LEADERSHIP

(PART OF PAPER – V GENERAL STUDIES MAINS)

What is Leadership?
While almost everyone seems to agree that leadership involves an influence process, differences tend to center around whether leadership must be non coercive (as opposed to using authority, rewards, and punishments to exert influence over followers) and whether it is distinct from management. The latter issue has been a particularly heated topic of debate in recent years, with most experts arguing that leadership and management are different.

For instance, Abraham Zaleznik of the Harvard Business School argues that leaders and managers are very different kinds of people.4 They differ in motivation, personal. history, and how they think and act. Zaleznik says that managers tend to adopt impersonal. if not passive, attitudes toward goals, whereas leaders takes a personal and active attitude toward goals. Managers tend to view work as an enabling process involving some combination of people and ideas interacting to establish strategies and make decisions. Leaders work from high risk positions-indeed, they are often temperamentally disposed to seek out risk and danger" especially when opportunity and reward appear high. Managers prefer to work with people; they avoid solitary activity because it makes them anxious. They relate to people according to the role they play in a sequence of events or in a decision-making process. Leaders, who are concerned with ideas, relate to people in more intuitive and empathic ways.

John Kotter, a colleague of Zaleznik at Harvard, also argues that leadership is different from management, but for different reasons.s Management, he proposes, is about coping with complexity. Good management brings about order and consistency by drawing up formal plans, designing rigid organization structures, and monitoring results against the plans. Leadership, in contrast, is about coping with change. Leaders establish direction by developing a vision of the future; then they align people by communicating this vision and inspiring them to overcome hurdles. Kotter sees both strong leadership and strong management as necessary for optimum organizational effectiveness. But he believes that most organizations are **underled** and **overmanaged**. He claims we need to focus more on developing leadership in organizations because the people in charge today are too concerned with keeping things on time and on budget and with doing what was done yesterday, only doing it 5 percent better.

Thus we define leadership as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals. The source of this influence may be formal, such as that provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. Since management positions come with some degree of formally designated authority, a person may assume a leadership role simply because of the position he or she holds in the organization. But not all leaders are managers; nor, for that matter, are all managers leaders. Just because an organization provides its managers with certain formal rights is no assurance they will be able to lead effectively. We find that nonsanctioned leadership-that is, the ability to influence that arises outside the formal structure of the organization-is as important or more important than formal influence. In other words, leaders can emerge from within a group as well as by, formal appointment to lead a group.

Transition in Leadership Theories
Trait Theories.
The media has long been a believer in trait theories. They identify people like Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, Nelson Mandela, Ted Turner, Barbara Jordan, and Jesse Jackson as leaders, and then describe them in terms such as *charis-matic, erithusiastic,* and *courageous.* Well, the media isn't alone. The search for personality, social, physical, or intellectual attributes that would describe leaders and differentiate them from nonleaders goes back to the 1930s and research done by psychologists.

Research efforts at isolating leadership traits resulted in a number of dead ends. For instance, a review of 20 different studies identified nearly 80 leadership traits, but only 5 of these traits were common to 4 or more of the investigations. If the search was intended to identify a set of traits that would always differentiate leaders from followers and effective from ineffective leaders, the search failed. Perhaps it was a bit optimistic to believe there could be consistent and unique traits that would apply universally to all effective leaders.

If, however, the search was intended to identify traits that were consistently associated with leadership, the results can be interpreted in a more impressive light. For example, six traits on which leaders tend to differ from non-leaders **are ambition and energy, the desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, and job-relevant knowledges** Additionally, recent research provides strong evidence that people who are high self-monitors-that is, are highly flexible in adjusting their behavior in different situations-are much more likely to emerge as leaders in groups than low self-monitors. Overall, the cumulative findings from more than half a century of research lead to conclusion that some traits increase the likelihood of success as a leader, but none of the traits *guarantee* success.

The trait approach has not proven more successful in explaining leadership due to at least four reasons. It overlooks very the needs of followers, it generally fails to clarify the relative importance of various traits, it doesn't separate cause from effect (for example, are leaders self-confident or does success as a leader build self-confidence?), and it ignores situational factors. These limitations have led researchers to look in other directions. A major movement away from traits began as early as the 1940s. Leadership research from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s emphasized the preferred **behavioral styles** that leaders demonstrated.

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Behavioral theories

The inability to strike "gold" in the trait "mines" led researchers to look at the behaviors that specific leaders exhibited. They wondered if there was something unique in the way effective leaders behave. For example, Robert Crandall, chairman of American Airlines, and Paul B. Kazarian, the former chairman of Sunbeam-Oster, both have been very successful in leading their companies through difficult times. And they both rely on a common leadership style through talking, intense, autocratic. Does this suggest autocratic behavior is a preferred style for *all* leaders?

If the behavioral approach to leadership were successful, it would have implications quite different from those of the trait approach. If trait research had been successful, it would have provided a basis for *selecting* the "right" person to assume formal positions in groups and organizations requiring leadership. In contrast, if behavioral studies were to turn up critical behavioral determinants of leadership, we could *train* people to be leaders. The difference between trait and behavioral theories, in terms of application, lies in their underlying assumptions. If trait theories were valid, then leadership is basically **inborn**: You either have it or you don't. On the other hand, if there were specific behaviors that identified leaders, then we could teach leadership-we could design programs that implanted these behavioral patterns in individuals who desired to be effective leaders. This was surely a more exciting avenue, for it meant the supply of leaders could be expanded. If training worked, we could have an infinite supply of effective leaders.

