Introduction to Situational Leadership® II

Developing Competence
Gaining Commitment
Retaining Talent

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Ken Blanchard first developed Situational Leadership® with Paul Hersey in the late 1960s. In 1985, Blanchard and the Founding Associates of The Ken Blanchard Companies®—Marjorie Blanchard, Don Carew, Eunice Parisi-Carew, Fred Finch, Laurence Hawkins, Drea Zigarmi, and Patricia Zigarmi—created a new generation of the theory called Situational Leadership® II. The leadership model used in this product is based on the Founding Associates’ second generation thinking and research, and is used with their permission.

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Overview

This 2.5-hour training program is an Introduction to Situational Leadership® II (SLII®). It focuses on the first two skills of a Situational Leader: Diagnosis and Flexibility. This leader guide provides you with information on how to facilitate this program. We hope you enjoy teaching others how to become Situational Leaders.

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Equipment

- PowerPoint® projector
- Easels and flip chart paper

Instructional Supplies

- Introduction to Situational Leadership® II Leader Guide
- Introduction to SLII® PowerPoint Presentation
- Development Level Needs Cards—one deck for every four to five participants

Participant Materials

- Introduction to Situational Leadership® II Participant Workbook
- LBAII® Self, Form B (Optional)
- LBAII Self, Form B—Scoring (Optional)
Introduction to SLII® Training Design

10 minutes  Ask participants to read the SLII® Overview. Explore the challenges leaders face today and how this program will help managers deal with these challenges. Define the purposes of SLII® and share the learning objectives for the program.

10 minutes  Ask participants to complete the Best Boss/Worst Boss Worksheet and share responses with a learning partner. Explore “what your best boss knew that you’re worst boss didn’t know.”

5 minutes  Define the three skills of a Situational Leader. Define leadership, leadership style, and the three “best beliefs” of a Situational Leader.

(20–25 minutes) Optional: Take the LBAII® Self, Form B

40–45 minutes  Teach the first skill of a Situational Leader: Diagnosis.

Define competence, commitment, and the four development levels.

Ask individuals to complete the Development Level Worksheet.

Teach the four development levels. Collect characteristics/descriptors from the Development Level Worksheet to add to the profiles of the four development levels in the participant workbook. Ask participants to record these descriptors in their workbooks.

Ask teams to sort the needs of employees at each level of development. Ask them to add the needs of each development level to the profiles of the four development levels in their participant workbooks.

10 minutes  **BREAK**
30–35 minutes  Teach the second skill of a Situational Leader: Flexibility. Define Directive and Supportive Behavior and the four leadership styles. Explain what a leader does in all four styles.

Practice identifying directive and supportive leadership behaviors in one to three situations.

25 minutes  Teach the value of matching leadership style to development level and the negative consequences of oversupervision and undersupervision.

Use six SLII® situations to practice diagnosing matches and mismatches—oversupervision and undersupervision.

(20–25 minutes)  Optional: Score the LBAII Self, Form B

15 minutes  Introduce the “Quick Diagnosis Model” and practice diagnosing development level and finding the match using the three SLII® scenarios included in the participant workbook.

10 minutes  Ask participants to create an action plan for using SLII® to deal with the challenges they face as leaders. Review what the participants can do to continue to learn about SLII®.

Total—2 hours 35 minutes to 2 hours 50 minutes (with 10 minute break). Doing the optional LBAII Self, Form B adds 20–25 minutes to complete and 20–25 minutes to score.
Leader’s Notes
Reflecting on Leadership

1. Display visual aid 1—Introduction to Situational Leadership® II.

2. Refer participants to workbook page 1—Situational Leadership® II—Overview.

3. Make these points

   Situational Leadership® II is a model for developing people. It’s a common language for talking about leadership. Because it opens up communication, Situational Leadership® II invites individuals to teach their managers about themselves and what kind of help they need in order to develop their competence, motivation, and confidence.

   SLI® will help you deal with the challenges you face today in your organization.
4. Ask this question

What are the greatest challenges you face?

Examples
- Doing more with less
- Losing my best people
- Keeping my team motivated
- Managing change
- Developing my people
- Coaching people
- Having enough time to show someone how

5. Record your participants’ responses on a flip chart.

6. Explain that learning to be a Situational Leader will help them address those challenges.

7. Refer participants to workbook page 2—The Purposes of SLII®.
8. Display visual aid 2—The Purposes of Situational Leadership® II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Purposes of Situational Leadership® II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Open up communication—increase the frequency and quality of conversations about performance and development between you and the people you work with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Help others develop competence and commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teach others how to provide their own direction and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Value and honor differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Review the four purposes.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Be able to diagnose others’ development levels and choose the appropriate leadership style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Know why there is no best leadership or coaching style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Learn to use a common language for coaching and developing others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand the negative impact of oversupervision and undersupervision on others’ performance and morale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Review the four objectives.
**Best Boss/Worst Boss**

1. Refer participants to workbook page 3—Best Boss/Worst Boss Worksheet.

2. Tell two stories based on your own best boss/worst boss experiences. First, describe your “best boss” and the influence he or she had on your performance. Recall two or three behaviors that you liked or admired. In the second story, describe your “worst boss” and what he or she did to demotivate you.

3. Give these directions

   *Recall a best boss and describe what you could see your boss doing or hear your boss saying that had a positive impact on your performance.*

   Ask them to reflect on how they reacted and felt.

   *Then, make a similar list of your worst boss’ behaviors and your reactions and feelings.*

4. Finally, ask each participant to respond to the last question on workbook page 3. Then have them share their responses with a learning partner.

5. Make two columns on a flip chart.

   **Worst Boss Behaviors | Reactions and Feelings**

6. Give this direction

   *Tell me some of your worst boss’ behaviors.*

7. List the behaviors on the flip chart.

8. Ask: “How did these behaviors make you feel or react?”
9. List feelings and reactions in the column to the right.

10. Make two more columns on a second flip chart

   Best Boss Behaviors | Reactions and Feelings

11. List the best boss behaviors on the flip chart; then the reactions and feelings.

12. If participants name traits, qualities, or characteristics of bosses such as patience, sense of humor, strong values, vision, or persistence, ask them how these qualities were demonstrated. Write the behavior next to the trait (example: Patience—always took time to explain things to me).

