**By Christopher Stutts**

**Discussion 2**

**Effective Leadership**

**Crucial Aspects of Learning**

The most important aspects of the lessons provided by the week’s chapters include the significance of contingency leadership and the relationship between leaders and followers. Indeed, leaders have to take into account various factors that are bound to affect the readiness of their subordinates to complete tasks (Daft, 2018). Furthermore, a leader needs to be aware of his or her strengths, as well as weaknesses, and attitudes. This awareness allows the leader to pursue strategies that can motivate followers and influence them positively. This learning was worth my time and understanding, as it enabled me to appreciate how leader-follower relationships affect organizational performance.

**Assessing Subordinates**

As a supervisor, I would assess the development level of my subordinates by analyzing the degree to which they are ready to execute tasks. Followers at the highest development level should be in a position to understand their responsibilities and undertake the same with minimal supervision (Daft, 2018). Such a scenario allows the leader to delegate duties to followers, knowing that they will complete the tasks autonomously. Many leaders can shift their styles to match the development levels of their followers. These transitions, however, require open-mindedness on the part of the leader.

**Most Effective Leadership Style**

In line with the path-goal theory, the participative style is ideal for an educational context. Notably, this approach involves the leader providing support and encouragement to followers (Daft, 2018). This strategy is meant to allow the leader to create meaningful relationships with subordinates while also allowing them to enhance their confidence. Moreover, the participative style enables leaders to work closely with followers in developing the latter’s skills (McHugh et al., 2016). In this regard, teachers who adopt the participative style are likely to have strong relationships with their students. Such educators will also motivate the learners and in a manner that makes the students more confident in their skills. All these considerations demonstrate why the participative style is the most effective for the teacher-learner relationship.

**Personality Dimension**

Historians may have considered the dimension of “openness to experience” to be proper for US presidents because of the need for such a leader to serve the interests of different groups. As a president, one needs to take into account the opinions of various groups before making a critical decision. Besides, the presidency requires the leader to consult extensively with multiple parties as part of the decision-making process. Business leaders, on the other hand, were traditionally expected to minimize the time and resources needed to make decisions about companies (Sudha et al., 2016). Consultation with subordinates would delay the decision-making process. However, changes in the modern corporate environment have resulted in more business leaders investing in strategies that allow them to consult their followers (McHugh et al., 2016). These reforms are likely to continue as they enable organizations to enhance the decision-making process while also motivating employees.

**CEOs versus CFOs**

The differences between chief executive officers (CEOs) and chief financial officers (CFOs) stem from the varying requirements of the two jobs. On the one hand, CEOs are expected to be highly risk-averse, willing to pursue different ideas to advance organizational goals (Friedman, 2016). This requirement makes CEOs to be highly optimistic and ready to experiment with multiple views. Conversely, CFOs are tasked with the mandate of managing the financial decisions of an organization. This responsibility makes CFOs pessimistic and less willing to try out new ideas that could result in financial losses. An understanding of how the variations in job requirements contribute to the differences between CEOs and CFOs is, therefore, crucial.

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**By Kristy Denton**

**Discussion 2**

I believe that there was a commonality in the underlying material within both chapters this week. The theme that brings it together the best seems to be the ability of a leader to be aware of situations and how they are being perceived by others and adjusting to the situation and individuals that they are communicating with. The first chapter looks at the methods of Hersey and Blanchard’s situational theory. According to Graeff (1983), the most important take away from this theory is the ability for a leader to be flexible in various situations. Wright (2017) goes on to say that the theory is based around the notion that there is no right or wrong leadership style, rather a leader’s success is based on the leader’s attitude and their ability to judge the follower’s ability and willingness to perform certain tasks and adjust to meet the needs of the follower until they are able to perform required tasks.

These concepts are worthy of studying as they are important to put into play in business and interactions in general. If a leader is asking a follower to complete a task that the follower has no buy-in, the product will fall short of the follower’s capabilities or there will be a degree of resentment in performing the task. According to Blank, Weitzel, & Green (1990), a person successful in situational leadership has the potential to become an effective leader that earns respect from their subordinate. They also generate a willingness for subordinates to cooperate and has subordinates that find enjoyment in their work. These results can offer the organization significant benefits through higher productivity and better employee retention.

            If I was a first-level supervisor to a team of telemarketers, I would assess the development of the team members through frequent and open dialog with each subordinate allowing them to openly discuss any frustrations, challenges, and even successes. I would also ask to join calls to work together to help the team continue to grow. I would track growth for each team member and have them work together in friendly competition allowing complete transparency into the measures that are being tracked and that are important for the team. This will ensure that each team member knows goals and can work to attain them.

            I think that to be considered a leader, a person needs to be able to shift their style to the development level of each follower. It is difficult for some people to develop the skill of being able to read others to this degree and adjust their communication to meet the needs of subordinates but successful leaders should be able to do this per their designation as a leader.

I find the achievement-oriented style to be very effective to help me learn, grow, and accomplish. Mwaisaka, K’Aol & Ouma (2019) describe this style well as a leader with a continuous challenge for followers to perform at the highest standards. The platforms of this style: confidence in followers, strategy execution, goal setting and organizational dedication are all significant motivators to help me accomplish more personally and professionally. I like the positive nature of this leadership style which drives my commitment to goals common to our team whether on an educational or personal level.

            Daft (2018) describes an individual with openness to experience as someone who is curious, creative, and open to new ideas and experiences. I believe that this has been less strongly correlated with business leaders in the past because businesses had been taught to be unidirectional and focus on what has been successful in an organization to help drive future success and operations. I think that this has changed significantly especially with my recent experience working with a venture organization. Times are now requiring business leaders to rethink their leadership style and be more curious and open to change. For instance, the company that I work with is 100 percent remote. Our business owner and COO are constantly curious and asking more so we can serve not only our current customers but those that we have not even met. We are building and growing at significant paces with input and questions at all levels in the organization to be able to keep up with the demands in the industry, create new products for the industry, and continue stable growth of our organization with a high tech focus. The growth that this organization has experienced in around 18 months on the market moving from 12 employees to 150 in this brief stent has been attributed to the extreme curiosity, willingness to explore new ideas, and dedication to the organizational vision all related to the executive direction of an openness to experience type of dimension.

            In my experience financial officers are very realistic numbers driven individuals. They are driven by the data in front of them and don’t want to count on anything that might not occur because their numbers won’t add up at the end of the accounting cycle. Their job is to accurately predict the accounting cycle with historical data and accurate growth potentials included in their sheets. CEO’s on the other hand are the optimistic leaders with high visions of what could be and where the company can potentially move in the market. They have the job of shooting for the stars and driving their team in a positive manor to the same allowing the company to reach new possibilities. Having this mix of a strong, realistic CFO and an optimistic CEO can take an organization to new levels as the two personality styles can balance one another out creating a stable but growing organization.

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