

13 TIPS FOR USING SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVELY

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How can a one-size-fits-all leadership style meet the demands of an increasingly diverse society? Situational leadership offers a more flexible solution.

Sociology textbooks can explain how various researchers have contributed in this area, but the concept is relatively straightforward. **Instead of sticking with what you know, you adapt your leadership style to different circumstances.** Maybe your organization is at an impasse, or maybe you just want to learn how to become more influential and effective. Find out more about the benefits of situational leadership below.

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP - ASSESSING THE SITUATION

There are many factors to take into account when you're working with a group. That includes the nature of your team and what you're trying to accomplish.

KEEP THESE TIPS IN MIND:

1. **Evaluate engagement. Willingness and enthusiasm are two key qualities to look for.** Some obvious signs of employee engagement include exceeding expectations and spending time on professional development activities.
2. **Measure ability.** Of course, willingness only goes so far. Your team must also be able to do the required tasks. You may want to administer tests or ask for self-assessments.
3. **Explore personalities.** Understanding personalities matters too. Talking about values and workstyles can help you to figure out how to motivate your team and handle conflicts.
4. **Clarify expectations.** Lay down some ground rules and work at developing group and individual goals. **Put your principles and objectives down in writing.**
5. **Define tasks.** Consider the nature of your work. Is it mostly simple and routine or does it involve more complex reasoning and variety?
6. **Meet deadlines.** Keep your timeline in mind. Will you need to make decisions on your own quickly or is there more room for discussion and consultation?

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP - UNDERSTANDING YOUR OPTIONS

Unless you're a monk, you're going to need more than one kind of outfit in your closet. In the same way, expanding your leadership skills will prepare you for a range of opportunities that you're likely to come across in today's workplace.

DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, VARIOUS STRATEGIES MAY BE EFFECTIVE, SUCH AS:

1. **Provide direction.** Sometimes leadership boils down to giving instructions. That may be the case if your team is limited in terms of willingness or ability.
2. **Offer coaching.** At the same time, you may be able to offer more support and less direction as your team acquires greater experience and forms stronger relationships. **Create a culture of constructive feedback, high standards, and ongoing learning.**
3. **Delegate responsibility.** Identify which tasks you need to do yourself and which you can hand over to someone else. This may include recurring activities or those that give employees a chance to upgrade their skills.
4. **Earn trust.** Even if your role carries a high level of authority, it's beneficial to build trust. A team is more likely to succeed if they feel secure and respected. Strive to be consistent and objective. Communicate openly and take responsibility for your decisions.
5. **Set an example.** What does your behavior say about your character and abilities? **Your team will notice what you do as well as what you say.** Honor your commitments and work on your listening skills.
6. **Build personal relationships.** Meaningful connections and shared goals turn a group of individuals into a team. As a leader, it's important to establish rapport and show appreciation. Stay positive and approachable.
7. **Identify talent.** Who are the shining stars on your team? **Create future leaders by spotting talent and nurturing it.** Pay attention to potential along with current performance, so you'll be prepared for emerging needs and opportunities.

Successful leaders keep growing and applying what they learn. Developing your situational leadership skills can help you to advance your career, while you help increase productivity and morale.