

Appendix: SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A Seminar for Cadet NCOs and Officers

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I. PREFACE

Which leadership style is best? The recent film, *Crimson Tide* depicts two leaders with entirely different styles. As cadets, should you try to emulate Gene Hackman's character in the film by demanding strict adherence to regulations, a constant display of customs and courtesies, and subordinates who immediately follow your orders without question? Or, should you emulate Denzel Washington who was quick to forgive when subordinates made mistakes, did not allow rank and customs to cause concern, and involved his men in the decision making?

This seminar will address the issue "What kind of leader should cadets be?" We will explore leadership crises depicted in films, discuss the choices leaders are routinely confronted with, and debate what the right course of action is. At the completion of this seminar, you will have a better understanding of the theory of situational leadership, and possess skills to become a good leader.

II. THE THEORY OF SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A. When we speak of leadership style, essentially we are concerned with two fundamental behaviors a leader exhibits:

1. Directive behavior
2. Supportive behavior

Directive Behavior

is any time a leader:

- provides a lot of structure
- sets goals or objectives
- plans the work in advance
- sets job priorities
- clarifies each worker's role
- sets time lines for work
- tells, supervises, and controls
- directs the what, when, where, how
- one-way communication
- gives feedback to others
- spells out the specifics, procedures
- determines methods to evaluate follower's performance

Supportive Behavior

is any time a leader:

- uses two-way or multi-way communication
- asks for suggestions and input
- listens to followers
- involves followers in problem solving
- encourages
- reassures
- disclosures information about self and job
- facilitates discussions

B. The Maturity of Followers

But when should you be directive, and when should you be supportive? That's the whole problem - knowing what style to employ to fit the situation. According to the theory of Situational Leadership, "there is no one best way to influence people. Which leadership style a leader should use depends on the maturity level of the people he is attempting to influence."

What is meant by maturity?

Maturity does not necessarily describe whether the person is "grown-up" or childish. For our purposes, maturity describes: "the ability and willingness of people to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. " It involves a person's competence and commitment.

For example, an element leader might show a high-degree of maturity by constantly ensuring all the cadets in his element wear their uniform properly and salute officers as required. However, that same element leader could show a low-degree of maturity by not collecting squadron dues and recording payment in a logbook on a regular basis. In the first case, he is able and willing to act on his own; in the second case he is either unable, or unwilling (or both) to take responsibility on his own.

In our work today, you will be asked to rate the maturity level of characters in a film. Here are your guidelines:

- M1** - low maturity
- M2** - low to moderate maturity
- M3** - moderate to high maturity
- M4** - high maturity

