

Using Situational Leadership® to Lead Teams

Situational Leadership® is a task specific model leaders have been using for 50 years to drive performance and enhance engagement. It is also a model that can be used in conjunction with Tuckman's stages of group development to effectively lead teams. And if it's true that a picture is worth a thousand words, we offer the following pictures (with far less than 1000 words).

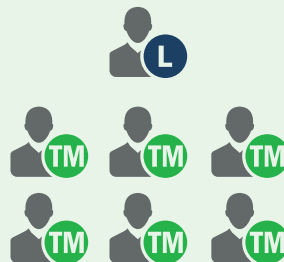
Stage 1: Forming ► Style 1: Establishing/Defining

Team Members Ask/Say:

- What are we doing?
- What is my role?
- Where does that fit in?

Objective:

Create movement



Leader Behaviors:

- Define team's purpose
- Establish the relative priority of that purpose
- Identify initial steps to be taken (who will do what and by when to get us started?)

Stage 2: Storming ► Style 2: Clarifying/Explaining

Team Members Ask/Say:

- Why are we doing this?
- Are you sure this is the best use of my time?
- Is there a better way?

Objective:

Team "buy-in" and clarity



Leader Behaviors:

- Recognize progress made
- Acknowledge problems and challenges
- Coach, teach, explain

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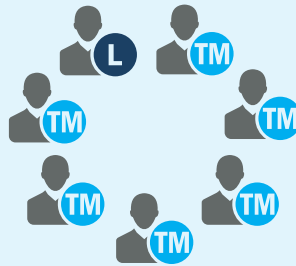
Stage 3: Norming ► Style 3: Participating/Collaborating

Team Members Ask/Say:

- We're not 100% sure, but here's what we think ____
- Trends still indicate we are moving in the right direction
- This is starting to make sense!

Objective:

Reinforce progress and amplify alignment



Leader Behaviors:

- Facilitate targeted problem solving
- Articulate benefits of enhanced collaboration
- Use open-ended questions to increase team involvement

Stage 4: Performing ► Style 4: Empowering/Delegating

Team Members Ask/Say:

- Here's something else we just figured out ____
- We've identified something we never thought we'd see ____
- What's next?

Objective:

Maximize team potential



Leader Behaviors:

- Be available if needed
- Listen and ask reflective questions
- Trust team to execute against charter

Application Challenge

Reflect on a team you currently lead:

1. What stage of group development best describes this team?
2. What leadership style best describes your current approach?
3. What adjustments could you make that would accelerate the development of this team?

References

Bruce W. Tuckman. *Developmental Sequence in Small Groups* (Psychological Bulletin, 1965, Vol. 63, No. 6, 385-397, Naval Medical Research Institute, Bethesda, Maryland).

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