13. Then ask this question: “What did your best boss know that your worst boss didn’t know?”

14. Listen to the answers.

15. Make this point

   Many, if not all, of the behaviors on the Best Boss list are the behaviors of a Situational Leader. Situational Leaders know how to diagnose the needs of their staff and they are flexible enough to provide the appropriate amount of direction and support.
The Three Skills of a Situational Leader

1. Refer participants to workbook page 4—The Three Skills of a Situational Leader.

2. Display visual aid 4—The Three Skills of a Situational Leader.

3. Review the three skills of a Situational Leader

   - **Diagnosis**—the willingness and ability to look at a situation and assess others’ development needs
     Does the individual need direction or support to become more self-reliant on a particular goal or task?

   - **Flexibility**—the ability to use a variety of leadership styles comfortably
     Is the leader comfortable using both directive and supportive leadership behaviors?

     Is the leader comfortable with all four leadership styles?
Think about driving your car. What would it be like if you could only drive your car in one gear? Just like it is useful to be able to use all the gears (including reverse) in driving a car, it is important to be able to use all of the leadership styles when influencing others. It’s important to be more of an all-terrain vehicle, which is what we mean by flexibility.

- **Partnering for Performance**—reaching agreements with people about the leadership style they need in order to achieve their individual and organization goals

4. Reemphasize that this program is meant to provide an introduction to Situational Leadership® II with a brief overview of the first two skills. If participants would like to learn about the third skill, Partnering for Performance, and get into application of the model and skill practice with the model, they should contact their training department or human resources department.

5. Make these points

As an individual’s competence and commitment grow, the leader should change his or her leadership style as the individual’s needs change.

*The purpose of Situational Leadership® II training is to help leaders become more aware and conscious of which leadership style to use and when to use it.

Helping leaders become more flexible and responsive is what this training program aims to accomplish.
6. Refer participants to workbook page 5—The Definition of Leadership.

7. Display visual aid 5—Leadership.

![Leadership Diagram]

8. Read the definition of leadership.

9. Next, define leadership style.

10. Display visual aid 6—Leadership Style.

![Leadership Style Diagram]

11. Review the definition of leadership style.
12. Make these points

*The people who report to you are the best predictors of your leadership style. Your self-perception is simply your good intentions.*

*In Situational Leadership® II there is no best leadership style. The “best” leadership style to use depends on the situation. In certain situations, it is appropriate to coach. In other situations, after setting a clear goal, the leader can delegate. Sometimes just support is needed. In other cases, to develop an individual’s skills, direction is needed.*

*Although there are no best leader behaviors, the Situational Leadership® II Model is based on a set of “best” attitudes—core beliefs and values about people.*

13. Display visual aid 7—Beliefs and Values about People.

14. Reveal the first belief

*People can and want to develop. They want to be good at what they do. The job of the leader is to*
help them win by setting attainable goals, developing realistic action plans, tracking performance, and providing frequent feedback on results.

The emphasis in Situational Leadership® II is always on development. Leaders need to create opportunities for individuals to perform and, through these opportunities, encourage them to develop their skills and resourcefulness. The focus is always on learning and continuous improvement.

15. Reveal the second belief

Leadership is a partnership. By making leadership more of a partnership, individuals will trust that their leaders have their interests at heart. In fact, individuals will give leaders the right to lead when they think their leaders have the expertise to help them achieve individual and organization goals.

16. Reveal the third belief

People thrive on involvement and communication. To excel, people need to influence what happens to them and how work gets done. They also need to know what is expected of them. They need feedback on results. They need information about the organization’s performance if they are going to be held accountable for achieving or exceeding goals.

As leaders move through the Situational Leadership® II Model, involvement in decision making and problem solving increases.
Diagnosis—The First Skill of a Situational Leader

1. Refer to workbook page 6—Diagnosis—The First Skill of a Situational Leader.

2. Display visual aid 8—Diagnosis.

3. Review the definition of Diagnosis.


5. Review the two dimensions of development level.

6. Make these points

   *Development level is the key situational variable in choosing the appropriate leadership style.*
Development level is goal or task specific. An individual can be at one level of development on one goal or task and at another level of development on another goal or task.

7. Display visual aid 10—Competence (Can Do!).

8. Give this definition

Competence is a measure of an individual’s demonstrated task-specific knowledge and skills and transferable knowledge and skills on a given goal or task.

9. Define task knowledge and skills by making these points.

The first criterion to determine competence is demonstrated task knowledge and skills. Task knowledge and skills are related specifically to the goal or task at hand.

For example, to teach a seminar on Situational Leadership® II, you need to know the SLII® Model.
10. Ask this question and encourage participants to record examples in their workbooks

*How would you know if someone has task-specific knowledge or skills?*

*Here are some examples of questions to ask*

- *How much formal education have you had? (Tell me about it.)*
- *How much on-the-job training and coaching have you had? (Tell me about it.)*
- *What experience do you have?*
- *How many opportunities have you had to practice or use these skills?*
- *Can you give me an example of this knowledge or skill in action?*
- *Could you teach someone else how to do this?*
- *Could you break what you know into “baby steps”?*

11. Define transferable knowledge and skills and encourage participants to record examples

*The second criterion to determine competence is transferable knowledge and skills. Transferable skills are generic skills developed on one project that can be applied to another project. Transferable skills include, for example, planning, project and time management, interpersonal communication, writing, and problem solving and decision making skills.*
Transferable skills are skills “you bring to the party.” For example, to teach Situational Leadership® II, you not only need to know the model, you also need good presentation skills.

Transferable skills increase the speed of learning.

12. Display visual aid 11—Commitment (Want to Do!).

13. Define commitment

*Commitment is a measure of an individual's motivation and confidence in relation to a specific goal or task.*

14. Define motivation

*Motivation is a person's interest in and enthusiasm for the goal or task. How interested is the person in doing the goal or task well? How excited is the person? How passionate is he or she about it?*

15. Define confidence

*Confidence is a person’s feelings of being able to perform a goal or task well without a lot of help from his or her leader. Confidence is a feeling of self-assurance and trust in oneself. The person trusts that he or she has the skills to work independently and perform the task well.*
Development Level Worksheet

1. Refer participants to workbook pages 7–8—Development Level Worksheet.

2. Give these directions.

   Think of a time you were a beginner, advanced beginner, steady contributor, and an expert at something. List descriptors of you at each level of development. You can use four different tasks or one task at four points in time. If you choose one task at which you’re an expert, think back to what it was like to be a beginner, advanced beginner, and steady contributor—before you became an expert.

