

# Who should be considered for the promotion case studies example

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



LT Brown should be considered for the spot promotion. This decision is based on leadership perspectives that are to be considered. Choosing between the two candidates LT Coffey and LT Brown is a process that will require CDR Smith to consider a number of aspects. This is because both candidates are equally qualified in terms of their experience, rank, and passion for higher responsibilities. In his book, *Leadership: Theory and Practice* Peter Northouse suggests a number of approaches that can be used to select leaders in such circumstances.

### **Factors that lead to the decision**

Four factors will be considered leading to the decision to select LT Brown, traits, skills, style, and experience. To begin with, he proposes the trait approach that focuses on the personal attributes of the candidates. The personal attributes includes values, competencies, personality, and physical characteristics. According to the approach, leaders are assumed to have particular traits in born. These traits are developed as they get opportunities for exercise them. The traits include, flexibility, assertiveness, self confidence, decisiveness, trustworthiness, courage, capacity to inspire, task competence, intelligence, stamina, ability to understand people needs, eagerness to accept responsibility.

LT Brown as the first candidate shows virtually all of these leadership traits. She is team oriented and highly respected by her colleagues and peers. This implies that she has the ability to motivated and inspire the people she leads. She understands people's needs as illustrated by her effort in mentoring young female sailors. The same can be said of LT Coffey, who is the other candidate for recommendation to the position. He has a reputation

for commitment and determination in achieving goals set for his job. He is a result oriented leader with quality outcome as his top priority. He is good in making sound decision and he has shown consistency in this area. His biggest failure in terms of traits is the attitude he poses towards his juniors. He is a person who may fail to inspire others working under him in as much as he provides the expected outcome in any task given. Therefore, if CDR Smith is to use the trait approach to recommend one of the two candidates for the position of LCDR/04, the most qualified candidate is LT Brown despite the fact that she is female.

The second approach proposed by Northouse is the skill approach which he divides into three, technical, human, and conceptual skills. Leaders need to have all these three skills as they are each important for their leadership. The ability to effectively demonstrate each category of skills is dependent on the level of leadership or management. This implies that as a leader raises ranks, he or she has to improve their technical, human, and conceptual skills. For top leadership positions, human and conceptual skills are the most utilized while for middle leadership position, the three skills are utilized equally. In essence, leaders need to have specialized competencies with an analytical ability and the capability to use specialized technological equipments for specific type of work. Human skills involve the ability to work with people and the knowledge about people. Conceptual skills involve the ability to mentally shape organizational issues and policies. This skill is important for top leadership positions as it involves envisioning, strategizing, and planning for the sake of the organization.

Both candidates show a strong sense of human, conceptual, and technical

skills. They are both qualified officers in the field of IT and communication. The position of Information Technology Division Officer has to be filled with a person who is technically knowledgeable in the field of communication and information technology. LT Brown is highly skilled in this field and holds a bachelors degree in computer science from the University of Georgia. Due to her qualification, she is the current holder of the position except that she first needs to attain the rank of LCDR/04. She also has human skills and has proven to be able to work and know the people she works with. LT Coffey is currently serving as the communication officer in the ship. He does not have the technical skills in the field of communication because he is not trained in that field. However, he shows understanding of communications and Combat Systems department overall operations. He shows conceptual skills which are critical for any leadership position. He can surround himself with experts and achieve impressive results. This is a skill that LT Brown seems to be lacking even though she is a specialist in IT and communications. Therefore, using the skill approach to leadership, CDR Smith should select LT Coffey. He has a strong cognitive ability, motivation, and personality. This has made him to be competent in problem solving, social judgment, and knowledge. In effect, outcomes from his past experience include performance, and problem solving. These outcomes have been consistent over time.

The third approach to leadership, proposed by Northouse is situational approach which emphasizes that there is no single best way to offer leadership. The style and behavior of a leader should therefore depend on the existing circumstances. The emphasis is for leaders to adapt to different situations in their leadership. Leadership is all about the behavior of an

individual who makes attempts to influence others. A leader needs to demonstrate task oriented behaviors and behaviors that support relationship building. Task oriented behaviors is best demonstrated when there is a one way communication from the leader to the people being led. This means that the leader communicates goals, directions, timelines, methods of evaluation, defining roles. Supportive behaviors are best demonstrated when there is a two way communication between the leader and team members. Every member has to feel comfortable with the leader and other team members as they work towards achieving a goal. This means that a leader has to be there to listen and praise his or her team members. The leader has to be there to solve problems and ask for input as well. In this way, positive relationships are built in the team.

