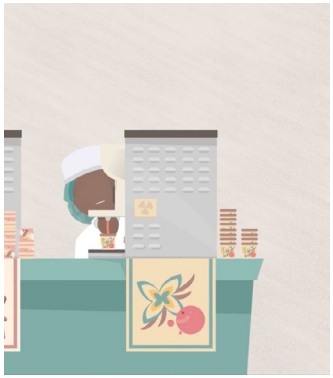
After a few days, the team becomes more comfortable with the task and wants to take on more responsibility. At this point, Lin switches to a Coaching style. She still provides direction about which ingredients to use, but is more open to the team trying out their own flavour combinations.

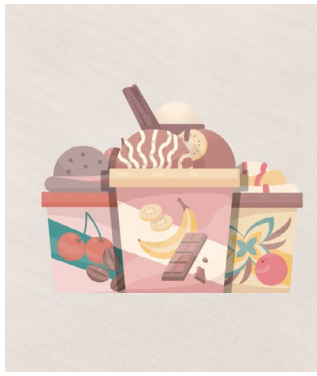
The following week, the team members have grown much more confident in their abilities and are beginning to feel resentful at being restricted to only using Lin's list of ingredients. Recognising this, she changes to a Supporting style - she stops telling the team which ingredients to use and instead engages in discussions with them about what flavours they might want to try.

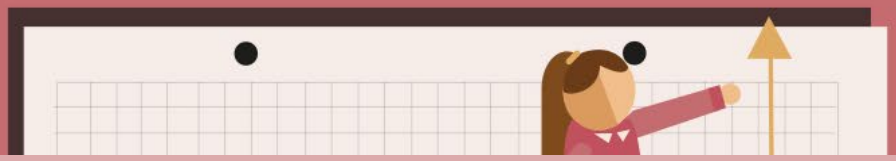
Situational Leadership Theory - Example (cont.)

Finally, as the team enters the last week of the project, Lin sees they are now fully skilled and committed to the task - so she moves to a Delegating style. She gives the team full rein over their flavour choices and lets them finish the project without any further input.

Hersey and Blanchard's model shows how management styles might be adapted over time to ensure team members remain motivated and get the task done.







Action-centred Leadership

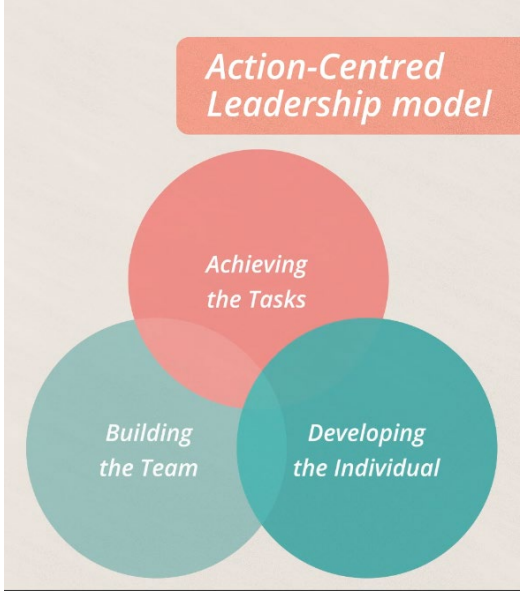
We'll now move on to look at two more approaches to team management, where the focus is on achieving a balance between the needs of team members and the needs of the task.

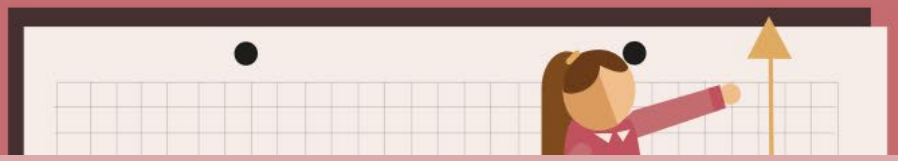
First, we'll consider the Action-Centred Leadership model. First published in 1973, by British academic John Adair, this model is still widely used today.

Action-centred Leadership (cont.)

It is typically drawn as a Venn diagram which shows that team managers have three overlapping areas of responsibility. These are:

- Achieving the task - this includes setting objectives, establishing roles within the team, delegating work, and monitoring performance against the plan
- Building and maintaining the team - this includes setting standards, communicating well, raising morale, and giving feedback
- Developing the individual - this involves understanding each team member's skills, and supporting their progress with praise and rewards for good work





Action-centred Leadership (cont.)