3. Allow a few minutes for participants to complete the worksheet.

4. Then, ask teams to share descriptors for each level of development with each other. Allow another four to five minutes.
**The Four Development Levels—D1**

1. Refer to workbook pages 9–12—The Four Development Levels.

2. Make this point

   *There are four levels of development, representing four combinations of competence and commitment.*

3. Refer to workbook page 9—The Four Development Levels—D1: The Enthusiastic Beginner.


5. Define D1 and make these points

   *At Development Level 1, an individual has low competence and high commitment.*

   *An individual at D1 is interested in and enthusiastic about the goal or task, but lacks skills and experience.*

   *We call an individual at D1 an Enthusiastic Beginner.*
6. Ask participants to shout out some descriptors of a D1. As needed, add descriptors for Development Level 1 using visual aid 13. Tell participants to record these descriptors on workbook page 9.

7. Make this remark

   You intuitively know the Situational Leadership® II Model, but after training, you will have a framework and some labels to use to describe what you already know.
The Four Development Levels—D2

1. Refer to workbook page 10—The Four Development Levels—D2: The Disillusioned Learner.

2. Display visual aid 14—Development Level 2.

3. Define D2

   At Development Level 2, an individual has low to some competence and low commitment.

4. Make these points

   An individual at D2 usually has developed some skills in relation to the goal or task but is often frustrated and demotivated due to unmet expectations. The drop in commitment is natural but will pass more quickly with the appropriate leadership style.

   People can also start out at D2 if they have low competence and lack commitment from the outset.

   We call an individual at D2 a Disillusioned Learner.

5. Ask participants to shout out some descriptors of a D2. As needed, add descriptors using visual aid 15. Tell participants to record these descriptors on workbook page 10.
The Four Development Levels—D3


3. Define D3

   At Development Level 3, an individual has moderate to high competence and variable commitment.

4. Make these points

   An individual at D3 has fairly good skills in regard to the goal or task, but his or her confidence may be shaky, which can affect motivation. Motivation can also be low at D3 because of a job-related or a personal issue, or because the individual is bored with the goal or task.

   We call an individual at D3 a Capable, but Cautious, Performer.

5. Ask participants to shout out some descriptors of a D3. As needed, add descriptors using visual aid 17. Tell participants to record these descriptors on workbook page 11.
The Four Development Levels—D4

1. Refer to workbook page 12—The Four Development Levels—D4: The Self-Reliant Achiever.


3. Define D4 and make these points
   
   At Development Level 4, an individual has high competence and high commitment.

   An individual at D4 has mastered the goal or task and is motivated and confident.

   We call an individual at D4 a Self-Reliant Achiever.

4. Ask this question
   
   Where do D4s get recognition and support?

   Answer: Primarily from themselves, their peers, and their clients or customers

5. Ask participants to shout out some descriptors of a D4. As needed, add descriptors using visual aid 19. Tell participants to record these descriptors on workbook page 12.
The Needs of Each Development Level

1. Hand out the decks of Development Level Needs Cards. Give one deck to each team of four to five participants.

2. Ask teams to sort the needs of employees at each level of development. Allow 5 to 7 minutes.

3. Quickly display the needs of each development level, using visual aids 20–23.

4. As you show each visual aid, ask participants to write the needs in their workbooks

   Development Level 1 Needs on page 9
   Development Level 2 Needs on page 10
   Development Level 3 Needs on page 11
   Development Level 4 Needs on page 12
5. As you share the needs of a D1, make the point that individuals at D1 are open to direction because they are excited and want to do well. What they can’t do for themselves, yet, is to set their own goals, develop their own action plans, or know if they are on track.

6. As you share the needs of a D2, explain that individuals at D2 still need direction. They still need help with goals, action plans, timelines, and priorities. They also need support because their motivation and confidence are low.

7. As you share the needs of a D3, make the point that individuals at D3 know how to do the task. Their skills are solid and substantial, but their commitment is variable. At times, they don’t trust their skills—an indication of low confidence. This usually happens when a D2 becomes a D3. Or individuals at D3 can feel confused, ambivalent, or dissatisfied—an indication of low motivation. Low motivation can be caused by job-related or personal circumstances. Low motivation as the cause of variable commitment at D3 usually occurs when a D4 slips back to D3. Explain that one of the challenges at D3 is to get the negative self-talk out of the way whether that self-talk is due to low confidence or motivation. D3s need support.

8. As you share the needs of a D4, make the point that D4s are very self-directed and self-motivated.

9. Answer any questions about the first skill of a Situational Leader—Diagnosis.

**Break :10**
Flexibility—The Second Skill of a Situational Leader

1. Refer to workbook page 13—Flexibility—The Second Skill of a Situational Leader.

2. Display visual aid 24—Flexibility.

3. Review the definition of Flexibility.

4. Make these points

   Every individual responds to a leadership style that works for him or her in a given situation on a given goal or task. An effective Situational Leader flexibly provides people with what is needed—be it direction or support—to develop their skills, motivation, or confidence.

   Flexibility also means being able to use more than one approach to get something done because different individuals need different things.
5. Make these points

*Situational Leadership® II means “Different Strokes for Different Folks.”

*To be a Situational Leader, you need to be able to use two kinds of leadership behavior—Directive Behavior and Supportive Behavior.*
**Directive Leadership Behavior**


2. Review the three Directive Behaviors.


4. Review the five key words for Directive Behavior.

5. Make these points

   *If you don't like the word “supervise,” substitute “pay attention to” or “stay in touch with” or “monitor.”*
Directive Leadership Behavior

The higher the Directive Behavior, the more frequently these behaviors are used by the leader. The lower the Directive Behavior, the less frequently these behaviors are used by the leader.

