

Positive psych



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Running head: positive psych Positive psych Northouse (2009) describes leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (p. 3). However, this process requires leaders to adopt multiple roles. Tremendous interpretations, explanations, and variations exist on leadership in literature. Helping individuals strengthen their achievement motivation may be explained on the basis all of these approaches; however, the most appropriate approach would be that of Hershey and Blanchard's situational leadership. Application of appropriate leadership qualities based on the situation is something that makes the leadership role justified. In any sphere of performance, this would require the leader to assume accountability for his role, provide appropriate guidance and coaching, and immense motivation.

Applying situational leadership to Wiegand and Geller's (2005) predicament on positive reinforcement gives this argument a stronger base. For instance, Wiegand and Geller (2005) emphasize the need for learning-based focus, goal-setting, planning, self-monitoring, and persistence to attain personal mastery, an important indicator for positive reinforcement. By adopting situational leadership, the leader assumes both directive and supportive roles depending upon the situation and the individual. For a starter, the leader is more directive as well as supportive thus providing a direction; guiding the individual through the task, and providing feedback. For an established performer, the leader will have to delegate tasks, monitor and acknowledge his/her performance. In both situations, the leader is being effective in achieving desired outcomes.

Secondly, Wiegand and Geller (2005) indicate the need for personal control through tasks, opportunities and involvement in order for individuals to be

motivated coupled with consistent feedback (Wiegand and Geller, 2005).

Situational leadership explains when and why tasks and opportunities may be given to individuals; these aspects are not explained in both style and contingency approaches. Thirdly, reduction in anxiety and fear of failure is also accomplished by adopting a supportive role by the leader based on situation, which will enhance achievement motivation in individuals.

The style approach explains nature and behavior of the leaders, but with little emphasis on situations and also does not consider developmental level of the followers. Northouse (2009) indicates that the style approach is only descriptive of leadership behavior but does not prescribe what actions may be required to enhance achievement motivation and achieve desired outcomes. The contingency approach may be used to understand leadership effectiveness in specific situations but does not provide any base to match leader's style with situation. It may be used to understand why an individual's leadership fails to produce desired outcome in spite of he/she possessing all required qualities but does not provide convincing explanation in relation to the situation (Northouse, 2009). Negative reinforcement works best when leaders want followers to avoid certain actions/outcomes. This approach works best when adopted according to the situation, else negative reinforcement could invite undesired outcomes such as fear of failure, shame or guilt (Wiegand & Geller, 2005). In addition, this approach would attract failure avoidance behavior rather than achievement motivation among individuals.

In conclusion, situational leadership approach works best in positive reinforcement among individuals thereby producing self-motivated, self-directed, self-reliant individuals through effective coaching, direction,

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partnership, monitoring, recognition and feedback.

References

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