

# Hersery and blanchards situational leadership theory essay examples

[Business](#), [Management](#)



## **Introduction**

Over several years managers have been in the search for the best model of leadership style. Research however, has shown that there exists no application model that is purposeful for leadership style. Successful leaders are those who are dynamic in their behavior such that they are in a position to meet their unique or dynamic in situations. Extensive research has shown that situational leadership model as prove helpful to managers on the grounds that it diagnoses their situation demand.

## **Background**

Situational Leadership Theory is the same as “ Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory”. The theory draws its views from contingency thinking. As from the name of the theory suggests leadership is individualistic and no leadership is better than any other. According to Hershey and Blanchard, execution of tasks differs and moreover, tasks differ and thus every task requires a different leadership. Goal setting, education, experience, and capacity to assumption of responsibility are the most vital issues that make a manager successful. Leadership technique understanding is not the only important issue in success but the general maturity of those that are led is also of importance. A leader’s success is to extent of the maturity of his or her group (Alimo-Metcalfe, 2013).

Hershey and Blanchard Situational theory has two pillars; the maturity of those who are led and Leadership style. The theory designates from four behaviors that Hershey and Blanchard considered being basic. The behaviors are designated with a letter and a number.

## **S-1 Telling**

S-2 Selling

S-3 Participating

S-4 Delegating

The behavior manifest itself as behavior related to the group being managed and the leadership style has its manifestation as behavior related to the task. S-1 which is "Telling" behavior simply means flow of information within the group but directed towards the group. This usually involves the giving of direction. In this situation, transactional leadership techniques operate in S-1. S-2 "Selling" behavior involves the techniques of the leader to be able to convince his group that he or she leads by giving emotional and social support. At this situation there exists a to and fro communication it is clear that the leader leads at all matters. S-3 "Participating" behavior the manager or the leader and the group share decision making. This makes the whole leadership structure more democratic. The main emphasis for group is more on building and strengthening human relation than achievement of organizational goal. The leader thus seeks to relate well with the group members. Lastly S-4 "Delegating": behavior which supports the transfer of tasks to other group members (Bass, 2009). The emphasis is on monitoring of those who their responsibility is delegated to them though the leader still remains supreme.

## **The four levels of the maturity of the group members include;**

M-1 this include the unwillingness and basic incompetence in performing tasks

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M-2 it involves the willingness to do the task but unable to do so

M-3 having no self confidence that they can perform the task perfectly though being highly competent

M-4 it involves the level at which the group or group members are committed to execute their work and they are also very much competent. It is important to note that every task may involve a different level of maturity. According to the theory, willingness and ability level in doing work can be nurtured by a considerable good leader who emphasis raising expectations of his or her member group. Blanchard lays four permutations of commitment (Popper, 2012).

## **D1 - Low competence and low commitment**

D2 - Low competence and high commitment

D3 - High competence and low/variable commitment

D4 - High competence and high commitment

Strengths of the theory

The theory is easy to apply because it is simple. Because of the simplicity of the theory scale, it becomes easy for leaders to give “ thumb in the wind” as they are able to assess the kind of leadership they can use (Zaccaro, 2012).

The theory is strong on overlooking group members’ competence and maturity thus focusing on good leadership. This is vital to success of every business or organization.

## **Critiques of the theory**

It is in doubt that the theory is applicable to both managers and leaders. It is not logical that managers can be seen as being present in the management

to execute the work of a leader. This is not true but it is in fact directly opposite. It is however clear that each case should be evaluated on its merits and applicability considering its limitations. The theory will not be applicable at situations of war, emergencies and survival time scenario (Northouse, 2004). This is because the theory is more on following those who are ready to work based on willingness and competence. The theory also suggests that the leader is the director at all times. However, if the group being lead has objectives and goals then the leaders directives might be irrelevant and not worth considering.

The theory is applicable in the current world in motivating workers in performing duties with minimum supervision but application of task directing. The Hershey and Blanchard theory is useful in management in that it

## References

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