

Situational Leadership

Instructions: Look at the following four leadership situations and indicate what the development level is in each situation, which leadership style each response represents, and which leadership style is needed in the situation (i.e., action A, B, C, or D).

Situation 1

Because of budget restrictions imposed on your department, it is necessary to consolidate. You are thinking of asking a highly capable and experienced member of your department to take charge of the consolidation. This person has worked in all areas of your department and has the trust and respect of most of the staff. She is very willing to help with the consolidation.

- A. Assign the project to her and let her determine how to accomplish it.
- B. Assign the task to her, indicate to her precisely what must be done, and supervise her work closely.
- C. Assign the task to her and provide support and encouragement as needed.
- D. Assign the task to her and indicate to her precisely what needs to be done but make sure you incorporate her suggestions.

Development level _____ Action _____

Situation 2

You have recently been made a department head of the new regional office. In getting to know your departmental staff, you have noticed that one of your inexperienced employees is not following through on assigned tasks. She is enthusiastic about her new job and wants to get ahead in the organization.

- A. Discuss the lack of follow-through with her and explore the alternative ways this problem can be solved.
- B. Specify what she must do to complete the tasks but incorporate any suggestions she may have.
- C. Define the steps necessary for her to complete the assigned tasks and monitor her performance frequently.
- D. Let her know about the lack of follow-through and give her more time to improve her performance.

Development level _____ Action _____

Situation 3

Because of a new and very important unit project, for the past 3 months you have made sure that your staff members understood their responsibilities and expected level of performance, and you have supervised them closely. Due to some recent project setbacks, your staff members have become somewhat discouraged. Their morale has dropped, and so has their performance.

- A. Continue to direct and closely supervise their performance.
- B. Give the group members more time to overcome the setbacks but occasionally check their progress.
- C. Continue to define group activities but involve the group members more in decision making and incorporate their ideas.
- D. Participate in their problem-solving activities and encourage and support their efforts to overcome the project setbacks.

Development level _____ Action _____

Situation 4

As a director of the sales department, you have asked a member of your staff to take charge of a new sales campaign. You have worked with this person on other sales campaigns, and you know he has the job knowledge and experience to be successful at new assignments. However, he seems a little unsure about his ability to do the job.

- A. Assign the new sales campaign to him and let him function on his own.
- B. Set goals and objectives for this new assignment but consider his suggestions and involve him in decision making.
- C. Listen to his concerns but assure him he can do the job and support his efforts.
- D. Tell him exactly what the new campaign involves and what you expect of him, and supervise his performance closely.

Development level _____ Action _____

SOURCE: Adapted from *Game Plan for Leadership and the One Minute Manager* (Figure 5.20, Learning Activity, p. 5), by K. Blanchard, P. Zigarmi, and D. Zigarmi, 1992, Escondido, CA: Blanchard Training and Development (phone 760-489-5005). Used with permission.