



**AFRICAN MEDICAL AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION:
MANUAL ON THE UNIT STANDARD: *Apply the principles
of situational leadership to a business unit*: ID No: 13953:
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Apply the principles of situational leadership to a business unit

Outcomes	Notional hours
1. Explain the concept of situational leadership	
2. Explain the levels of development used in situational leadership	
3. Diagnose the leadership needs of people in a business unit	
4. Plan to introduce situational leadership in a business unit	

Specific Outcome 1: Explain the concept of situational leadership

Mode of delivery	Assessment method	Assessment Instrument
Classroom presentation	Oral and written questioning	Written assignments/Tests

Situational leadership refers to leadership that treats different people differently. It involves using a variety of leadership styles flexibly. Situational leadership is based on the ability to diagnose the needs of those being led and contracting them to the leadership style they need. A situational leader is flexible and is able to use four different leadership styles depending on the situation. What leadership style is appropriate is dependent on the leader's ability to diagnose the needs of the people he/she leads and empower them. Situational leadership is about involving people by sharing with them what leadership is doing so that they understand why things are happening as they happen. Disseminating information about situational leadership is important so that people do not misinterpret the actions of the leader. When people know what prompts the leader to act in certain ways they cease to have misconceptions that would have been created had they been kept in the dark.

Leadership style is a combination of directive and supportive behaviours. Directive behaviour is clearly telling people what to do, how to do it, where to do it and when to do it, and then closely supervising their performance. Supportive behaviour is about listening to people, providing support and encouragement for their efforts and then facilitating their involvement in problem solving and decision making. There are four leadership styles: Directing, Coaching, Supporting and Delegating. It should be stressed that there is no one best leadership style.

- Directing- The leader provides specific instructions and closely supervises task accomplishment. This style is appropriate for people who have low competence but high commitment
- Coaching- The leader continues to direct and closely supervise task accomplishment but also explains decisions, solicits suggestions and supports progress. This style is appropriate for people who have some competence but with low commitment
- Supporting- The leader facilitates and supports subordinates efforts toward task accomplishment and shares with them responsibility for decision making. This style is appropriate for people with high competence and variable commitment
- Delegating- The leaders turns over responsibility for decision making and problem solving to subordinates. This style is appropriate for people with high competence and high commitment.

These four leadership styles are a combination of directive and supportive behaviours that can be graphically displayed:

Supportive behaviour	SUPPORTING High Supportive and Low Directive	COACHING High Supportive and High Directive
	DELEGATING Low Supportive and Low Directive	DIRECTING High Directive and Low Supportive
	Directive behaviour	

Suggested tasks for the trainee to attain competence against this specific outcome

1. Explain the concept situational leadership
2. Name and explain the two basic behaviours that manager can use to influence subordinates
3. List and explain the four basic leadership styles and give an indication of where each is appropriate

Evidence that the trainee has achieved competence against this specific outcome:

1. The concept of situational leadership is explained
2. The two basic behaviours that a manager can use to influence a subordinate are named and explained

2. The four basic leadership styles are listed and explained and an indication is given of where each is appropriate

Specific Outcome 2: Explain the levels of development used in situational leadership

Mode of delivery	Assessment method	Assessment Instrument
Classroom presentation	Oral and written questioning	Written assignments/Tests

A person's performance is determined by competence and commitment. Diagnosing is about examining two ingredients that determine a person's performance: competence and commitment. Competence is a function of knowledge and skills which can be gained through education and training and/or experience. Commitment on the other hand is a combination of confidence and motivation. Confidence is a measure of a person's self assuredness- a feeling of being able to do a task well without supervision, whereas motivation is a person's interest in and enthusiasm for doing a task well. The situational leader develops people under his/her supervision to have high competence and high commitment. Four combinations of competence and commitment make up what we call development levels. The four development levels are:

Low Competence • High Commitment	Some Competence • Low Commitment	High Competence • Variable Commitment	High Competence • High Commitment
Development level1	Development level2	Development level3	Development level4

The people on development level one are least developed whilst those on level 4 are fully developed. People on different levels need to be treated differently. The following diagram matches the development level of people with the appropriate style of leadership.

Development level	Appropriate leadership style
D1 Low Competence and High Commitment	DIRECTING Structure, control and supervise
D2 Some Competence and Low Commitment	COACHING Direct and support
D3 High Competence and Variable Commitment	SUPPORTING Praise, listen and facilitate
D4 High Competence and High Commitment	DELEGATING Turn over responsibility for day to day decision making

People who lack competence but are enthusiastic need direction and supervision to get them started. People who have some competence but lack commitment need direction and supervision because they are still relatively inexperienced. They also

need support to build self esteem and involvement in decision making to restore their commitment. People who have competence but lack motivation need support to bolster their confidence and motivation. People with competence and commitment are able and willing to work with little supervision or support.

As development moves from level 1 to level 4 the manager's leadership style moves from style 1 to style 4. The manager follows five steps in developing people's competence and commitment.

1. The first step is to tell people what to do
2. The second step is to show people what to do. Once told what to do, people need to be shown what good performance looks like. People need to know what the performance standards are.
3. The third step is to let people try
4. The fourth step is to observe their performance
5. The last step is to praise progress or reprimand poor performance

In cases where poor performance is observed, the manager may use reprimands. Before reprimands can be used, the manager must ascertain the facts for poor performance. Sometimes poor performance may be attributed to loss of confidence- the task may be more complicated than the person anticipated- in this case the manager does not reprimand but provides support and encouragement, and if necessary direction.