6. Explain that the highest impact Directive Behaviors (if the leader wants to be seen as effective at direction giving) are Goal Setting and Action Planning/Showing How.
Supportive Leadership Behavior

1. Display visual aid 27—Supportive Behavior.

2. Make these points

Leaders are using supportive leadership behavior when they

- Encourage rather than advocate
- Listen rather than talk
- Ask rather than tell
- Pull rather than push
- Explain rather than define

3. Display visual aid 28—Supportive Behavior.
4. Review the five key words for Supportive Behavior.

5. Make this point

*The higher the Supportive Behavior, the more frequently these behaviors are used by the leader.*
*The lower the Supportive Behavior, the less frequently these behaviors are used by the leader.*

6. Explain that the highest impact Supportive Behaviors (if the leader wants to be seen as effective at giving support) are Listening and Facilitating Self-Reliant Problem Solving by asking good, open-ended questions.
What Do the Four Leadership Styles Look Like?

1. Make this remark

There are four leadership styles, and each leadership style is a unique combination of Directive and Supportive Behavior.

2. Refer to workbook page 14—The Four Leadership Styles.

3. Display visual aid 29—The Four Leadership Styles.

4. Make these remarks

Style 1 is a combination of high Directive Behavior and low Supportive Behavior. The leader provides specific instructions about goals and roles and closely supervises the individual’s performance.

The leader takes the lead in telling the employee what, when, and how to accomplish the goal or task. Problem solving, decision making, and evaluation are largely initiated by the leader. The leader provides frequent follow-up and feedback.

Style 1 is called Directing.
Notice that it is low support—not no support.

In fact, if Style 1 is used appropriately, high direction feels supportive.

5. Give this example

Let’s assume there’s noise in the hall and it’s distracting. I’d say to someone, “Greg, there’s noise in the hall. Please get up, go out into the hall, tell those people that they are making a lot of noise and that it’s bothering us, and then ask them to move their conversation down the hall. Is it clear what I need you to do? Can you do it right now, since this has been going on for 15 minutes already? Let me know if they cooperate. If not, we’ll need to come up with another plan.”

There may be a little give-and-take, but essentially you expect the person to be cooperative and to do what you want him or her to do, when you want him or her to do it, using the plan you’ve come up with. Ask: Is this a good plan for dealing with the noise in the hall? The answer: It might be. It depends. Ask: What if the plan doesn’t work? Who’s responsible? The answer: You are. The person you are directing is only responsible for carrying out the action plan.
6. Make these remarks

Style 2 is a combination of high Directive Behavior and high Supportive Behavior. Sensitive to any feelings of discouragement the individual may be feeling, the leader explains why, solicits suggestions, praises behaviors that are approximately right, and continues to direct task accomplishment.

Style 2 is called **Coaching**.

7. Give this example

Let’s assume there’s noise in the hall and it’s distracting. I’d say to someone, “Greg, there’s noise in the hall. What I’d like to suggest is that you get up, go out into the hall, tell those people that they are making a lot of noise and that it’s bothering us, and ask them to move their conversation down the hall. What do you think?”

Up until this question, this looks like Style 1. But then you ask, “What do you think?” and listen to the other person’s input.
Let’s assume that Greg responds, “Those people look really mean, and they’re huge. Why don’t I ask security to come and ask them to leave?” Now we have two suggestions on the table: My idea—just take care of it, and his idea—call security.

Ask: Who decides? The leader decides but explains why. If you think that Greg’s idea is a good one, you’d say, “That seems reasonable. I knew I could count on you. You have a good relationship with security. Let me know if you have any problems.”

If you don’t think Greg’s plan is a good idea, then you would redirect by saying, “My concern is that security will take too long, but they are imposing. Why don’t you take a couple of other people with you when you ask them to move?”

In Style 2 you lead with your ideas, ask or consult, and then you decide. Ask: Is this a good plan for dealing with the noise in the hall? The answer: It might be. It depends.

8. Ask this question

What is there more of in Style 2 than in Style 1?

Examples of possible answers

- More two-way communication
- More praise
- More involvement in problem solving and decision making
- More explanations of why
- More give and take
- More employee initiative
9. Make these points

Style 3 is a combination of high Supportive Behavior and low Directive Behavior. The leader and the individual make decisions together. The role of the leader is to facilitate, listen, draw out, encourage, and support.

Style 3 is called Supporting.

10. Give this example

Let’s assume there’s noise in the hall and it’s distracting. I’d say to someone, “Greg, there’s noise in the hall. What could you do to take care of it?”

You would then listen to Greg’s ideas. Let’s assume he suggests calling security and you think it’s a bad idea. You would say, “My concern is that they might take a lot of time getting here. What do you think? What other ideas do you have?”

In Style 3 you can offer ideas, but the person decides how he or she will accomplish the goal or task so he or she can accept or reject your ideas or concerns. Ask: “Is there anything I can do to help?” Ask: Is this a good plan for dealing with the noise in the hall? The answer: It might be. It depends.
11. Make these points

Style 4 is a combination of low Directive Behavior and low Supportive Behavior. The leader empowers the employee to act independently with appropriate resources to get the job done.

However, low support and low direction does not mean no support or direction.

Style 4 is called Delegating.

12. Give this example

Let’s assume there’s noise in the hall and it’s distracting. I’d say to someone, “Greg, there’s noise in the hall. Could you take care of it?”

That’s it. You don’t need to know how Greg’s going to take care of it. All you want to do is acknowledge his initiative or contribution when he does it with a “Thanks.”

Often when you use Style 4, the person has already identified the problem and taken care of it. Ask: Is this a good plan for dealing with the noise in the hall? The answer: It might be. It depends.

The point is that there are four viable options for dealing with the noise in the hall.

• Here’s what I want you to do.
• Here’s what I suggest, what do you think?
• How will you take care of the noise in the hall? How can I help?
• There’s noise in the hall.

14. Make this point

_Some behaviors are common to all four styles: Goal Setting, Observing and Monitoring Performance, and Feedback._

15. Ask these questions

_How frequent is the observation, monitoring, and feedback in Styles 1 and 2? How frequent is it in Styles 3 and 4? The answer: Much less frequent._
Leadership Style Flexibility

1. Refer participants to workbook pages 15–21—Leadership Style Flexibility.

2. Give these directions

   Individually, read through the first situation on pages 15–16. Use the column on the left to note when the manager makes a directive or a supportive comment. Use the definitions of Directive and Supportive Behaviors on page 13 to identify what type of comment the manager is making. Then, answer the questions at the end of each situation before going on to the next one.