Ohio State Studies

The most comprehensive and replicated of the behavioral theories resulted from research that began at Ohio State University in the late 1940s. These researchers sought to identify independent dimensions of leader behavior. Beginning with over 1,000 dimensions, they eventually narrowed the list into two categories that substantially accounted for most of the leadership behavior described by subordinates. They called these two dimensions ***initiating structure*** and ***consideration***.

Initiating structure refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of subordinates in the search for goal attainment. It includes behavior that attempts to organize work, work relationships, and goals. The leader characterized as high in initiating structure could be described in terms such as "assigns group members to particular tasks," "expects workers to maintain definite standards of performance," and "emphasizes the meeting of deadlines." Robert Crandall and Paul Kazarian exhibit high initiating structure behavior.

Consideration is described as the extent to which a person is likely to have job relationships that are characterized by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas, and regard for their feelings. He or she shows concern for followers' comfort, well-being, status, and satisfaction. A leader high in consideration could be described as one who helps subordinates with personal problems, is friendly and approachable, and treats all subordinates as equals. The leadership style is very people oriented, emphasizing friendliness and empowerment.

Extensive research, based on these definitions, found that leaders high in initiating structure and consideration (a "high-high" leader) tended to achieve high subordinate performance and satisfaction more frequently than those who rated low on either consideration, initiating structure, or both. However, the "high-high" style did not always result in positive consequences. For example, leader behavior characterized as high on initiating structure led to greater rates of grievances, absenteeism, and turnover and lower levels of job satisfaction for workers performing routine tasks. Other studies found that high consideration was negatively related to performance ratings of the leader by his or her superior.

In conclusion, the Ohio State studies suggested that the "high-high" style generally resulted in positive outcomes, but enough exceptions were found to indicate that situational factors needed to be integrated into the theory.

University of Michigan Studies

Leadership studies undertaken at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, at about the same time as those being done at Ohio State, had similar research objectives: to locate behavioral characteristics of leaders that appeared to be related to measures of performance effectiveness.

The Michigan group also came up with two dimensions of leadership behavior that they labeled **employee oriented and production oriented**. 14 Employed-oriented leaders were described as emphasizing interpersonal relations; they took a personal interest in the needs of their subordinates and accepted individual differences among members. The production-oriented leaders, in contrast, tended to emphasize the technical or task aspects of the job: Their main concern was in accomplishing their group's tasks, and the group members were a means to that end.

The conclusions arrived at by the Michigan researchers strongly favored the leaders who were employee-oriented in their behavior. Employee-oriented leaders were associated with higher group productivity and higher job satisfaction. Production-oriented leaders tended to be associated with low group productivity and lower job satisfaction.

The Managerial Grid

A graphic portrayal of a two-dimensional view of leadership style was developed by Blake and Mouton. They proposed a Managerial Grid based on the styles of "concern for people" and "concern for production," which essentially represent the Ohio State dimensions of consideration and initiating structure or the Michigan dimensions of employee oriented and production oriented.

The grid, depicted in Figure has 9 possible positions along each axis, creating 81 different positions in which the leader's style may fall. The grid does not show results produced but, rather, the dominating factors in a leader's thinking in regard to getting results.

Based on the findings of Blake and Mouton, managers were found to perform best under a 9,9 style, as contrasted, for example, with a 9,1 (authority type) or 1,9 (country club type) style.16 Unfortunately, the grid offers a better framework for conceptualizing leadership style than for presenting any tangible new information in clarifying the leadership quandary, since there is little substantive evidence to support the conclusion that a 9,9 style is most effective in all situations.

Scandinavian Studies

The three behavioral approaches we've just reviewed were essentially developed between the late 1940s and early 1960s. These approaches evolved during a time when the world was a far more stable and predictable place. In the belief that these studies fail to capture the more dynamic realities of today, researchers in Finland and Sweden have been reassessing whether there are only two dimensions that capture the essence of leadership behavior.Their basic premise is that in a changing world, effective leaders would exhibit development-oriented behavior. These are leaders who value experimentation, seek new ideas, and generate and implement change.

