

# Situational Leadership

How adjusting your leadership style can achieve greater engagement, retention and motivation in your team.

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*“Leadership is a series of behaviors rather than a role for heroes.”*

*-Margaret Wheatley*



# What is it?

- Blanchard and Hersey
- A theory of leadership that suggests that you adjust your leadership style to fit the needs of the people you hope to lead
- Has been shown to increase engagement and retention
- Has been shown to decrease turnover

# Agenda

- Increase awareness of your natural leadership style
- Increase awareness of the differing leadership needs of those you lead
- Apply specific leadership strategies that are appropriate to different situations

*What is your natural leadership style?*



You are thinking about making a change. Your team members have a strong record of achievement. They respect the need for change. What would you do?

- A. Implement the change and closely supervise to ensure success.
- B. Use feedback from the team, but direct the change personally.
- C. Get the team involved in the change but not be too directive.
- D. Have the team develop and implement the change itself.

You take over a department where the previous supervisor had tight controls in place. You don't want to decrease efficiency, but you feel your group could be more productive if allowed some input. What would you do?

- A. Keep the controls in place.
- B. Get input from dept members, but make changes as you see fit.
- C. Involve the department members in revising the controls
- D. Assign a task force to alter controls as it sees fit.



You recently met with your employees to review a policy to clarify your expectations regarding compliance. However, your employees are not complying with the policy or meeting your expectations. What would you do?

- A. Redefine your expectations and supervise closely to ensure compliance.
- B. Meet with your employees for input but enforce the policy.
- C. Allow your employees to suggest policy changes and/or improvements.
- D. Avoid applying pressure and trust your employees to come around.



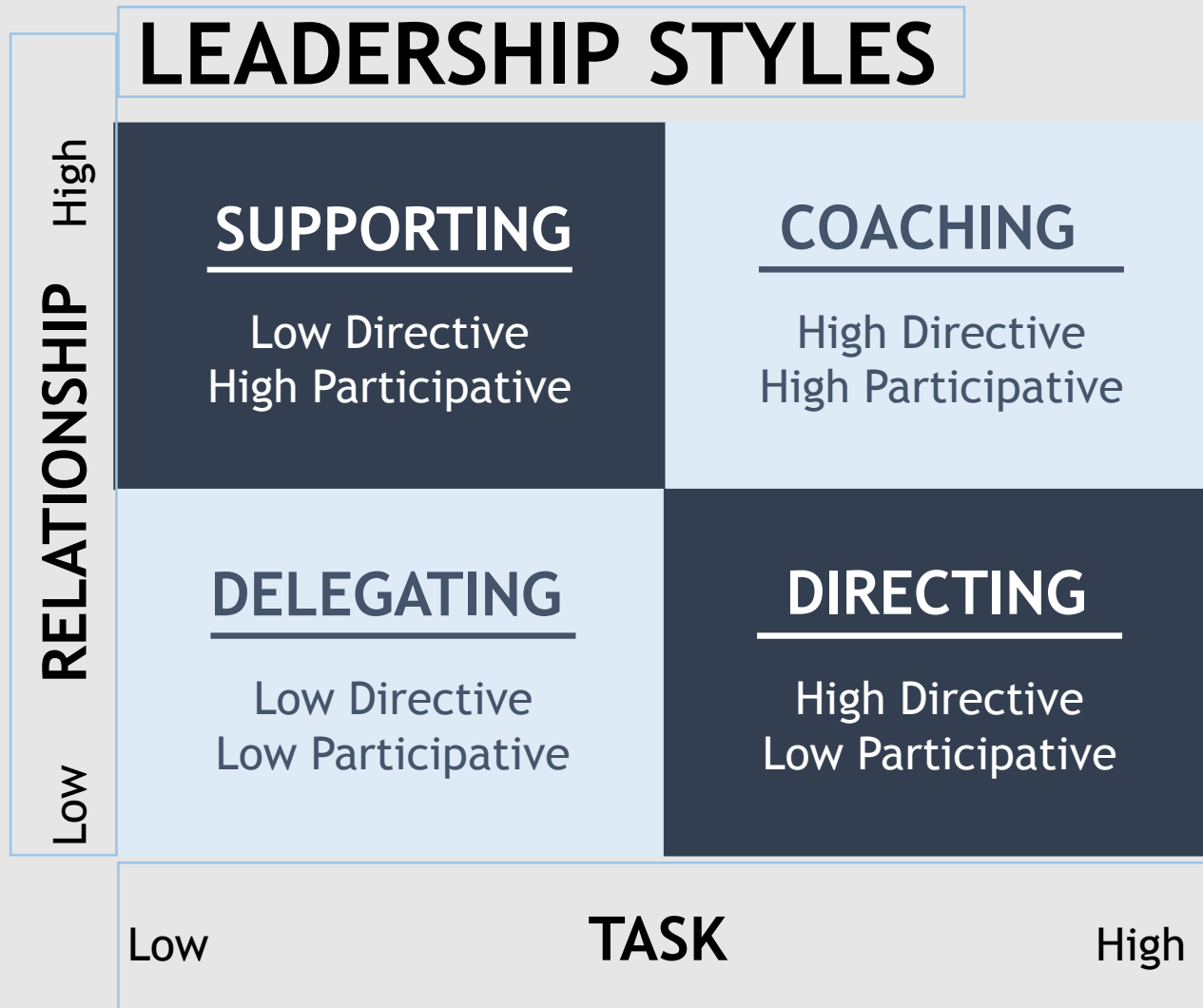
Your employees are having difficulty solving a problem. What do you do?