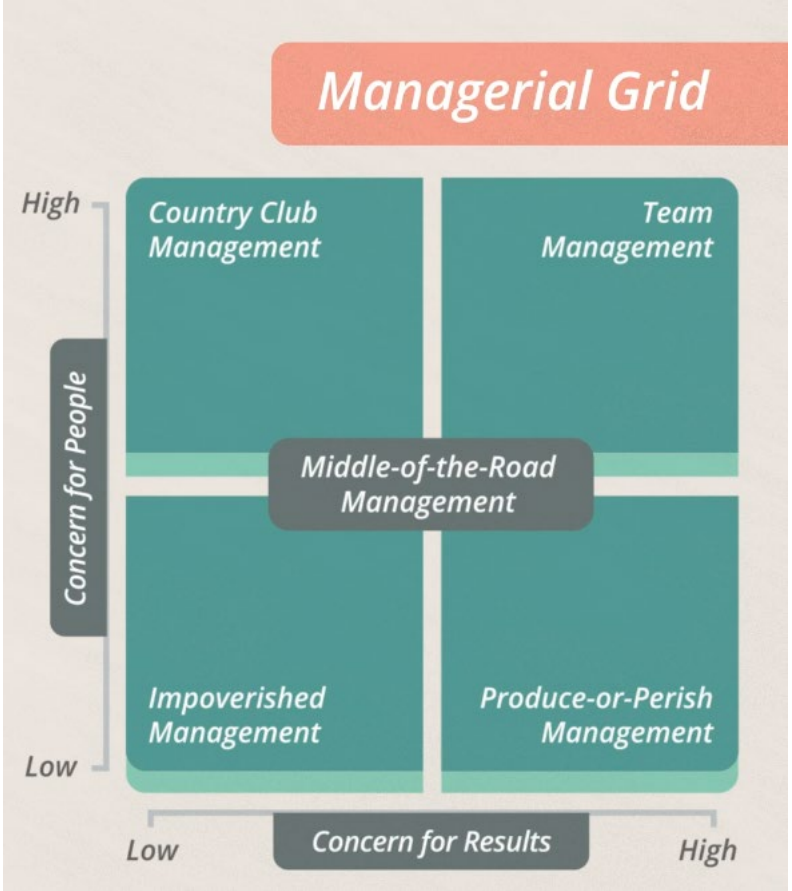
Adair said that, because each of these three areas are interlinked, a team can only perform at its most effective level when a manager takes control of all three areas.

The task can only be completed with a fully-skilled team working as a cohesive unit; the team can only work as a cohesive unit if each member understands their roles and responsibilities and they are properly rewarded for their work; and team members can only develop the skills they need if the task ahead of them is clear and they feel supported by their manager and colleagues.

Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid

But Adair was not the first to think of team management in terms of balancing the needs of the individual, the team and the task. Academics Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed a detailed model to illustrate this idea in 1964. It is known as the Managerial Grid.

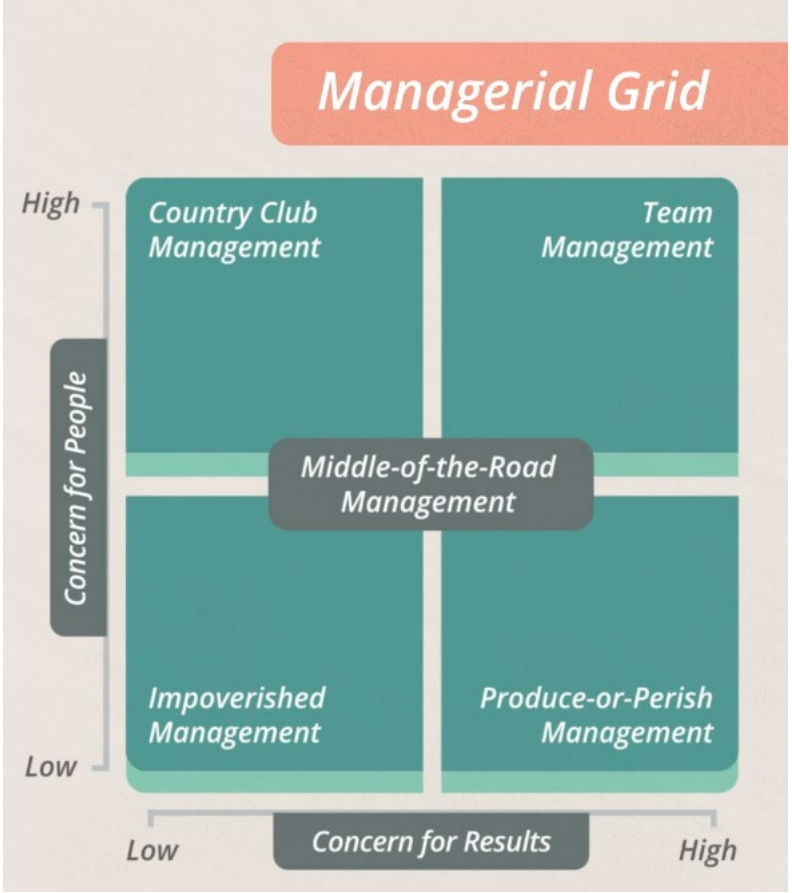
The grid is laid out along two axes. The vertical axis represents the manager's level of concern for their team members, and the horizontal axis represents their concern for results. Depending on where the manager falls on the grid, they will fit into one of five management styles.



Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (cont.)

For example, managers who score highly on concern for their team members and low on concern for getting the task done, fall into a style known as 'Country Club Management'. These managers are focused on keeping their team members happy - but just because they're happy, it doesn't necessarily mean they are effective.

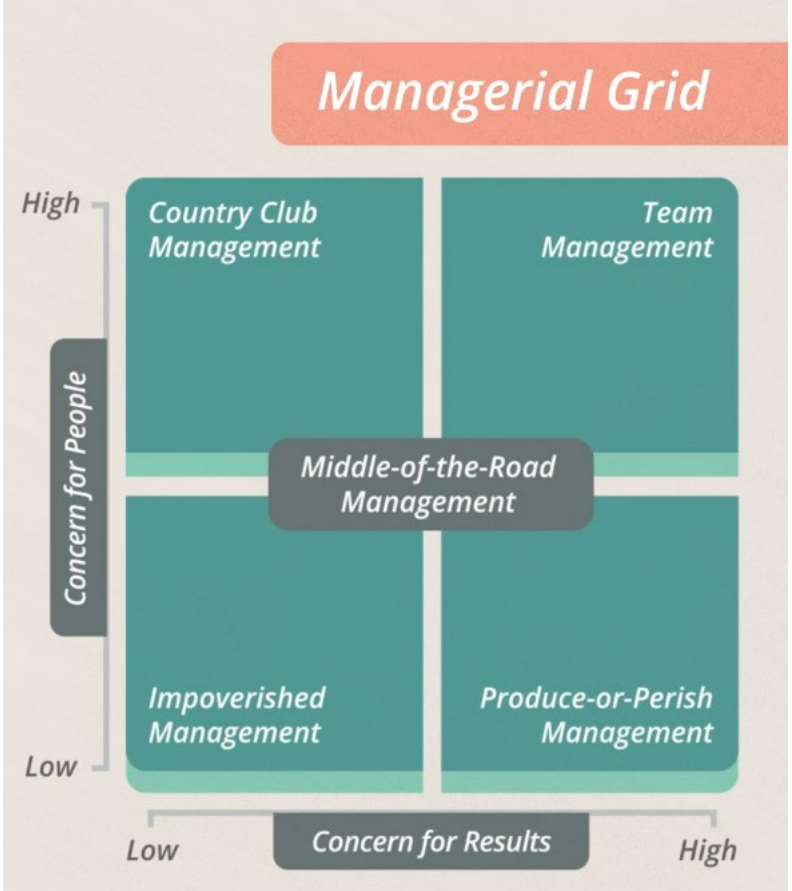
At the other extreme is 'Produce or Perish Management', which favours the task over the needs of the team. For these managers, the most important things are efficiency and results, while the team is seen only as a means to an end - it only exists to get the task done.



Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (cont.)

If a manager falls into the 'Impoverished Management' style, they do not have a strong concern for either results or people. These are hands-off managers in every sense - they do the minimum required to stay in the job and their methods are generally ineffective.

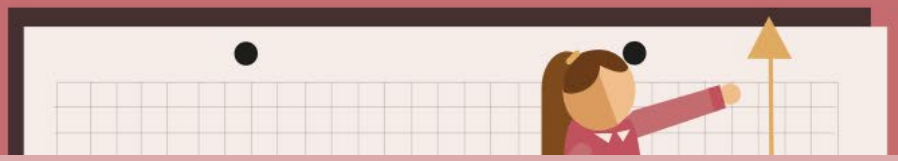
'Middle-of-the-road Management' falls somewhere in between all of these approaches. But that doesn't mean it achieves a good balance. According to Blake and Mouton, a middle-of-the-road manager compromises on the needs of both the task and their team members, and ends up serving neither of them well.



Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (cont.)

The final approach is the 'Team Management' style. This gives equally high priority to the needs of team members and the task. Blake and Mouton argue this is the ideal form of management, and the only one that acknowledges both sides of the manager's job.