To determine the developmental needs of staff, managers must start by setting goals each employee. Goals start performance in the right direction and permit the manager to analyse a person's competence and commitment. Once goals have been set, the manager needs to praise (show appreciation) where the employee does right. Praisings improve the development level of individuals by building confidence and thus motivating. The manager may use reprimands to stop poor performance alternatively the manager has to change leadership style

Suggested tasks for the trainee to attain competence against this specific outcome

1. List and explain the development levels that are used in situational leadership
2. Explain commitment and competence as they are used in situational development
3. Match development levels with appropriate leadership style
4. List the five steps managers use to develop people's commitment and competence

Evidence that the trainee has achieved competence against this specific outcome:

1. The development levels that are used in situational management are listed and explained
2. Commitment and competence are explained
3. Development levels are matched with appropriate leadership style
4. The five steps that a manager can use to develop people's commitment and competence are listed.

Specific Outcome 3: Diagnose the leadership needs of people in a business unit

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Mode of delivery	Assessment method	Assessment Instrument
Classroom presentation Observation	Oral and written questioning	Written assignments/Tests

People's past performance can be ascertained from evaluation forms that was part of performance review. Evaluation forms should reflect the development level of each employee. The manager must make it a point that he/she interviews individual employees about their performance in cases where performance has been poor. The manager and the employee must agree on the competence and commitment of the employee with respect to goals that were set and on the leadership style that the employee needs. The manager and the subordinate must look at the past performance of the subordinate and agree to the development level of the subordinate. With development level analysis the suggestions of the subordinate take precedence. If the subordinate feels that she/he is at development level 3, the manager has to go along with that with one proviso. Manager and subordinate have to agree on what the results should be for the next month so that both can observe the performance of the subordinate and confirm the level. Once the development level is confirmed, the leadership style falls into line as shown in specific outcome 2. The manager and the subordinate do not just leave things at saying the subordinate needs a particular style. The leadership style once determined establishes the number, frequency and kinds of meetings the manager has with the subordinate. These meetings are for the manager to assess if the subordinate is catching on and starting to perform and what style of leadership should the manager move to leadership style moves with the development level as mentioned in Specific Outcome 2.

The manager has praises and reprimands to motivate or correct the subordinate. If the subordinate performs well in terms of the set goals and performance standards, the manager must give due by praising the subordinate. Being praised also builds the confidence of the subordinate. The subordinate who is praised feels appreciated and thus becomes motivated to do his/job which in turn increases commitment. The performance of the subordinate allows the manager to change leadership style from more direction and support to less direction and less support.

If despite the leadership style, the subordinate fails to perform on the set goals and performance standards; the manager will have to reprimand the subordinate. Reprimands allow the subordinate to take corrective action. With poor performance, the manager may have to move from a leadership style of less direction and less support to one of more direction and more support. Learners must be given the opportunity to observe managers in real life situations and learn from them.

Suggested tasks for the trainee to attain competence against this specific outcome

1. Explain how a manager and a subordinate come to define the development level of the subordinate
2. Explain the role of praises and reprimands in situational leadership

Evidence that the trainee has achieved competence against this specific outcome:

1. How a manager and a subordinate come to define the subordinate's development level is explained
2. The roles of praises and reprimands in situational leadership are explained

Specific Outcome 4: Plan to introduce situational leadership in a business unit

Mode of delivery	Assessment method	Assessment Instrument
Classroom presentation	Oral and written questioning	Written assignments/Tests

To introduce situational leadership to a business unit one needs to share the concept with the members of the unit where it is to be introduced. One concern about leaders is that they start using concepts without telling anybody. If subordinates are not conversant with what is happening they may misinterpret the manager's behaviour. If for example a manager would analyse the development level of a subordinate on a particular task as a level 4 and decide that the subordinate is competent and thus spend less time with him/her without actually informing the subordinate, the subordinate may misinterpret the manager's and think that the manager is ignoring him/her and thus unappreciative. The manager must explain to the group that he has positive assumptions about everybody, that all subordinates have the potential to be high performers. What fluctuates is the manager's behaviour depending on subordinate's needs for direction and support.

The manager must thus explain the steps that will be involved in implementing situational leadership to a business unit. Involvement of the subordinates and their understanding of the processes to be followed are key to successful implementation because situational leadership rests on the buy in from subordinates. The steps that the manager must explain are:

1. That for each subordinate there must be set goals in terms of performance in his/her area of responsibility. The manager and the subordinate must agree on how the subordinate will be assessed against a standard of performance.
2. The manager and the subordinate must perform a development level diagnosis by looking at the performance level
3. Once the development level has been identified, it is matched with the appropriate leadership style.
4. The subordinate performs with the manager using the appropriate leadership style to help him/her to gradually stand on his/her feet and learn to direct and motivate himself/herself.

Suggested tasks for the trainee to attain competence against this specific outcome

1. Discuss the importance of information dissemination in situational leadership
2. List and explain the steps required for successful implementation of situational leadership.

Evidence that the trainee has achieved competence against this specific outcome:

1. The importance of information dissemination in situational leadership is discussed
2. The steps required for successful implementation of situational leadership are listed and explained.