- A. Tell them how to fix it.
- B. Work with them and together solve the problem.
- C. Offer your opinion and encourage them to continue.
- D. Let them solve the problem on their own.

Your department has been successful in achieving its goals. Department members have worked well together with little need for your intervention. However, conflict is escalating among department members. What would you do?

- A. Quickly and firmly correct the situation.
- B. Listen to your employees and then implement your own plan.
- C. Discuss the conflict openly with your department members and encourage them to resolve the situation.
- D. Observe, but do not intervene.

# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE



# DIRECTING

- High direction / low support
- Primarily one-way communication
- The task get more attention than the person
- The leader directs the follower regarding task accomplishment
- The leader supervises closely
- The leader gives regular feedback on performance
- The employee has no involvement in decision-making or problem-solving

# COACHING

- High direction / high support
- The task and the person receive equal attention
- The leader continues to provide specific direction, close supervision and immediate feedback on task accomplishment
- The leader also becomes more supportive – offering encouragement and reassurance
- The leader begins to open up two-way communication by soliciting suggestions and explaining decisions

# SUPPORTING

- Low direction / high support
- The person receives more attention than the task
- The leader provides minimal direction, supervision, and feedback
- The leader now concentrates on providing support, encouragement and praise
- Two-way communication is the norm—leader and employee work together
- Leader and employee share responsibility for decision-making and problem-solving

# DELEGATING

- Low direction / low support
- Neither the task nor the person receives close attention
- The leader turns over responsibility for decision-making and problem-solving to the employee
- Communication is limited, but when it occurs, it is two-way
- Direction is limited to setting parameters for task accomplishment



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

So how do we determine what style to use and when?