According to the case, the ship has 5000 personnel on board. Out of this number 750 are women. Living conditions on an aircraft carrier can be difficult and extremely exhausting, especially working 14-16 hours per day. Shipboard personnel are required to work and live in very close proximity, which sometime creates problems. One of the major challenges and complaints from women serving on aircraft a carrier is working with men who believe women should not be stationed onboard a combat ship. Another challenge is women have to work twice as hard to be recognized, and afforded the same opportunities as their male counterparts, especially in positions of higher authority. LT Brown, being a woman faces a huge challenge in offering leadership in this situation. There is widespread negativity against women on board. She is best situated to handle the perception of men regarding women. LT Brown already has built a positive

rapport with members of the division. A change in leadership could imply a drop in team morale as most officers enjoy working under her leadership. At the same time, putting a new person in the position of Information Communication Officer would affect critical aspects such as customer service and the support provided to shipboard personnel.

A fourth and key perspective into leadership brought out in the book is women and leadership. According to Northouse, women make good leaders when placed under competitive circumstance. They spend a lot of time building relationships with team members because they tend to feel the importance of positive relationships. Eventually, the positive relationships built translate into results and attainment of goals. Team members tend to be motivated under the leadership of women. On the other hand, men focus more on results at the expense of relationships. This perspective into leadership is evident in the two candidates, LT. Brown and LT Coffey. LT. Brown, being a female has built positive relationships around her team members which has boosted their morale, whereas LT Coffey is always focused on results and sometimes demonstrates arrogant attitude towards his team members. Northouse further asserts that women have the ability to lead just as men however they are faced with organizational, interpersonal, and personal barriers. This is seen in the case study, where majority of men have a negative attitude towards women. For LT Brown, to be proposed for the spot promotion she has to deal with this challenge.

## **If CDR Smith selects LT Coffey for the spot promotion, how will it affect LT Brown and her team?**

Basically, the situation does not support a change in leadership as it has the potential to tarnish the reputation of the combat system department in addition to affecting LT Brown negatively. It is important that operations proceed in a normal or better way rather than making operations of the department worse than what it currently is. The big dilemma for LCDR Smith is to recommend between the two candidates for the position of Information Technology Division Officer. The position has to be filled by a qualified personnel who has at least attained LCDR/04 position in the unit.

Bringing LT Coffey into the combat system department is likely to have a lot of negative implications for the team and for LT Brown. Coffey is more oriented on a directive situational style rather than balancing between directive and supportive styles. Leaders are not only expected to focus on goals but should be in a position to bring out the best out of all team members. His entry into the combat system can have implications for motivation level of team members. Basically, the level of morale will drop when he is recommended into the position and made to head the division temporarily. LT Brown, may not be affected, if the new challenge is either equal or higher than her role as the head of the information technology division. However, the new challenge is not as competitive as what she used to do heading the division. The budget for communication office is lower than that of the IT division. Similarly, the number of officers is less. LT Brown can view this development as a demotion which is likely to affect her negatively.

## **Factors used to make the final decision**

CDR Smith has a number of options at his disposal. He needs to consider each critically in order to make the decision. As a leadership consultant and based on the analysis of the case, the best option for CDR Smith is to recommend LT Brown for the spot promotion since she is already in the position. Both LT Coffey and LT Brown are equally qualified for recommendation. However, the analysis of the situation makes LT Brown as the better candidate for recommendation. The second option has been eliminated because it has implications of lowering the team morale. The third option cannot be considered because there is need for two senior division officers with LCDR/04 ranking in the department. Furthermore, the position of Information Technology Division Officer has to be occupied by LCDR/04 ranked officer. Options four and five can only be considered after CDR Smith has analyzed the best candidate for recommendation. He needs to consult widely.

## **Works Cited**

Northouse, Peter G. Leadership: Theory and Practice. 6th. Boston: Sage Publication, Inc., 2013. Print.