3. After a couple of minutes, ask participants to share their ratings for each of Casey’s comments. The answers are provided on the following pages.

4. Then discuss participants’ answers to the three questions on page 16.

5. If there’s time, have the participants go through the two other cases on pages 17–19 and pages 20–21.

6. The answers are also recorded on the following pages.

7. Answer any questions participants may have about directive and supportive leadership behavior or the four leadership styles.
Leadership Style Flexibility Answers

Situation 1

D Casey: Come over and sit down, and let’s get organized on how we’re going to track the results of the ad campaign for our new product.

D Casey: Good, Sandy, so let’s get started on an action plan. (Sandy grabs a pen and a piece of paper.) What we’ve done thus far is to set up a tracking system so that we know exactly which sales are coming from which ad. Right?

D Casey: The next step of the process is to take the data that comes in and input it into the computer. That way we will be able to analyze it easily. We’ll know exactly how sales are running in each state with which particular ad. Once that’s up and running, we can do some statistical analysis of the data.

D Casey: Sandy, I need you to talk to Sam over in the data-processing unit. He will help you understand our software so that you can manipulate the data and know how we’re doing with each version of the ad campaign.

D Casey: Good. So why don’t you go over what you think the next steps are with me so I can be sure I’ve communicated them clearly?

S Casey: Right. Now, do you have any questions?

D Casey: Great, if you think of anything, let me know. Let’s plan to meet next Monday at 9:00 a.m. to discuss your progress.
**Situation 2**

**D**  Pat: Yeah, Terry, come in. I wanted to ask you about the reports and why they were late—and two sections were incomplete. This is the second time this month. What seems to be the problem?

**S**  Pat: There’s a lot going on right now. Is the workload too much?

**S**  Pat: It sounds like you have a lot going on right now and that, like most of us, you hate all the paperwork.

**S**  Pat: I know how you feel. I don’t know too many people who actually like paperwork. But, it is important. With the way our organization works and with all the regulations, we’ve got to have timely, accurate, and detailed reporting.

**S**  Pat: You’re right. What ideas do you have?

**S**  Pat: So, what do you think?

**S**  Pat: You know, Terry, over the past year you’ve always been right on time and accurate with your paperwork. You’re the one staff member I could always count on to help me get my reports in on time. You know what’s required, so if you think this is the best way to deal with the situation, let’s put a development plan together for Fred and get him started. Let me know what I can do to help.
**Situation 3**

**D** Andy: Lee, you know that we’ve been having some trouble with product quality in your area and, in general, with your work as a supervisor. Now, I feel that I probably have not provided the kind of direction you needed as you moved into a supervisory position, and I want to help resolve that problem. Lee, do you understand the importance of the fact that rejections in your area are up by 10 percent?

**S** Andy: Well, do you have any ideas as to what we might do to resolve this problem?

**D** Andy: All right; well, let me give you some suggestions and see what you think about them. What I would suggest is that you give all of your people a copy of our current quality standards and procedures. Then, be sure that each associate understands and is using these procedures. You understand the procedures, and I know you can explain them to your people.

**D** Andy: No, Lee, I don’t think I’d do it quite that way. Let’s get together tomorrow at 9:00, and we’ll go over the quality standards and procedures and discuss how to introduce and implement them with your people.

**S** Andy: I know you can handle this job, Lee. I think you just need some time and maybe a little guidance from me. Perhaps I haven’t provided the guidance you’ve needed in the past, but now I’m going to. So, let’s work together on this and see if we can correct this product quality problem.
Matching Leadership Style to Development Level

1. Refer to workbook page 22—The Situational Leadership® II Model.

2. Make these remarks

   The goal in Situational Leadership® II is to match your leadership style to the individual’s development level on a specific goal or task. When people excel, their performance is positively impacted by their hard work and desire and by the quality of the coaching they have received.

3. Display visual aid 31—The SLII® Model.

4. Make these points, referencing the visual aid or the SLII® poster

   To be an effective leader, you need to
   - Diagnose the situation
   - Discuss the individual’s needs
   - Coach in a way that is customized to that particular person, goal, time, and place
Remember, development level is goal or task specific. A person can be a D3 or D4 on several parts of his or her job and then, when faced with a new task, can be a D1.

Ideally, you want people to provide their own direction and support; but when they are tackling a new task, your help—the direction and support you provide as a coach or leader—is important. Over time, if you match your leadership style to their development level, the individuals become more self-reliant and are able to provide for themselves or find their own sources of direction and support.

5. Make these points

The match for D1 is Style 1.

It is not no support but low support in Style 1.

Individuals at D1 lack experience. Leaders in Style 1 shouldn’t try to pull a lot of ideas from them or do much mutual problem solving. However, there should still be some praise and encouragement for having a positive attitude, taking initiative, following directions, and making progress.

For a D1, providing direction feels like support.

6. Explain the match for D2 is S2.

As a leader, you provide direction to build people’s competence and support to build their commitment.
7. Make these points.

*Style 3 is a match for Development Level 3.*

*Since a D3’s skills are generally good, a Style 3 leader would not provide a D3 with a lot of direction or frequent feedback on results. D3s usually know how to monitor their own performance and can use that data to improve.*

*However, when they encounter a problem where they don’t trust their own skills or experience, they may need the leader’s support—reassurance, encouragement, and recognition. They may need the leader to confirm that their thinking and problem solving is on track.*

8. Explain

*Style 4 is a match for Development Level 4.*

*When people get to D4, they do not need much direction or support. They need leaders to clarify expectations and then get out of the way. Occasionally, they need to be praised or to be valued for their contribution to avoid slipping back to D3.*

9. Make these remarks

*Effective leaders diagnose the needs of individuals, then choose the appropriate leadership style.*

*When you match your leadership style to the development level of an individual, it releases energy. People become more committed to helping the organization achieve its goals, and their ability to make a contribution grows as their competence grows.*
10. Give this direction

*Brainstorm the positive outcomes of matching your leadership style to the needs of the people you work with.*

11. Record their answers on a flip chart.

**Examples**

- Productivity goes up
- Competence increases
- Motivation increases
- Confidence increases
- People become more self-directed or intrinsically motivated
- Problems get identified and resolved sooner

12. Make these points.

*Too often, leaders use only the leadership style(s) they are most comfortable using, not the style(s) that match the situation.*

*But, over time, if you match your leadership style to others’ development levels, they become more self-reliant and are able to provide their own direction and support.*
Oversupervision and Undersupervision

1. Refer to workbook page 23—Oversupervision and Undersupervision.

2. Display visual aid 32—A Leader Has Three Choices.

3. Name the two options to a match: oversupervision and undersupervision.

4. Make these points

These two options both have a negative impact on performance, development, and learning.