C. Leadership Styles

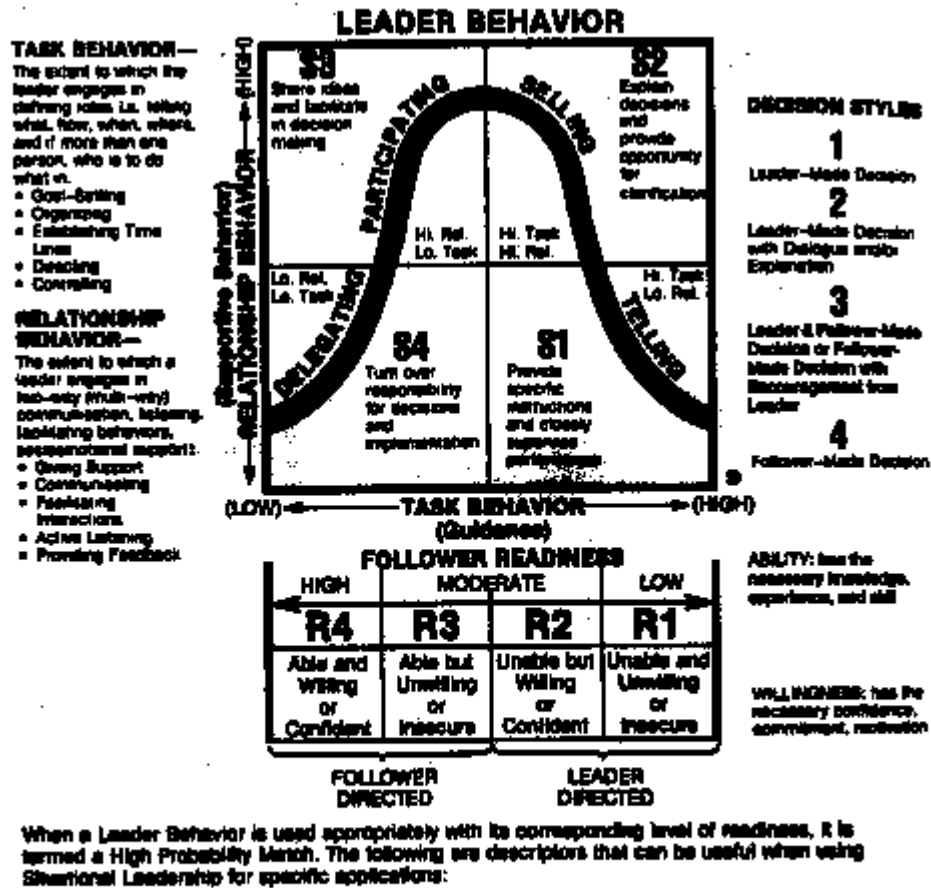
When we speak of styles we concern ourselves with two fundamental behaviors - directive behavior and supportive behavior. We've already talked about these two behaviors. A leader using mostly directive behavior has a high reverence for mission or task behavior. A leader using mostly supportive behavior has a high reverence for the needs of people.

Your leadership text describes three behaviors:

1. Authoritarian
2. Democratic
3. Laissez-faire

Describe each style and identify whether it is supportive or directive.

Next examine the following graph, and the leadership styles accompanying it. Where would the three Leadership 2000 styles fit on this graph?



- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>S1</p> <p>Telling
Guiding
Directing
Establishing</p> | <p>S2</p> <p>Selling
Explaining
Clarifying
Persuading</p> | <p>S3</p> <p>Participating
Encouraging
Collaborating
Committing</p> | <p>S4</p> <p>Delegating
Observing
Monitoring
Following</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

Although your text uses three leadership styles, today we will discuss four styles and apply them to the films. Just as there are four levels of maturity, there are four corresponding leadership styles.

1. Directing
2. Coaching
3. Supporting
4. Delegating

How to determine style

Of course, none of this information will be valuable without knowing how to determine which style to use. Here are three guidelines:

1. Decide which area of individual or group activity you want to influence.
2. Determine the maturity or motivational level for that activity.
3. Select the appropriate style for the maturity level.

III. PRACTICAL ANALYSIS: LEADERSHIP IN FILM

During each of the following film segments, pay close attention to the following:

1. What is the central crises facing the leader?
2. What is the follower's level of maturity?
3. What style of leadership did the leader employ?
4. Was the leader's action the most effective choice?

12 O'Clock High

A. *BGen Savage says he thinks there is trouble with the 918th He and Gen Pritchard visit the unit. Col Davenport tries to downplay a navigator's error. A debate on leadership style ensues.*

1. Crises: Davenport is over concerned with his men
2. Maturity: Davenport is M1 unable and unwilling to lead
3. Style: Pritchard relieved Davenport; S1/Telling
4. Discussion: Davenport over-identifies with his men. Pritchard and Savage believe there isn't time or reason to influence Davenport to be more directive. There is a war going on requiring extreme urgency, plus Davenport is mentally drained to prevent him from progressing as a leader.