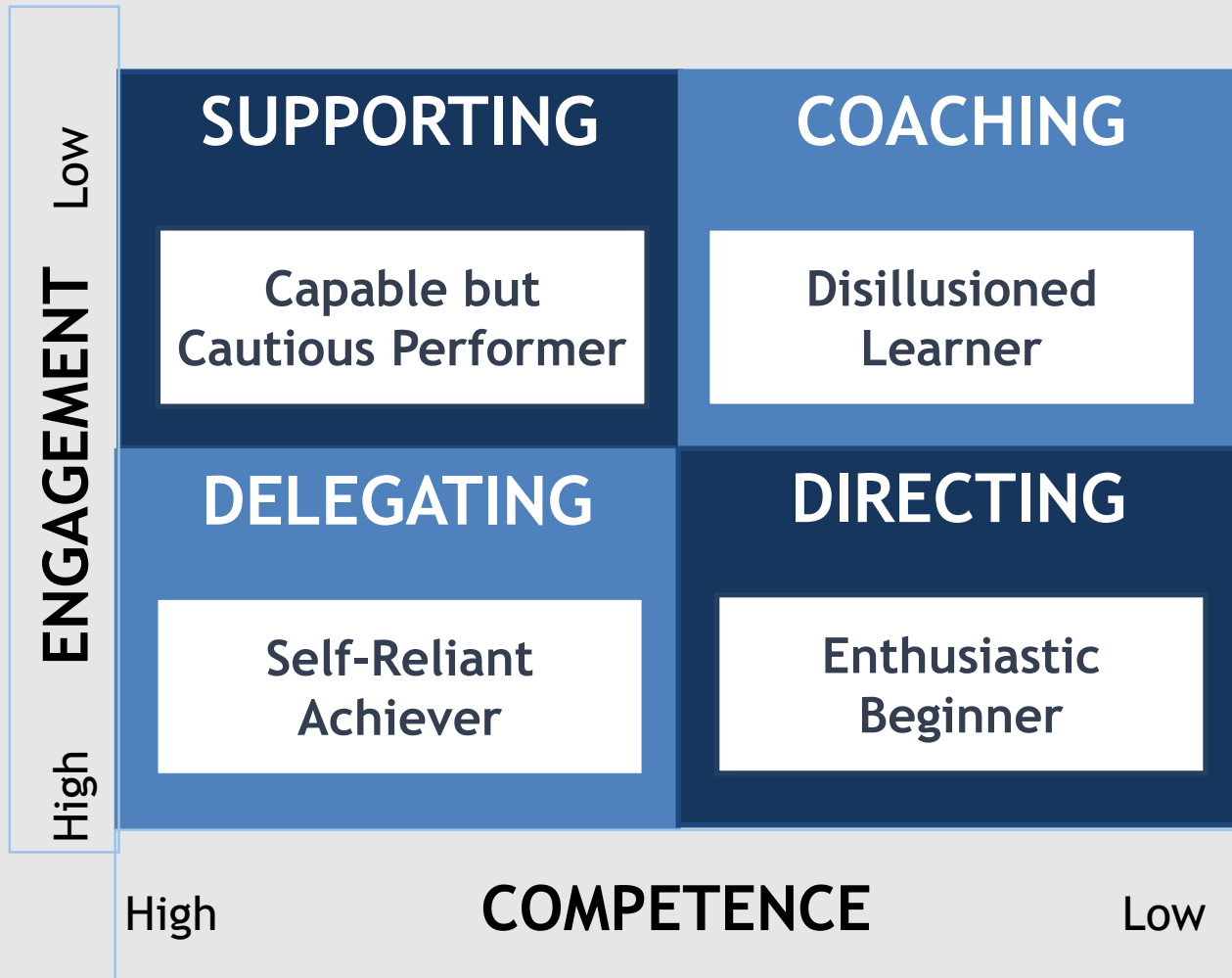
# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

The style you use depends on your employee(s)' **engagement** and **competence**.

**Engagement** is the level of commitment, willingness and general attitude towards work.

**Competence** is the ability to do the task at hand, based on skills, knowledge and experience.

# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE



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The **Enthusiastic Beginner** is someone who has high engagement but low competence.

With beginners, self-confidence is usually high, but it's often a false sense of confidence, based on a lack of understanding on the complexity or difficulty of the task.

Who can give me an example of this level in their organization?



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

The **Disillusioned Learner** is someone who has low engagement and low competence.

At this level, employees may become discouraged as they discover, “the more I learn, the more I realize I don’t know.”

Who can give me an example of this level in their organization?



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

The **Capable but Cautious Performer** is someone with moderate engagement & moderate competence.

At this level, employees may be afraid of making a mistake or have been doing the task for a long time and have lost interest.

Who can give me an example of this level in their organization?



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

The **Self-Reliant Achiever** is someone with high engagement and high competence.

At this level, employees have experience and success on the job. These peak performers are ready and willing to take on additional responsibility.

Who can give me an example of this level in their organization?



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

So how can you adjust your style?

- Observation
- Previous Experience
- Effective Questioning





# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

## Effective questions

- Ask about competence
  - Do you feel you need any additional training?
  - What is your greatest work accomplishment?
  - Can you tell me about the planning process you used with your last project?
  - What is your role in our department?



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

## Effective questions

- Ask about engagement
  - Are you satisfied with the way things are going?
  - How would you evaluate yourself in this position?
  - What part of your job fulfills you?
  - Is there anything else you would like to take on?

# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

“Even though I’ve been on this job for several years, I still second guess the decisions I make. It’s not a lack of training. I have the skills and experience to do my job well. I’m just afraid of making a mistake.”



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

“I know I have a lot to learn, but I love my job. I want to be the best at what I do. My mentor is great! I’m learning so much. Is there any additional training I can attend? I worry I’m not learning fast enough.”



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

“I like my job but it’s not what I thought it would be. It’s not a lack of skill. I’m good with people and with the software we use. I just don’t have all of the knowledge I need. I’m frustrated because I still have to ask for help to get things done.”



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

“I’m pretty confident doing this job. I know I’ve got the knowledge and skills to do a great job, and I do! I’d love an opportunity to have some more autonomy and leadership.”



# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP: ADJUSTING YOUR STYLE

“It’s true I’ve been in code enforcement for years, but my department just started using tablets for all of our paperwork. I hate them. I can’t get proper pictures, and I don’t know where my files are sometimes. And it seems to run out of power just when I need it!”



# Questions?





*Thank you!*