- **Oversupervision**—when you give an individual more direction than he or she needs. You use an S1 or S2 with a D3 or D4.

- **Undersupervision**—when you use a Supporting or Delegating style and the individual really needs direction and close supervision to build skills. You use an S3 or S4 with a D1 or D2.

5. Ask this question

Think of a time when you were oversupervised. How did you feel and what was the impact of the leader’s behavior on performance?
6. Give this direction

Work with a learning partner to list reactions to oversupervision.

7. Write responses on a flip chart.

Examples
- Resentment
- Anger
- Low initiative
- Frustration
- Less creativity
- Fewer good ideas or solutions shared

8. Make this point

When individuals are oversupervised, they may direct more energy to getting you off their back than to getting the job done. When you oversupervise, individuals can become dependent on you for direction and solutions to problems. They can become frustrated, resentful, and angry. They lose their willingness to take risks. Their initiative, and often their morale, go down.

9. Ask this question

Think of a time when you were undersupervised. How did you feel and what was the impact of the leader’s behavior on performance?

10. Give this direction

Work with a learning partner to list reactions to undersupervision.
11. Write responses on a flip chart.

Examples

- Low success
- Frustration
- Resentment
- Feelings of abandonment
- Set up to fail

12. Make this point

When individuals are undersupervised, their confidence doesn’t develop. They fail because they don’t get the direction or feedback they need. They often feel “set up.” They can become demoralized and frustrated. They begin to doubt themselves more and more. When you undersupervise someone, you can also frustrate yourself because you have to step in and clean up the mess.

13. Make these points

If you have been oversupervising or undersupervising, you need to

- Acknowledge the problem
- Communicate with the individual and discuss what his or her needs are for direction and support
- Agree on what behaviors he or she can count on from you in the future
Is This a Match, Oversupervision, or Undersupervision

1. Refer participants to workbook pages 24–26.

2. Write these directions on a flip chart. In teams, ask participants, individually, to analyze each of the six situations to determine

   A. Development level
   B. Whether it’s a match or mismatch
   C. If it’s a mismatch, whether it is oversupervision or undersupervision

3. The right answers are:

   Situation 1: DL
   - match
   - mismatch
   - over
   - under

   See Rationale—page 51.

   Situation 2: DL
   - match
   - mismatch
   - over
   - under

   See Rationale—pages 52–53.
Situation 3: DL 3  ■ mismatch  □ over  □ under
See Rationale—page 54.

Situation 4: DL 1  ■ mismatch  □ over  ■ under
See Rationale—pages 55–56.

Situation 5: DL 4  ■ mismatch  □ over  □ under
See Rationale—page 57.

Situation 6: DL 2  ■ mismatch  □ over  □ under
See Rationale—page 58.
Rationale for Is This a Match, Oversupervision, or Undersupervision

Situation 1

A new wireless data transfer system has just been introduced into your field office. One of the employees is reluctant to learn the new equipment. She claims she does not have time to learn the new system and still do her job. You have a great deal of experience with and knowledge of this system, and you have explained the benefits and importance of using the new system to her. So far, your efforts have been ineffective. She continues to find excuses not to learn the new system.

You would explain again to the employee the rationale and benefits of the new system and set times to work with her on it. Make an effort to listen to and incorporate any of her suggestions about ways in which she can gain the skills necessary for the new system.

Diagnosis—D2: The employee lacks skill and experience with wireless systems. Her competence in this area is low. Due to fear, lack of interest, or for whatever reason, she is not motivated to learn how to use the new system. Thus, her commitment to the task is low. It appears that she is at the D2 level of development, in need of an S2 (Coaching) style of leadership.

Your style is a Match.

Rationale—This Style 2 (Coaching) approach is a good choice. It addresses the employee’s need to understand the benefits and techniques of working with the new system, as well as her concerns about working with wireless systems. Whether her concerns are based on fear or lack of interest, the Style 2 (Coaching) approach provides the support she needs to overcome her commitment problem.
Situation 2

As a result of some new company initiatives, one of the teams in your department has to be reorganized. Individuals on the team have a history of working well together. The team leader has experience with reorganizing teams and has made suggestions for needed changes in the past. The new initiatives will have a significant impact on overall company performance.

You would tell the team leader about the new initiatives and the changes that will be required in her team. Be specific about how those changes should be implemented.

Diagnosis—D4: It appears that your team leader demonstrates a great deal of competence, both in the ways she functions and in reorganizations. The team leader sees the need for the reorganization and, thus, would be committed to workable suggestions to accomplish it. The team leader appears to be at the D4 level of development, with high competence and high commitment. Therefore, an S4 (Delegating) style of leadership is appropriate in this situation.

Your style is a Mismatch.

It is Oversupervision.
**Rationale**—Basically, your Style 1 (Directing) approach assumes that your team leader does not have good ideas to offer concerning the pending reorganization. By directing her, you are assuming responsibility for the entire task yourself. This is not only poor use of your time, but it may result in a less-than-perfect plan for the reorganization. It may also result in a plan that is poorly accepted by the team.

*You should* give the team leader the assignment of reorganizing the team. Ask her to complete the task in a week and to submit the plan for your final approval.

**Rationale**—By choosing a Style 4 (Delegating) approach to plan the reorganization of the team, your time is free for other things. The team leader’s high level of competence and commitment will very likely result in a successful plan that will be supported.
**Situation 3**

A very capable woman who works for you has demonstrated so much ability on an important project that you have asked her to make a presentation to a group of executives who will be visiting the company next week. The presentation is critical for a new marketing effort, and you feel that she is the best person to make the presentation, but she seems to lack confidence. She makes frequent references to her lack of formal education, and she has told you that she frankly cannot see herself making the presentation.