B. *Pritchard subtly asks Savage to take command of the 918th, even though Savage has already done his fair share of leading.*

1. Crises: Pritchard must find a commander of the 918th and fast; if the 918th fails, perhaps the war will be lost.
2. Maturity: Savage is highly competent and highly committed M4.
3. Style: Pritchard delegates/S4 the problem to Savage
4. Discussion: Although Pritchard could simply order Savage to take over, he reminds Savage that he is needed. In telling Savage what to do, Pritchard only outlines the problem of the 918th, and leaves the problem solving entirely to Savage. This also shows that Pritchard trusts Savage as a man and an officer to solve the problem on his own -- he is proven capable.
5. Think About: We've addressed the maturity of Davenport. What about the 918th as a whole. Davenport was relieved because he is an ineffective leader: he used the wrong style of leadership. Pritchard asked Savage to turn the 918th around. How do you think he'll do that?

C. *Savage has agreed to take command of the 918th In sight of the base, he stops and has a cigarette. Once on the base, he disciplines the CQ for being lax. At group HQ, he disciplines a clerk, orders a ranking officer to be placed under arrest, and accuses the officer of being a coward.*

1. Crises: Savage has been given the responsibility to command an inefficient unit.
2. Maturity: As a whole, the 918th believe they are jinxed with bad luck. They show signs of apathy. Unable and unwilling to be responsible. Low commitment, low competence. M1
3. Style: Savage is extremely authoritarian. High task, low relationship behavior. Telling/S1
4. Discussion: Is there really any other way to set an unmotivated, incompetent unit on the right track in a short amount of time? In choosing to be highly directive, and not at all supportive (just the opposite of Davenport), Savage assumes a personality different than his natural one. Notice that he was friendly to his driver by offering him a smoke, perhaps a last action of his normal friendly nature before he fully assumed the mantle of leadership. Once the smoke was over, Ernie became "sergeant. " This shows the loneliness at the top; Savage will have no friends in his job as commander -- he can't be both a best friend and a officer.

D. *In a previous scene, Savage told the men that they could transfer out of the unit if they had no stomach for his leadership. After Savage's offer, the entire unit requests to be transferred. Over coffee, Savage and Stovill make small talk. Stovill offers to sit on the transfers.*

1. Crises: Savage needs to buy time to encourage the men not to transfer.
2. Maturity: Stovill is fairly competent, and is showing signs that his commitment is increasing M3
3. Style: Savage quietly persuaded Stovill (mostly with non-verbal questions) to help delay the processing of transfers.
4. Discussion: What Savage wanted he could not ask for. As he put it "there could be trouble in [wrongly holding up transfers]. " Also, Savage needs another officer to support his efforts realizing he can not be overly confrontational and still expect to succeed. It is also important to note that winning over Stovill was Savage's first success in turning around the 91 8th. Through Savage's S 1 or authoritarian style, he made Stovill realize the importance of the 91 8th's efforts and that Savage was committed to making the unit effective or mature This illustrates the essence of situational leadership: a leader should "help followers grow in maturity as far as they are able and willing to grow. " Stovill knows that Savage wants to help the unit, and he has agreed to join the effort.

E. Maj Cobb tells Savage that the IG's complaint was withdrawn; the entire unit is now fully behind Savage because they appreciate how he has helped them succeed. Cobb suggests now is a good time for Savage to issue weekend passes. Savage refuses by saying "now is the time to start building some leadership around here. " Cobb comments to Stovill that Savage is very "iron-tailed. " Stovill replies there is little difference between Savage and Davenport.

1. Crises: What action, if any, should Savage take now that the unit supports his philosophy and policies?
2. Maturity: The men of the 918th now show good motivation, and a high level of competence.
3. Style: Savage shifts from a S1 or telling to S4 or delegating.
4. Discussion: Savage has succeeded in what was desperately needed: to turn the 918th around and back into a fighting unit. Now that the unit has become more proficient and definitely more dedicated and mature, Savage is now in a position to have the men take on more responsibility for planning the missions, briefing one another, etc. He chooses not to "kiss and make up" after the men "shed their diapers" because that would not be progress. Savage believes "the men are better than that", that they can become an even better unit. Also, this shows how Savage fully believes his job as a leader requires him to push the unit ever forward.

Note: It is not common for a leader to be able to move directly to S4 after S 1, and that is not the case here. During previous scenes which were not show, Gen Savage could be seen coaching and supporting (S3 & S4) the men.