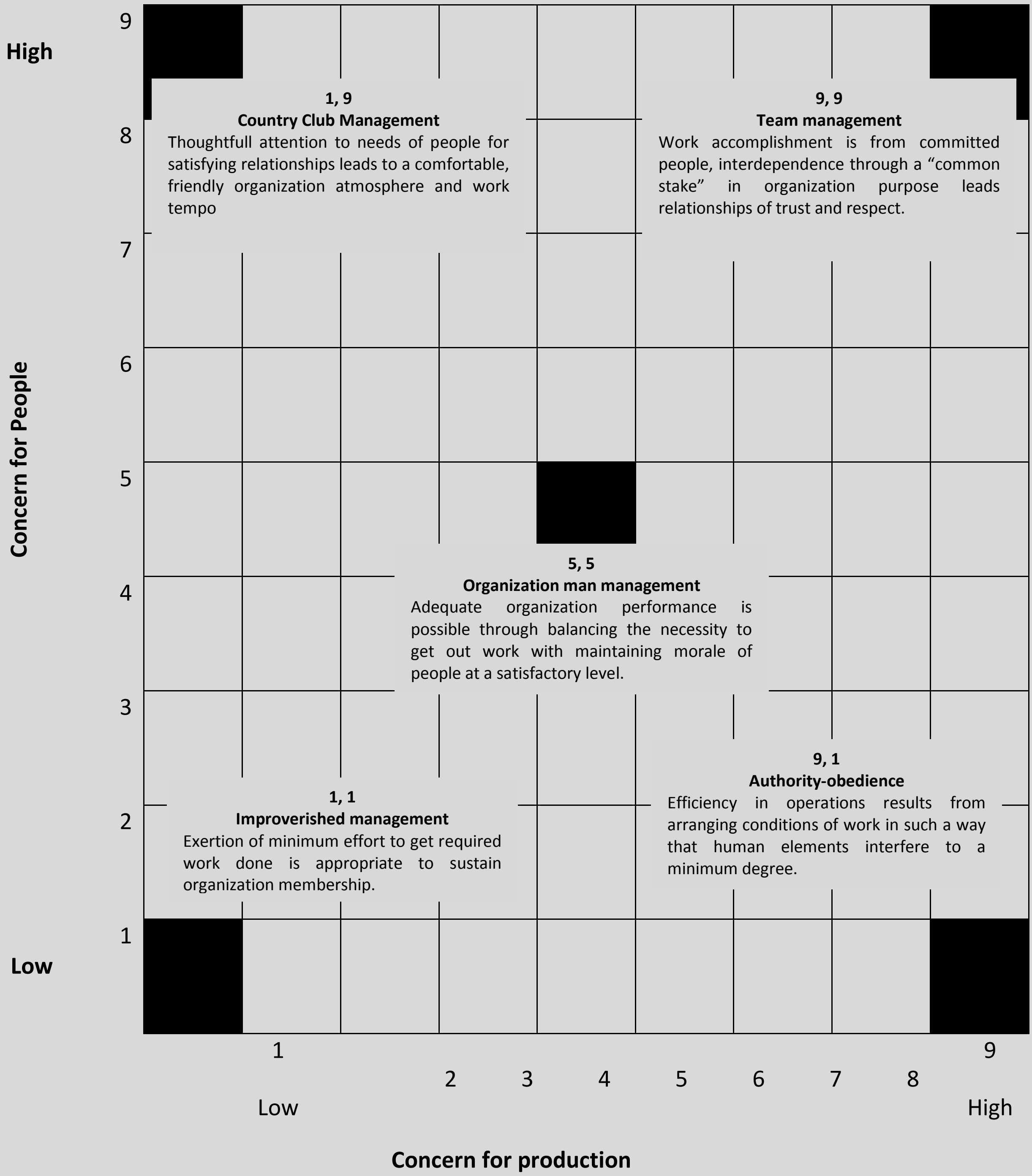
For instance, these Scandinavian researchers went back and looked at the original Ohio State data. They found that the Ohio State people included development items such as "pushes new ways of doing things," "originates new approaches to problems," and "encourages members to start new activities." But these items, at the time, didn't explain much toward effective leadership. It could be, the Scandinavian researchers proposed, that this was because developing new ideas and implementing change wasn't critical *in those days.* In today's dynamic environment, this may no longer be true. So the Scandinavian researchers have been conducting new studies looking to see if there is a third dimension-development orientation-that is related to leader effectiveness.

The early evidence is positive. Using samples of leaders in Finland and Sweden, the researchers have found strong support for development-oriented leader behavior as a separate and independent dimension.

It became increasingly clear to those who were studying the leadership phenomenon that the predicting of leadership success was more complex than isolating a few traits or preferable behaviors. The failure to obtain consistent results led to a focus on situational influences. The relationship between leadership style and effectiveness suggested that under condition *a,* style *x* would be appropriate whereas style *y* would be more suitable for condition *b,* and style z for condition c. But what were the conditions *a, b,* c, and so forth? It was one thing to say that leadership effectiveness was dependent on the situation and another to be able to isolate those situational conditions. No shortage of studies has attempted to isolate critical situational factors that affect leadership effectiveness. For instance, popular moderating variables used in the development of contingency theories include the degree of structure in the task being performed, the quality of leader-member relations, the leader's position power, subordinates' role clarity, group norms, information availability, subordinate acceptance of leader's decisions, and subordinate maturity. Several approaches to isolating key situational variables have proven more successful than others and, as a result, have gained wider recognition. We consider five of these: the **Fiedler model, Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory, leader-member exchange theory, and the path-goal and leader-participation models.**

Figure

The Managerial Grid



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Fiedler Model
The first comprehensive contingency model for leadership was developed by Fred Fiedler. The Fiedler contingency model proposes that effective group performance depends on the proper match between the leader's style of interacting with his or her subordinates and the degree to which the situation gives control and influence to the leader. Fiedler developed an instrument, which he called the least preferred coworker (LPC) questionnaire, that purports to measure **whether a person is task** or **relationship oriented**. Further, he isolated **three situational criteria-leader-member relations, task structure, and position** power-that he believes can be manipulated so as to create the proper match with the behavioral orientation of the leader. In a sense, the Fiedler model is an outgrowth of trait theory, since the LPC questionnaire is a simple psychological test. However, Fiedler goes significantly beyond trait and behavioral approaches by attempting to isolate situations, relating his personality measure to his situational classification, and then predicting leadership effectiveness as a function of the two.

IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP STYLE Fiedler believes a key factor in leadership success is the individual's basic leadership style. So he begins by trying to find out what that basic style is. Fiedler created the LPC questionnaire for this purpose. It contains 16 contrasting adjectives (such as- pleasant-unpleasant, efficient-inefficient, open-guarded, supportive-hostile). The questionnaire then asks the respondent to think of all the coworkers they have ever had and to describe the one person they *least enjoyed* working with by rating him or her on a scale of 1 to 8 for each of the 16 sets of contrasting adjectives. Fiedler believes that based on the respondents' answers to this LPC questionnaire, he can determine their basic leadership style. If the least preferred coworker is described in relatively positive terms (a high LPC score), then the respondent is primarily interested in good personal relations with this coworker. That is, if you essentially describe the person you are least able to work with in favorable terms, Fiedler would label you *relationship oriented.* In contrast, if the least preferred coworker is seen in relatively unfavorable terms (a low LPC score), the respondent is primarily interested in productivity and thus would be labeled *task oriented.* About 16 percent of respondents score in the middle range. Such individuals cannot be classified as either relationship or task oriented and thus fall outside the theory's predictions. The rest of our discussion, therefore, relates to the 84 percent who score in either the high or low range of the LPC.

Fiedler assumes that an individual's leadership style is fixed. As we show in a moment, this is important because it means that if a situation requires a task-oriented leader and the person in that leadership position is relationship oriented, either the situation has to be modified or the leader removed and replaced if optimum effectiveness is to be achieved. Fiedler argues that leadership style is innate to a person-you *can't* change your style to fit changing situa-tions!

DEFINING THE SITUATION After an individual's basic leadership style has been assessed through the LPC, it is necessary to match the leader with the situation. Fiedler has identified three contingency dimensions that, he argues, define the key situational factors that determine leadership effectiveness. These are **leader-member relations, task structure,** and **position power.** They are defined as follows:

1. *Leader-member relations:* The degree of confidence, trust, and respect subordinates have in their leader
2. *Task structure:* The degree to which the job assignments are procedurized (that is, structured or unstructured)
3. *Position power:* The degree of influence a leader has over power variables such as hiring, firing, discipline, promotions, and salary increases

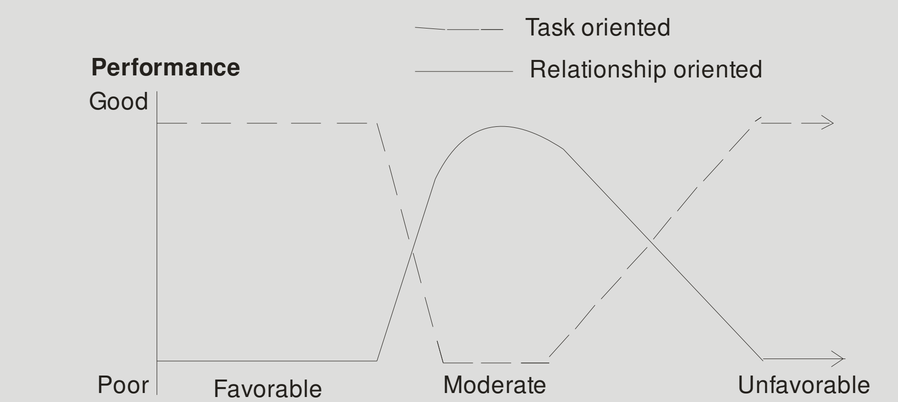
So the next step in the Fiedler model is to evaluate the situation in terms of these three contingency variables. Leader-member relations are either good or poor, task structure is either high or low, and position power is either strong or weak.

Fiedler states the better the leader-member relations, the more highly structured the job, and the stronger the position power, the more control or influence the leader has. For example, a very favorable situation (where the leader would have a great deal of control) might involve a payroll manager who is well respected and whose subordinates have confidence in her (good leader-member relations), where the activities to be done-such as wage computation, check writing, report filing-are specific and clear (high task structure), and the job provides considerable freedom for her to reward and punish her subordinates (strong position power). On the other hand, an unfavorable situation might be the disliked chairman of a voluntary United Way fundraising team. **In** this job, the leader has very little control. Altogether, by mixing the three contingency variables, there are potentially eight different situations or categories in which a leader could find him or herself.

MATCHING LEADERS AND SITUATIONS With knowledge of an individual's LPC and an assessment of the three contingency variables, the Fiedler model proposes matching them up to achieve maximum leadership effectiveness.

Based on Fiedler's study of over 1,200 groups, in which he compared relationship- versus task oriented leadership styles in each of the eight situational categories, he concluded that task oriented leaders tend to perform better in situations that were *very favorable* to them and in situations that were *very unfavorable* (see Figure 11-2). So Fiedler would predict that when faced with a category **I, II,** III, VII, or VIII situation, task-oriented leaders perform better. Relationship-oriented leaders, however, perform better in moderately favorable situations: categories IV through VI.

Figure
Findings from Fiedler Model



Category	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Leader-member relations	Good	Good	Good	Good	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Task structure	High	High	Low	Low	High	High	Low	Low
Position power	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak	Strong	Weak

Given Fiedler's findings, how would you apply them? You would seek to match leaders and situations. Individuals' LPC scores would determine the type of situation for which they were best suited. That "situation" would be defined by evaluating the three contingency factors of leader-member relations, task structure, and position power. But remember that Fiedler views an individual's leadership style as being fixed. Therefore, there are really only two ways in which to improve leader effectiveness.