You would ask the woman to do the presentation. Talk with her about her fears. Try to build her confidence by praising her for past accomplishments. Explore the alternatives she has for the presentation, but leave the specifics to her.

**Diagnosis—D3:** In your opinion, this woman has the ability to make the presentation, and she is very familiar with the subject matter. The problem is her fear and/or insecurity that she cannot do a good job with the presentation. Thus, her high competence and shaky confidence suggest that she is at the D3 level. She needs an S3 (Supporting) style of leadership.

**Your style is a Match.**

**Rationale**—Your Style 3 (Supporting) approach should help build the woman’s confidence. It should also help her realize that she already has the answers to her concerns and that she can indeed deliver the presentation as requested. By discussing alternatives with her, you can confirm your judgment about her ability to deliver the presentation. If you then decide that her competence is not as high as you thought, you might slide back to a Coaching style. Meanwhile, the Style 3 approach is the best place to start.
Situation 4

You have just hired the competition’s top manager. This person comes with great credentials and a lot of experience as a project manager. Her responsibility will be to supervise one-third of your department. Since your department is in trouble and cannot afford any more setbacks, you feel fortunate to have this woman on your staff. Right now, she really needs extensive information about your organization’s policies and procedures.

You would, at the first opportunity, have a discussion with the new project manager about the department’s problems. Do some brainstorming with her about possible courses of action and support her efforts to get oriented as quickly as possible. Offer to help her get “up to speed” on the organization’s policies and procedures.

Diagnosis—D1: In this example, be careful not to confuse potential with demonstrated competence. Although this new project manager is motivated and has a lot of potential, she does not understand your organization yet. Therefore, she is a D1 in this situation. She is low in competence as a supervisor for your organization, but she has the ability to quickly learn the information she needs. This project manager probably has a very high commitment to learning your organization’s policies and procedures. Thus, an S1 (Directing) style of leadership would be appropriate.

Your style is a Mismatch.

It is Undersupervision.
**Rationale**—Your choice of a Style 3 (Supporting) approach assumes that the new project manager knows more than she really does at this time. Providing support is not nearly as efficient as providing her with detailed information and guidance to get started properly. She has arrived on the scene with plenty of commitment and energy to do the job. Right now, she needs direction, not support.

*You should* give her a crash course on your company—its products, policies, and procedures. Be specific about the information you provide and supervise her closely. Be certain that key areas of responsibility are clear and that measures of performance and standards are carefully outlined. Work hard to acclimate her to the company as quickly as possible.

**Rationale**—A Style 1 (Directing) approach is the best tactic to get this new project manager started in the right direction. It gives her the information she needs to develop her full potential. Her commitment to high standards will also carry her through in this new career venture.
Situation 5

You are a district manager for a growing company and you manage 31 sales reps. You have to do some preliminary projections for next year’s sales goals and need some help with the figures. You are about to meet with one of your most experienced assistant managers to assign her the task of gathering the data for these projections. She has had experience in all phases of the sales process and has a knack for data analysis. She wants the assignment.

You would ask her to produce the sales projections. Specify the format, the data collection procedures, and the timeline. Ask for her ideas and incorporate them into the approach you want her to use to make the projections when possible. Ask her to check in with you twice before submitting the report so you can track her progress.

Diagnosis—D4: The assistant manager has the desire and the skill to do these projections. Anything other than a delegating leadership style would be oversupervising.

Your style is a Mismatch.

It is Oversupervision.

Rationale—Your Style 1 (Directing) approach is inappropriate because she knows the sales prices and is competent in data analysis. Such oversupervision will clearly demotivate her.

You should ask her to produce the sales projections by the end of the month. Let her know she can contact you if she has any questions. Thank her for taking on the project.

Rationale—This Style 4 (Delegating) approach is the most appropriate, given the assistant manager’s skill and commitment levels. It allows her to use her skills and intrinsic motivation to do the job.
**Situation 6**

You manage two technical engineers who do not work well together at staff meetings. Both push their points too hard, fail to build on each other’s comments, and seldom show any appreciation for contributions made by the other. Individually, they value these staff meetings and feel that they have a lot to offer that will help. They just have no idea how to work together.

In a meeting with the two of them, you would share your concerns with both engineers about how they treat each other in staff meetings. Describe their behaviors, define what you want them to do about it, and draw out their feelings regarding your proposed solution. Listen to any suggestions they may have and incorporate them into an action plan. Be sure they do what they have agreed to do.

**Diagnosis—D2:** Up to this point, these two engineers have shown no ability to work together, and their competence as team members is questionable. They demonstrate low competence on how to work together, and they do not seem committed to helping the team. They need a lot of direction to improve, thus an S2 (Coaching) style would be best.

**Your style is a Match.**

**Rationale**—This Style 2 (Coaching) approach is a good approach. It provides both members with clear solutions to their dysfunctional interactions and also deals with their feelings by giving them a chance to vent their frustration and shape your solution. By holding them accountable to the action plan, you provide the ongoing direction that will be needed to change their behavior.
Optional: The LBAII® Self—Scoring

Determine Overall Leadership Style Flexibility

1. Refer to the LBAII® Self prework questionnaire and the LBAII Scoring form.

2. Direct participants to the style flexibility grid on page 2 of the LBAII Scoring form.

3. Display visual aid 33—Style Flexibility

4. Make this point

The numbers on the left-hand side of the grid (1–20) correspond to the 20 situations on the LBAII Self.

5. Give these directions

Transfer your answers to each of the 20 situations on the LBAII Self by circling the matching letter (A, B, C, or D) on the style flexibility grid.

Add up the number of circles in each of the four columns and write these numbers in the boxes labeled Totals directly below Situation 20.
Check to ensure that the numbers in the four Totals boxes add up to 20.

Point out that each of the four columns (S1, S2, S3, and S4) represents one of the four leadership styles. The column totals will tell participants how many times they chose each of the four leadership styles.

6. Determine each manager’s overall style flexibility score

   Calculate the difference between the total in each of the four columns and the number 5.