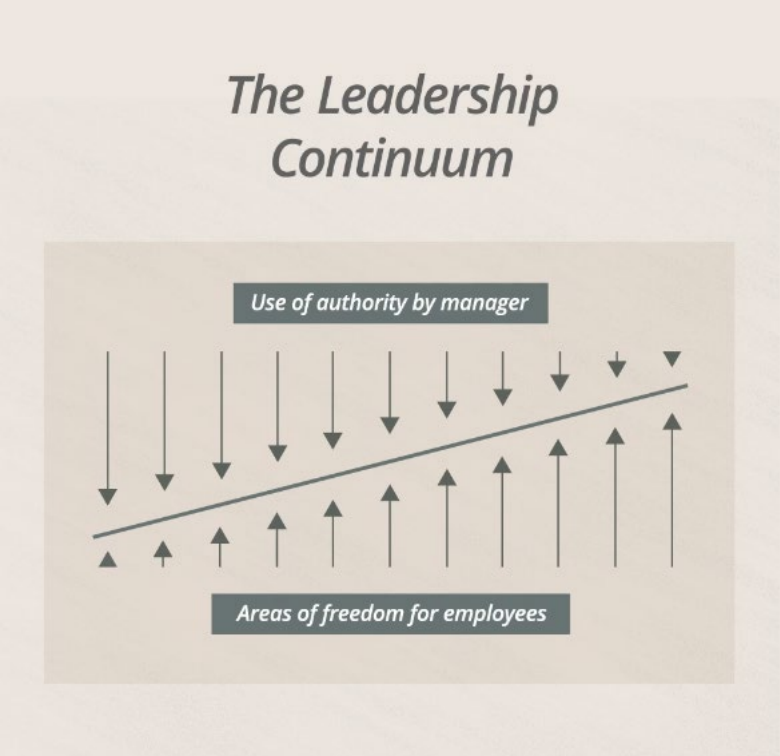
However, that doesn't mean it's easy to achieve - and the two sets of priorities may sometimes come into conflict. If a project has a looming deadline, for example, team members may be required to make personal sacrifices to make sure 'all hands are on deck'. And, vice versa, if team members are required to temporarily work on another project or to take time out for training and development, managers may have to accept that progress on the project will suffer.



The Leadership Continuum

We'll now take a look at a model that attempts to take a more fluid approach to how teams are managed.

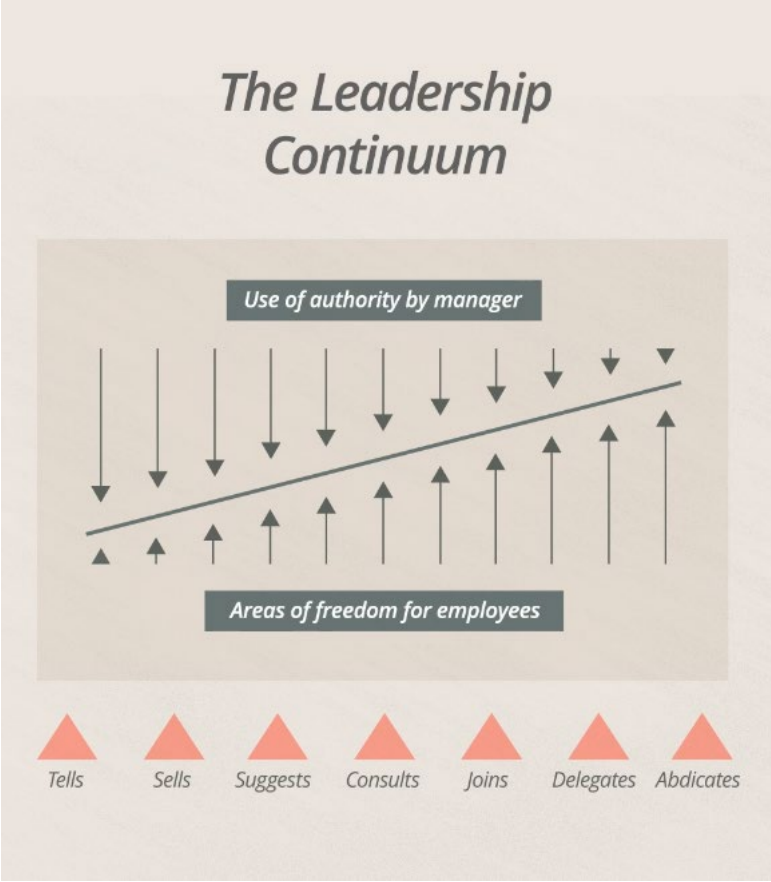
The Leadership Continuum was developed in 1958 by psychologists Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt. They argued that a manager's approach should be flexible - and that it should change according to the circumstances of their team and organisation.



The Leadership Continuum (cont.)

Instead of dividing managers into a limited number of 'styles', however, they devised a more fluid 'continuum' of management approaches that vary according to how much authority a leader shows, and the amount of freedom they give to employees. The continuum is not supposed to be viewed as a one-directional timeline - managers may move up or down it at different times, according to the changing needs of the team or the task.

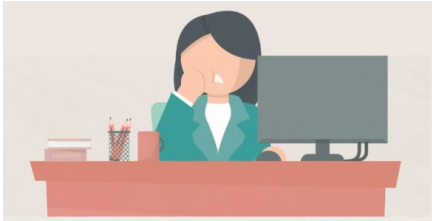
However, while the continuum is intended to be completely fluid, Tannenbaum and Schmidt did identify seven behaviour points to help illustrate what your management style might look like as you move along the line.