First, you can change the leader to fit the situation-as in a baseball game, a manager can reach into his bullpen and put in a right-handed pitcher or a left-handed pitcher, depending on the situational characteristics of the hitter. The second alternative would be to change the situation to fit the leader. That could be done by restructuring tasks or increasing or decreasing the power of the leader to control factors such as salary increases, promotions, and disciplinary actions. To illustrate, assume a task-oriented leader is in a category IV situation. If this leader could increase his or her position power, then the leader would be operating in category III and the leader-situation match would be compatible for high group performance.

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Theory

Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard have developed a leadership model that has gained a strong following among management development specialists. This model-called situational leadership theory-has been used as a major training device at such Fortune 500 companies as BankAmerica, Caterpillar, IBM, Mobil Oil, and Xerox; it has also been widely accepted in all the military services. Although the theory has undergone limited evaluation to test its validity, we include it here because of its wide acceptance and its strong intuitive appeal.

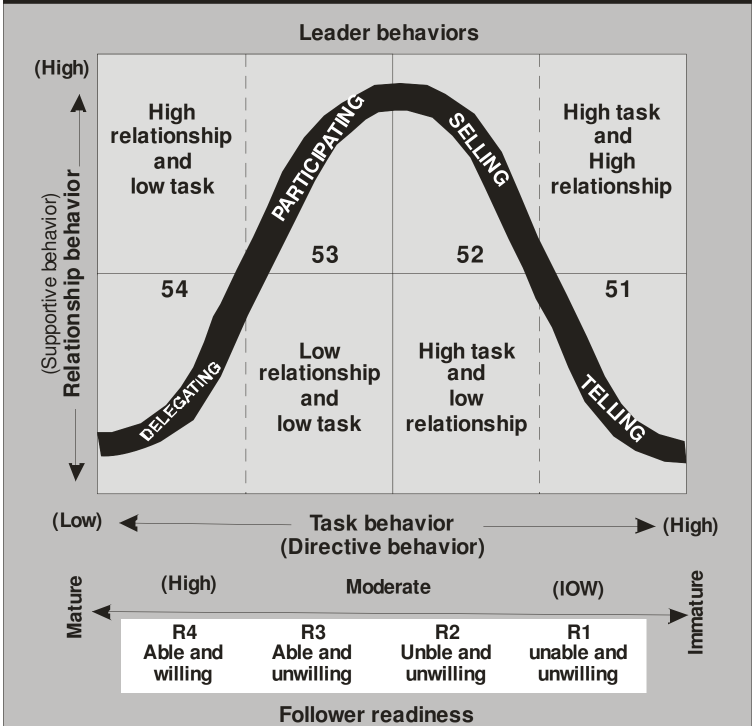
Situational leadership is a contingency theory that focuses on the followers. Successful leadership is achieved by selecting the right leadership style, which Hersey and Blanchard argue is contingent on the level of the followers' readiness or maturity.

The emphasis on the followers in leadership effectiveness reflects the reality that it is they who accept or reject the leader. Regardless of what the leader does, effectiveness depends on the actions of his or her followers. This is an important dimension that has been overlooked or underemphasized in most leadership theories. The term *readiness,* as defined by Hersey and Blanchard, refers to the extent to which people have the ability and willingness to accomplish a specific task.

Situational leadershig uses the same two leadership dimensions that Fiedler identified: task and relationship behaviors. However, Hersey and Blanchard go a step farther by considering each as either high or low and then combining them into four specific leader behaviors: telling, selling, participating, and delegating. They are described as follows:

- *Telling* (high task-low relationship). The leader defines roles and tells people what, how, when, and where to do various tasks. It emphasizes **directive behavior**.
- *Selling* (high task-high relationship). The leader provides both **directive behavior** and **supportive behavior**.
- *Participating* (low task-high relationship). The leader and follower share in decision making, with the main role of the leader being **facilitating and communicating**.
- *Delegating* (low task-low relationship). The leader provides little direction or support.

Figure
Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model



Source: P. Hersey and K.H. Blanchard, Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources, 5th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988. Used by permission from Ronald Campbell, President, Leadership Studies. Escondido, CA. September, 1991.

The final component in Hersey and Blanchard's theory is defining four stages of follower readiness:

R1. People are **both unable and unwilling** to take responsibility to do something. They are neither competent nor confident.

R2. People are **unable but willing** to do the necessary job tasks. They are motivated but currently lack the appropriate skills.

R3. People are able but unwilling to do what the leader wants.

R4. People are **both able and willing** to do what is asked of them.

Figure integrates the various components into the situational leadership model. As followers reach high levels of readiness, the leader responds by not only continuing to decrease control over activities, but also by continuing to decrease relationship behavior as well. **At stage R1, followers need clear and specific directions. At stage R2, both high-task and high relationship behavior is needed. The high-task behavior compensates for the followers' lack of ability, and the high-relationship behavior tries to get the followers psychologically to buy into the leader's desires. R3 creates motivational problems that are best solved by a supportive, nondirective, participative style. Finally, at stage R4, the leader doesn't have to do much because followers are both willing and able to take responsibility**.

Leader-Member Exchange theory

The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory argues that because of time pressures, leaders establish a special relationship with a small group of their subordinates. These individuals make up the in-group-they are trusted, get a disproportionate amount of the leader's attention, and are more likely to receive special privileges. Other subordinates fall into the out-group. They get less of the leader's time, fewer of the preferred rewards that the leader controls, and have superior-subordinate relations based on formal authority interactions.

The theory proposes that early in the history of the interaction between a leader and a given subordinate, the leader implicitly categorizes the subordinate as an "in" or an "out" and that relationship is relatively stable over time. Just precisely how the leader chooses who falls into each category is unclear, but there is evidence that leaders tend to choose in-group members because they have personal characteristics (for example, age, gender, attitudes) that are similar to the leader, a higher level of competence than out-group members, and/or an extroverted personality. LMX theory predicts that subordinates with in-group status will have higher performance ratings, less turnover, and greater satisfaction with their superior.

Research to test LMX theory has been generally supportive. More specifically, the theory and research surrounding it provide substantive evidence that leaders do differentiate among subordinates, that these disparities are far from random, and that in-group and out-group status are related to employee performance and satisfaction.39

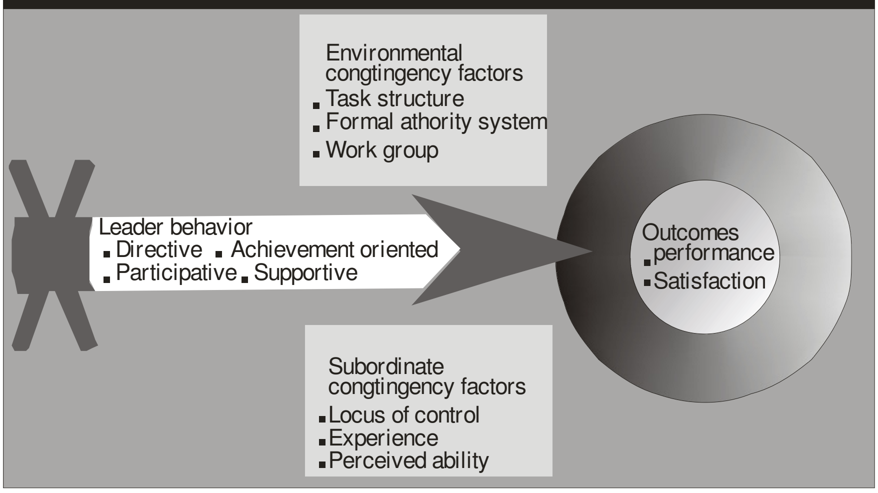
Path-Goal theory

Currently, one of the most respected approaches to leadership is the path-goal theory. Developed by Robert House, path-goal theory is a contingency model of leadership that extracts key elements from the Ohio State leadership research on initiating structure and consideration and the expectancy theory of motivation.

The essence of the theory is that it's the leader's job to assist his or her followers in attaining their goals and to provide the _necessary direction and/or support to ensure their goals are compatible with the overall objectives of the group or organization. The term *path-goal* is derived from the belief that effective leaders clarify the path to help their followers get from where they are to the achievement of their work goals and make the journey along the path easier by reducing roadblocks and pitfalls.

According to **path-goal theory,** a leader's behavior is *acceptable* to subordinates to the degree that it is viewed by them as an immediate source of satisfaction or as a means of future satisfaction. A leader's behavior is *motivational* to the degree it (1) makes subordinate need satisfaction contingent on effective performance, and (2) provides the coaching, guidance, support, and rewards that are necessary for effective performance. To test these statements, House identified four leadership behaviors. The ***directive leader*** lets subordinates know what is expected of them, schedules work to be done, and gives specific guidance as to how to accomplish tasks. This closely parallels the Ohio State dimension of initiating structure. The ***supportive leader*** is friendly and shows concern for the needs of subordinates. This is essentially synonymous with the Ohio State dimension of consideration. The ***participative leader*** consults with subordinates and uses their suggestions before making a decision. The ***achievement-oriented leader*** sets challenging goals and expects subordinates to perform at their highest level. **In** contrast to Fiedler's view of a leader's behavior, House assumes that leaders are flexible. Path-goal theory implies that the same leader can display any or all of these behaviors depending on the situation.

Figure
The path-Goal Theory



As Figure 5 illustrates, path-goal theory proposes two classes of situational or contingency variables that moderate the leadership behavior-outcome relationship: those in the environment that are outside the control of the subordinate (task structure, the formal authority system, and the work group) and those that are part of the personal characteristics of the subordinate (locus of control, experience, and perceived ability). Environmental factors determine the type' of leader behavior required as a complement if subordinate outcomes are to be maximized; personal characteristics of the subordinate determine how the environment and leader behavior are interpreted. So the theory proposes that leader behavior will be ineffective when it is redundant with sources of environmental structure or incongruent with subordinate characteristics.

The following are some examples of hypotheses that have evolved out of path-goal theory:

- Directive leadership leads to greater satisfaction when tasks are ambiguous or stressful than when they are highly structured and well laid out.
- Supportive leadership results in high employee performance and satisfaction when subordinates are performing structured tasks.
- Directive leadership is likely to be perceived as redundant among subordinates with high perceived ability or with considerable experience.
- The more clear and bureaucratic the formal authority relationships, the more leaders should exhibit supportive behavior and deemphasize directive behavior.
- Directive leadership will lead to higher employee satisfaction when there is substantive conflict within a work group.
- Subordinates with an internal locus of control (those who believe they control their own destiny) will be more satisfied with a participative style.
- Subordinates with an external locus of control will be more satisfied with a directive style.
- Achievement-oriented leadership will increase subordinates' expectancies that effort will lead to high performance when tasks are ambigu ously structured.