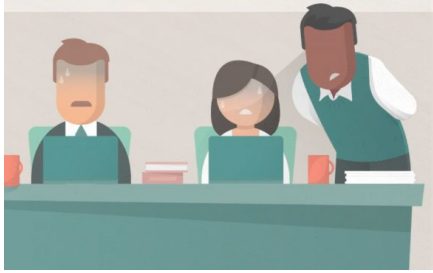


The Leadership Continuum (cont.)

At the far left of the continuum, the manager's authority is extensive, and workers have little say over what they do or how they do it. The manager simply 'tells' them what to do.

This management style is commonplace where workers carry out routine work with no room for creativity. It could also apply to jobs where there is heavy supervision of employees - in fields where the work is dangerous, for example - or where an employee is new.

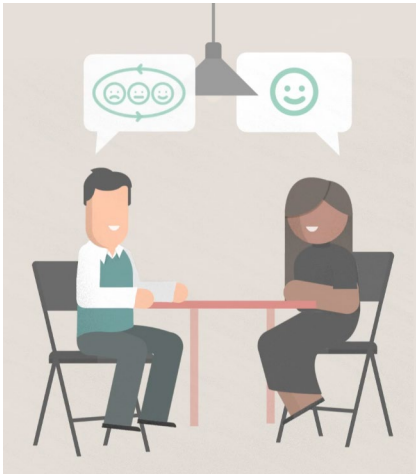


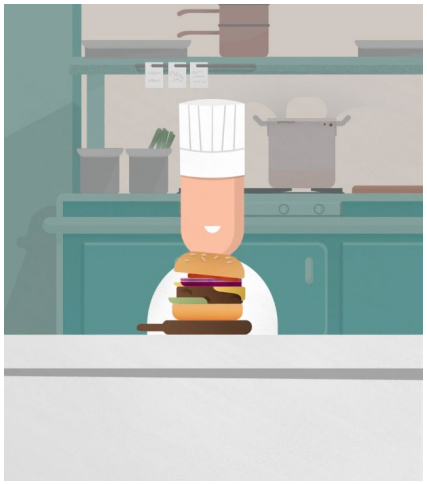


The Leadership Continuum (cont.)

As you move right along the continuum, workers are gradually given more control. So at the midpoint, the manager 'consults' employees on what to do. Workers have the freedom to make suggestions, and the manager gives up some authority in exchange for their input.

Finally, at the far right of the continuum, workers are allowed to direct their own work. Here, the manager only lightly supervises employees or even gives them full responsibility to get the job done. This approach is often used with highly skilled and experienced workers.



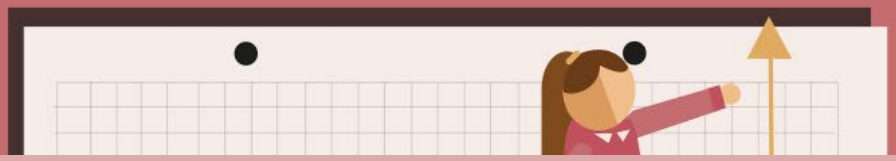


Influencing Forces

This model acknowledges that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to management - every situation will be different. A manager needs to choose the right amount of authority to exercise, depending on the difficulty of the project and the track record of their team. Complex activities and inexperienced teams often require more direction than workers carrying out routine tasks, or mature, self-directed teams.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt propose there are three forces that influence what type of leadership is both practical and desirable in any situation. These forces are:

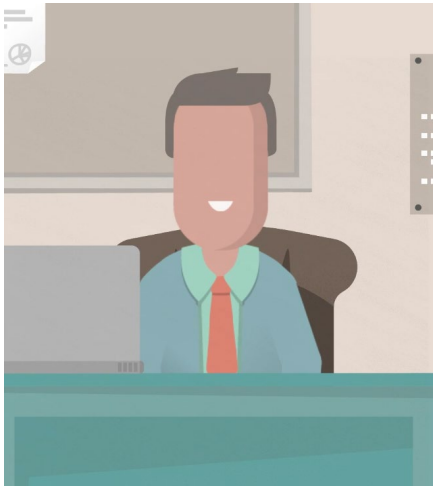
- Forces within the manager
- Forces within the team
- Forces within the situation

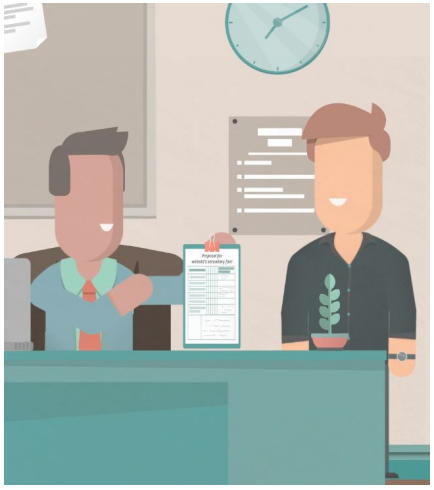


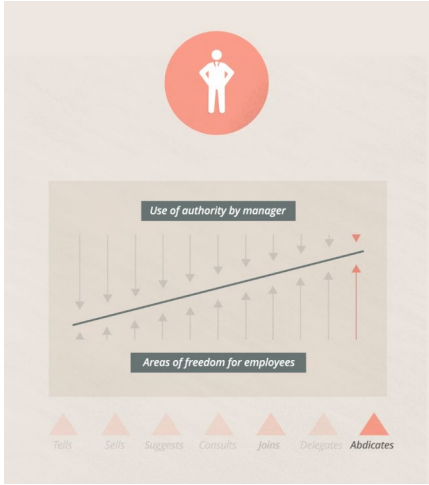
Influencing Forces - Example

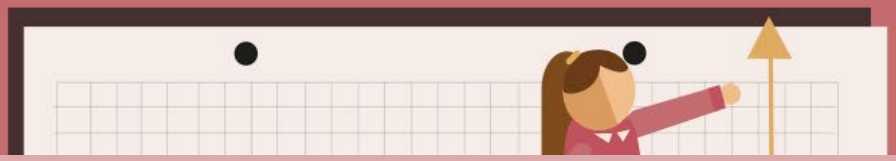
So what does this mean in practice? Let's look at an example.

Lionel manages the software development team at an online clothes retailer. As a manager, he allows team members to take part in decision-making and is highly confident in his team as he has worked with them for several years. This means his internal forces push him towards the right-hand side of the leadership continuum, where he exercises less authority and gives team members more freedom.







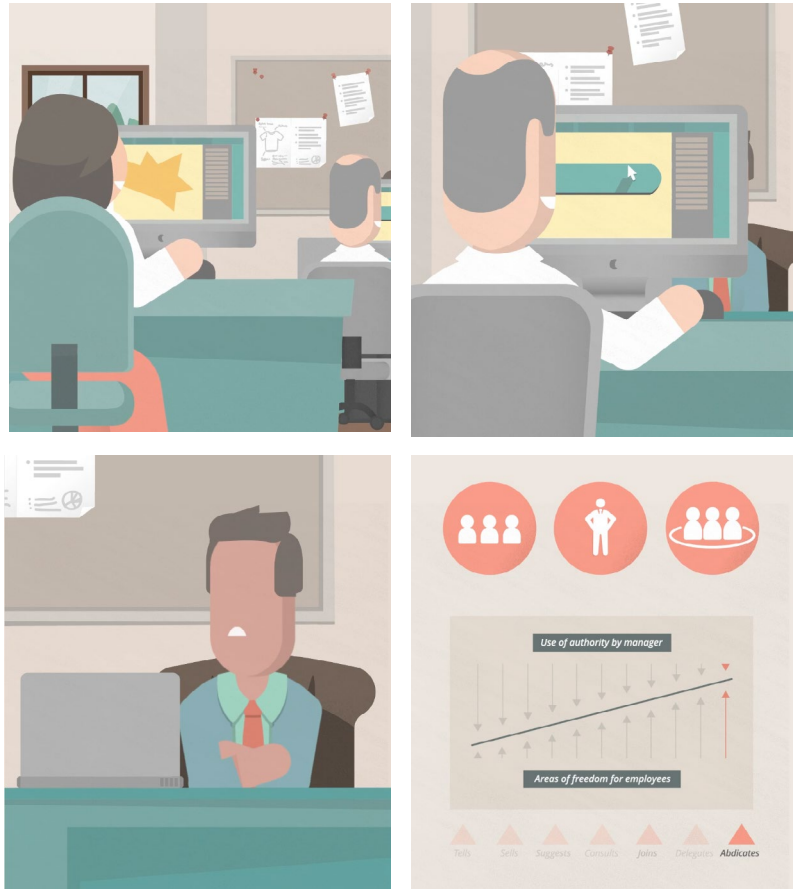


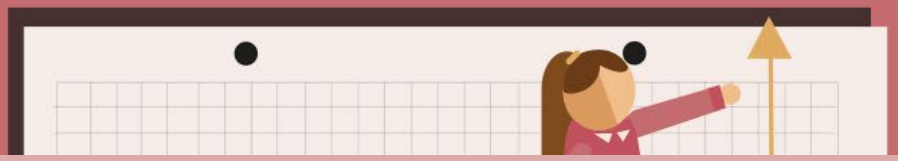
Influencing Forces - Example (cont.)

His team are happy to take responsibility for decision-making and have a relatively high desire for independence. So the forces operating within the team also lend themselves towards a less hands-on management style.

The majority of the team's tasks are also suited to giving them the creative freedom to problem-solve - the team has a lot of experience in designing new webpages for the company's online store and they always perform to a high level when left to work independently.

So here, all three forces combine to influence Lionel to give his team a lot of freedom and to have little direct involvement in their day-to-day work.