Leader-Participation Model — Victor Vnom & Phillip Yelton

The model assumes that any of five behaviors may be feasible in a given situation: Autocratic I (AI), Autocratic II (AII), Consultative I (CI), Consultative II (Cll), and Group II (GII):

- AI. You solve the problem or make a decision yourself using information available to you at that time.
- All. You obtain the necessary information from subordinates and then decide on the solution to the problem yourself. You mayor may not tell subordinates what the problem is when getting the information from them. The role played by your subordinates in making the decision is clearly one of providing the necessary information to you rather than generating or evaluating alternative solutions.
- CI. You share the problem with relevant subordinates individually, getting their ideas and suggestions without bringing them together as a group. Then you make the decision, which mayor may not reflect your subordinates' influence.
- CII. You share the problem with your subordinates as a group, collectively obtaining their ideas and suggestions. Then you make the decision that mayor may not reflect your subordinates' influence.
- GII. You share the problem with your subordinates as a group. Together you generate and evaluate alternatives and attempt to reach an agreement (consensus) on a solution.

Attribution Theory of Leadership

In the context of leadership, attribution theory says that leadership is merely an attribution that people make about other individuals. Using the attribution framework, researchers have found that people characterize leaders as having such traits as intelligence, outgoing personality, strong verbal skills, aggressiveness understanding, and industriousness. Similarly, the high-high leader high on both initiating structure and considerations has been found to be consistent with attributions of what makes a good leader. That is, regardless of the situation, a high-high leadership style tends to be perceived as best. At the organizational level, the attribution framework accounts for the conditions under which people use leadership to explain organizational outcomes. Those conditions are extremes in organizational performance. When an organization has either extremely negative or extremely positive performance, people are prone to make leadership attributions to explain the performance. This helps account for the vulnerability of CEOs when their organizations suffer a major financial setback, regardless of whether they had much to do with it. It also accounts for why these CEOs tend to be given credit for extremely positive financial results-again, regardless of how much or how little they contributed.

One of the more interesting themes in the **attribution theory of leadership** literature is the perception that effective leaders are generally considered consistent or unwavering in their decisions. That is, one of the explanations for why

Ronald Reagan (during his first term as president) was perceived as a leader was that he was fully committed, steadfast, and consistent in the decisions he made and the goals he set. Evidence indicates that a heroic leader is perceived as being someone who takes up a difficult or unpopular cause and, through determination and persistence, ultimately succeeds.

Charismatic Leadership Theory

Charismatic leadership theory is an extension of attribution theory. It says that followers make attributions of heroic or extraordinary leadership abilities when they observe certain behaviors. Studies on charismatic leadership have, for the most part, been directed at identifying those behaviors that differentiate charismatic leaders from their noncharismatic counterparts. Some examples of individuals frequently cited as being charismatic leaders include Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Walt Disney, Mary Kay Ash (founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics), Ross Perot, Steve Jobs (cofounder of Apple Computer), Ted Turner, Lee Iacocca (former chairman of Chrysler), Jan Carlzon (chairman of SAS Airlines), and Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf.

Several authors have attempted to identify personal characteristics of the charismatic leader. [Robert House (of path-goal fame) identified three: **extremely high confidence, dominance, and strong convictions in his or her beliefs.** Warren Bennis, after studying 90 of the most effective and successful leaders in the United States, found they had four common competencies: They had a **compelling vision** or sense of purpose; **they could communicate that vision in clear terms their followers could readily identify** with; they **demonstrated consistency** and focus in the pursuit of their vision; and they **knew their own strengths and capitalized on them.** The most comprehensive analysis, however, has been completed by Conger and Kanungo at McGill University. Among their conclusions, they propose that charismatic leaders have an idealized goal they want to achieve, a strong personal commitment to their goal, are perceived as unconventional, are assertive and self-confident, and are perceived as agents of radical change rather than managers of the status quo.

Table 3 Key Characteristics of Charismatic Leaders

1. *Self-confidence.* They have complete confidence in their judgement and ability.
2. *A vision.* This is an idealized goal that proposes a future better than the status quo. The greater the disparity between this idealized goal and the status quo, the more likely that followers will attribute extraordinary vision to the leader.
3. *Ability to articulate the vision.* They are able to clarify and state the vision in terms that are understandable to others. this articulation demonstrates on understanding of the followers' needs and, hence, acts as a motivating for ce.
4. *Strong convictions about the vision.* Charismatic leaders are perceived as being strongly committed, and willing to take on high personal risk, incur high costs, and engage in self-sacrifice to achieve their vision.
5. *Behavior that is out of the ordinary.* Those with charisma engage in behavior that is perceived as being novel, unconventional, and counter to norms. when successful, these behaviors avoke surprise and admiration in followers.
6. *Perceived as being a change agent.* Charismatic leaders are perceived as agents of radical change rather than as caretakers of the status quo.
7. *Environment sensitivity.* These leade rs are able to make realistic assessments of the environmental constraints and resources needed to bring about change.

Source: Based on J. A. Conger and R. N. Konungo. "Behavioral Dimensions of Charismatic Leadership," in J. A. Conger and R. N. Konungo, Charismatic Leadership (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), p.91

Attention has recently focused on trying to determine how charismatic leaders actually influence followers. The process begins by the leader articulating an appealing vision. This vision provides a sense of continuity for followers by linking the present with a better future for the organization. The leader then communicates high performance expectations and expresses confidence that followers can attain them. This enhances follower self-esteem and self-confidence. Next, the leader conveys, through words and actions, a new set of values and by his or her behavior sets an example for followers to imitate. Finally, the charismatic leader makes self-sacrifices and engages in unconventional behavior to demonstrate courage and convictions about the vision.

If charisma is desirable, can people learn to be charismatic leaders? Or are charismatic leaders born with their qualities? While a small minority still think charisma cannot be learned, most experts believe individuals can be trained to exhibit charismatic behaviors and can thus enjoy the benefits that accrue to being labeled *It* a charismatic leader. For instance, one set of authors proposes that a person can learn to become charismatic by following a three-step process. First, an individual needs to develop the aura of charisma by maintaining an optimistic view, using passion as a catalyst for generating enthusiasm, and communicating with the whole body, not just with words. Second, an individual draws others in by creating a bond that inspires others to follow.

And third, the individual brings out the potential in followers by tapping into their emotions. This approach seems to work as evidenced by researchers who've succeeded in actually scripting undergraduate business students to "play" charismatic. The students were taught to articulate an overarching goal, communicate high performance expectations, exhibit confidence in the ability of subordinates to meet these expectations, and empathize with the needs of their subordinates; they learned to project a powerful, confident, and dynamic presence; and they practiced using a captivating and engaging voice tone. To further capture the dynamics and energy of charisma, the leaders were trained to evoke charismatic nonverbal characteristics: They alternated between pacing and sitting on the edges of their desks, leaned toward the subordinate, maintained direct eye contact, and had a relaxed posture and animated facial expressions. These researchers found that these students could learn how to project charisma. Moreover, subordinates of these leaders had higher task performance, task adjustment, and adjustment to the leader and to the group than did subordinates who worked under groups led by noncharismatic leaders.

One last word on this topic: Charismatic leadership may not always be needed to achieve high levels of employee performance. It may be most appropriate when the follower's task has an ideological component. This may explain why, when charismatic leaders surface, it is more likely to be in politics, religion, wartime, or when a business firm is introducing a radically new product or facing a life threatening crisis. Such conditions tend to involve ideological concerns. Charismatic leaders, in fact, may become a liability to an organization once the crisis and need for dramatic change subside. Because then the charismatic leader's overwhelming self-confidence often becomes a liability. He or she is unable to listen to others, becomes uncomfortable when challenged by aggressive subordinates, and begins to hold an unjustifiable belief in his or her "rightness" on issues.

Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are also charismatic. Kinds of leaders guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements. But there is another type of leader who inspires followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organization, and who is capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on his or her followers. These are **transformational leaders.**

They pay attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers; they change followers' awareness of issues by helping them look at old problems in new ways; and they are able to excite, arouse, and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve group goals.

Transactional and transformational leadership should not, however, be viewed as opposing approaches to getting things done. Transformational leadership is built *on top of* transactional leadership-it produces levels of subordinate effort and performance that go beyond what would occur with a transactional approach alone. Moreover, transformational leadership is more than charisma. The purely charismatic [leader] may want followers to adopt the charismatic's world view and go no further; the transformational leader will attempt to instill in followers the ability to question not only established views but eventually those established by the leader.

The evidence supporting the superiority of transformational leadership over the transactional variety is overwhelmingly impressive. For instance, a number of studies with U.S., Canadian, and German military officers found, at every level, that transformational leaders were evaluated as more effective than their transactional counterparts. In summary, the overall evidence indicates that transformational leadership is more strongly correlated than transactional leadership with lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and higher employee satisfaction.

Leading Through Empowerment

An important trend has developed over the past decade that has immense implications for leadership. That trend is for managers to embrace empowerment. More specifically, managers are being advised that effective leaders share power and responsibility with their employees.77 The empowering leader's role is to show trust, provide vision, remove performance-blocking barriers, offer encouragement, motivate, and coach employees. The list of companies that have jumped on the "empowerment bandwagon" includes such world-famous corporations as General Electric, Intel, Ford, Saturn, Scandinavian Airline Systems, Harley-Davidson, NCR, Goodyear, and Conrail. Many have introduced empowerment as part of their corporate wide efforts in implementing total quality managment.78

Does this wholesale embracement of shared leadership strike you as a bit strange, given the attention that has been focused on contingency approaches to leadership? If it doesn't, it should. Why? Because empowerment proponents are essentially advocating a non contingent approach to leadership. Directive, task-oriented, autocratic leadership is out, and empowerment is in.

The problem with the current empowerment movement is that it ignores the extent to which leadership can be shared and the conditions facilitating success of shared leadership. Because of factors such as downsizing, higher employee skills, commitment of organizations to continuous training, implementation of total quality management programs, and introduction of self-managed teams, no doubt an increasing number of situations call for a more empowering approach to leadership. But not *all* situations! Blanket acceptance of empowerment, or *any* universal approach to leadership, is inconsistent with the best and most current evidence we have on the subject.

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