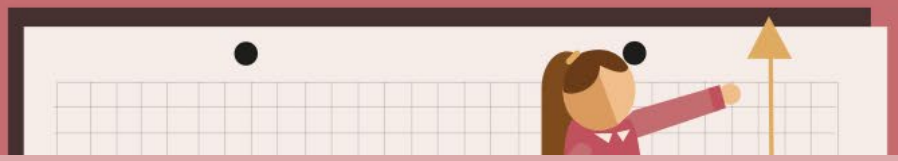


Influencing Forces - Example (cont.)

However, if one of these forces changes, Lionel may need to adjust his management approach.

For example, Lionel has a low tolerance for risk. If a new project with an extremely urgent deadline comes up, he may feel uncomfortable leaving his team to work on the task independently. His internal forces might influence him to take a more controlling approach to reassure himself that the task will be completed on time.

Similarly, if the retailer was bought by a new owner with a culture of more hands-on management, Lionel could find that the new situational forces this creates mean he has to reel in some of the creative freedom he usually gives his team.

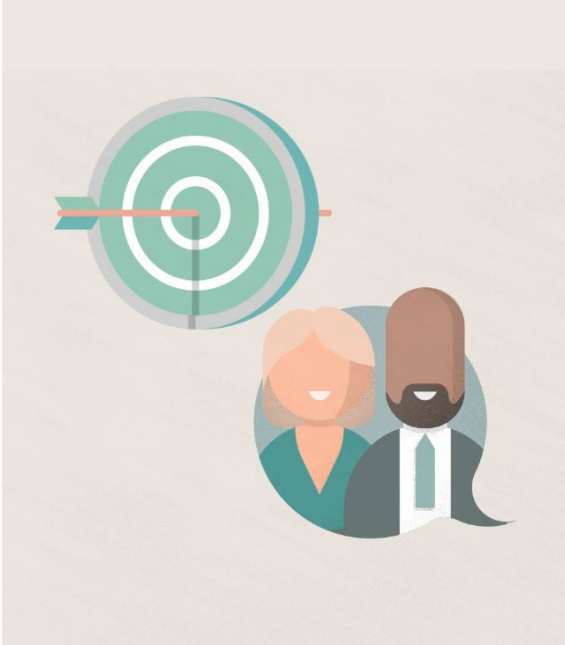


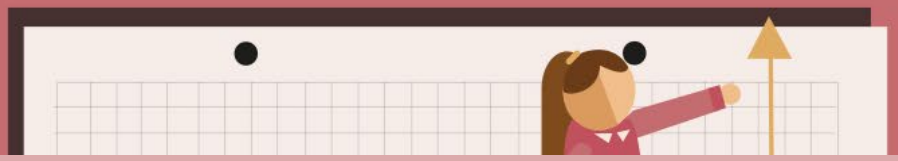
The Difference between Managing and Leading

We've looked at how you can effectively manage a team to higher levels of performance. But in some situations, you may not be directly responsible for managing a team - you may, instead, need to manage the team leader.

Before we go any further, let's first consider a key question - is there any difference between a 'manager' and a 'leader'?

Traditionally, management was seen as the art of delivering objectives, while leadership was seen as the art of guiding people.



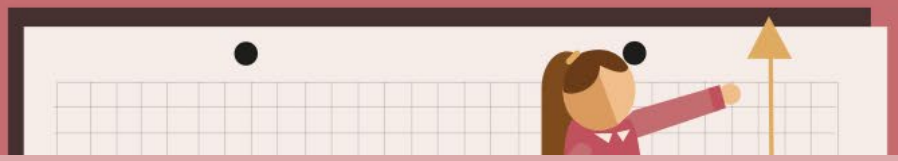


The Difference between Managing and Leading (cont.)

However, there is a longstanding debate about how distinct these two concepts really are. Some authors argue that leadership is a completely separate discipline, with its own concerns. Others see the two as almost identical.

Perhaps the best compromise between these opposing groups was put forward by the theorist Henry Mintzberg. He argued that management and leadership are distinct, but that they are 'difficult to separate in day-to-day practice.'

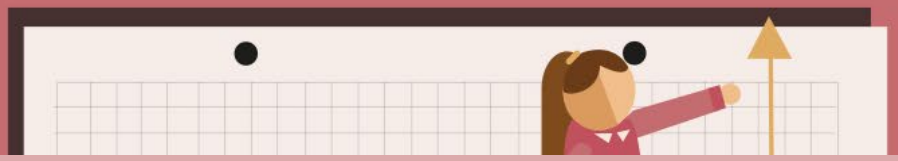
What almost all management thinkers agree on is that to be good at their job today, managers need both these elements, to function at a high level. Although it is possible to be a good manager without being a leader, the goal is to do both well.



The Team Leader's Role

So a team leader's role is twofold. First, they have to make sure the team achieves its objectives. Crucially, this does not mean the leader should try to do everything themselves. Instead, they should make effective use of their team. This means:

- Delegating
- Setting targets
- Monitoring performance

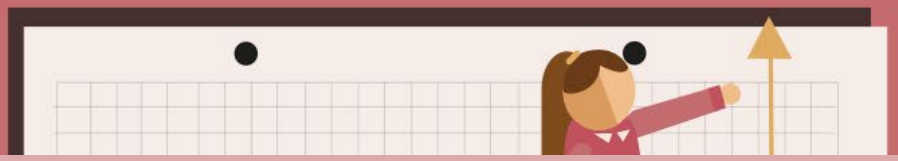


The Team Leader's Role (cont.)

However, the team leader's role is not just focused on delivering the task at hand - they must also take account of the needs of their team members. They need to offer:

- Support and guidance
- Supervision
- Learning and development

Again, we saw this kind of distinction in the three overlapping circles of individual, team and task in Adair's 'Action-centred Leadership' model. None of these elements exists in isolation - they are dependent on each other.



Emotional Intelligence

To achieve the task, team leaders have to build and maintain effective teams. And to build effective teams, they have to know how to get the best out of each team member, and how their interaction with each individual will affect their work.

One way you can help make sure team leaders have the skills to deliver all three of these elements is to apply the concept of emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence (cont.)

Developed by psychologist Daniel Goleman in the 1990s, emotional intelligence is made up of five different elements. These are:

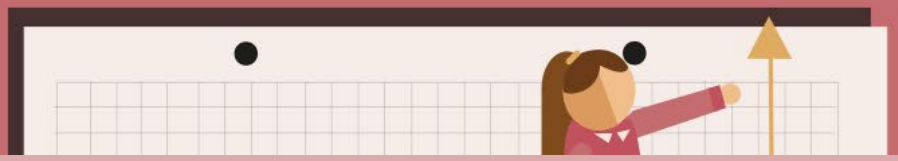
- Self-awareness - that is, the understanding you have of yourself and the effect you have on others
- Self-regulation - or the ability to manage your emotions and control your behaviour
- Motivation - which is the drive to get things done, while maintaining high standards
- Empathy - which considers your ability to put yourself in the shoes of other people and to respond to them in a sensitive way
- Social skills - that is, all the ways we interact with others, taking into account the four other aspects of emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (cont.)

Demonstrating these elements of emotional intelligence is a crucial aspect of leadership.

Team members will look to their leader for guidance and see them as a role model. If a team's leader is able to stay calm, positive and supportive, it's likely that their team members will too.

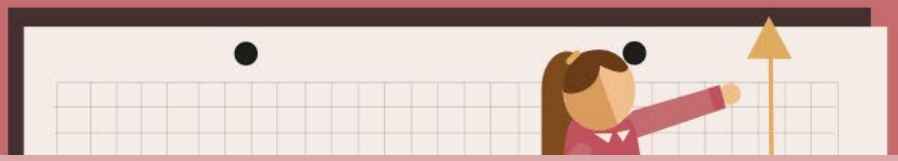
Goleman thought that the better you are at managing each of these five traits, the better leader you can be. And he saw emotional intelligence as a skill, that – like any skill – can be improved through practice.



Emotional Intelligence (cont.)

Team leaders should be encouraged to reflect on their own levels of emotional intelligence and to work on improving areas of weakness. For example, a manager who displays poor levels of self-regulation - such as losing their temper if one of their team members fails to perform - could enrol on a training course designed to improve self-control.

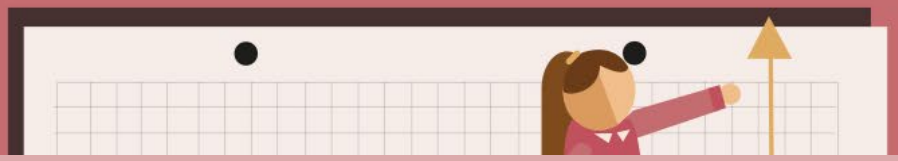
That brings us to the end of the second lesson. We've looked at the impact that different leadership styles can have on a team's performance and considered how managers should balance the needs of individuals, teams and tasks to achieve their goals. We've also considered some of the key skills and abilities that leaders need to get the best out of their teams.



Values-based and Ethical Leadership

We've seen how important it is for managers to lead with emotional intelligence and to encourage their team members to do the same. Being able to recognise and manage your own emotions while understanding the emotions of others is also a key consideration in values-based leadership (VBL). Explore this in more detail in the associated information sheet in the lesson.

The concept of values is often grouped with ethics – and they are closely linked. While values are the beliefs that shape a person's behaviour, you can think of ethics as moral principles of 'right' and 'wrong'. For all managers – and especially those who lead other managers – ethical leadership is crucial. When managers lead ethically, it creates a ripple effect, which sets the standard for behaviour across teams and builds a culture of trust, fairness, and accountability. Find out more in the 'Ethical Leadership' information sheet in the lesson.



Recap

In this lesson, you have learned about:

- Adapting management styles to meet changing needs
- Balancing needs
- Skills and attributes of effective team leaders