   Record the difference in the appropriate shaded box.

   For example, if you have a 2 in the S1 column, the difference between 5 and 2 is 3. If you have an 8 in the S2 column, the difference between 8 and 5 is also 3. There are no negative numbers.

   Add across the shaded boxes to get a subtotal.

   Subtract the subtotal from 30 to obtain an overall flexibility score.

   Draw an arrow to the number on the style flexibility graph that represents your overall flexibility score.

7. Make these points

   A perfect flexibility score is 30, which is a result of getting all 5s in the S1, S2, S3, and S4 columns.
For example, subtract 5 from 5 to get 0 in each of the shaded boxes, for a subtotal of 0. Zero from 30 leaves 30—the highest possible flexibility score.

A score of 18 or above is considered to be a high flexibility score, which means that the individual perceives that he or she would manage different situations differently.

**Determine Primary, Secondary, and Developing Styles**

1. Display visual aid 34—Style Matrices.

2. Give these directions

   *Look at the primary, secondary, and developing styles matrices, under Identifying Leadership Styles.*

   A person’s primary style is the leadership style(s) in which he or she made the most choices.
Fill in the Primary Style Matrix

1. Make this point

Your primary style is the leadership style you have chosen most often. It is the style you are most comfortable using.

2. Give these directions

Look at the totals of the four columns on the style flexibility grid and circle the highest number—or, numbers if there is a tie.

Transfer the circled number to the appropriate quadrant on the primary style matrix.

For example, if you have a 10 in the S2 column, write 10 in the S2 circle of the primary style matrix. If you have an 8 in the S2 column and an 8 in the S3 column, write an 8 in both the S2 and S3 circles, which would indicate two primary styles.

Fill in the Secondary Style Matrix

1. Make these points

A secondary style is any style other than an individual’s primary style(s) in which he or she has four or more answers.

Secondary styles are backup styles. They are often used when the primary style is not appropriate or with individuals who require a different approach. A person can have one, two, three, or no secondary styles.
2. Give these directions

   Look at the totals on the style flexibility grid and draw triangles around all numbers that are a 4 or above other than the primary style(s), which has already been circled.

   For example, if you have a 10 in S2 and 4s in S1 and S3, you have a primary style of S2 and secondary styles of S1 and S3.

   Transfer the circled number to the appropriate triangles on the secondary style matrix.

**Fill in the Developing Style Matrix**

1. Make this point

   Styles with three or less choices are developing styles. These styles need to be developed and utilized more often when appropriate.

2. Give this direction

   Look at the totals on the style flexibility grid and transfer totals of three or less to the appropriate squares on the developing style matrix.

**Review Style Results**

1. Poll the group

   How many people have a primary style in Style 1? Style 2? Style 3? Style 4?

3. Make these points

    *In terms of self-perception, most people see S3 and/or S2 as their primary style. A primary style in S1 and/or S4 is rare based on self-perception.*

4. Ask this question

    *Why do you think this happens?*

5. Acknowledge responses.

6. Make these points

    *There is a lot of encouragement, mostly from books on management and leadership, to be participative—to involve others in decision making. Styles 2 and 3 are seen as participative or consensus building styles.*

    *When Blanchard® asked others, however, Styles 1 and 4 are more common. Individuals say either that their leaders leave them alone, saying, “What manager? I haven’t seen him or her in a month”—or they tell us, “My manager micromanages.”*
In fact, the most common leadership style is a hybrid of Style 1—Style 4—Style 1. We used to call it “leave alone—zap” leadership. Now, we call it “seagull management.” Seagull managers tell people what to do (S1), leave them alone (S4) and then, when things go wrong, like a seagull they swoop back in, make a lot of noise, and dump on everyone (S1), and then they fly off down the beach again (S4).

7. Make this point

At this time, all you have is your own perception, and yet leadership style is defined as “the pattern of behaviors you use with others as perceived by them.” I encourage you to collect others’ perceptions by using the LBAII Other if you haven’t already done so.
Optional: The LBAII® Self—
Scoring the Style Effectiveness Dimension

Score the Style Effectiveness Dimension

1. Direct participants to the style effectiveness grid on page 3 of the LBAII Scoring form.

2. Display visual aid 35—Style Effectiveness.

3. Give these directions

   Transfer your answers from the flexibility grid to the effectiveness matrix. (If you circled D for Situation 1 under flexibility, do the same for Situation 1 under effectiveness. Ignore the numbers next to the letters in the P or F columns at this time.)

   Add the number of circles in each of the four columns and write these numbers in the line labeled Totals directly below Situation 20.
Check to ensure that the numbers in the four Totals boxes add up to 20.

The four columns are labeled P, F, G, and E for poor, fair, good, and excellent. The total in the E column represents how many times the manager chose the theoretically correct answer—the match.

**Determine Overall Style Effectiveness Score**

1. Give these directions

   Multiply the numbers in the Totals boxes by the numbers 1, 1, 3, and 4. Then, put the products of these calculations in the shaded boxes below the numbers.

   Add up the products to get an overall effectiveness score ranging from 20 to 80.

   Draw an arrow to this number on the style effectiveness graph to represent your score.

   The average Self style effectiveness score is 54 (±4). Anything above the average indicates that the leader varies his or her leadership style in response to the needs of the situation. A score below the average indicates that the leader’s diagnostic skills—his or her ability to determine an individual’s competence and commitment—could be improved.
2. Make these points

Look at the P (poor) and F (fair) columns on the style effectiveness grid and find the subscript numbers next to the letters. These subscripts represent the style that was chosen in the situation.

For example, B₄ means that B was Style 4 (Delegating) and D₃ means that D was Style 3 (Supporting).

**Fill in the Style Diagnosis Matrix**

1. Display visual aid 36—Style Diagnosis Matrix.

2. Give these directions

Look at the style diagnosis matrix on page 4.

Count the number of Style 1 choices that fell in the P or F columns and put that number in the style diagnosis matrix in the quadrant labeled S1.

Repeat the procedure for Styles 2, 3, and 4.
3. Make these points

A score of 4 or more in any of the quadrants indicates a repetitive misdiagnosis of development level or misuse of that style.

Take note of any connection between your primary style and the style you tend to misuse or overuse. A strength carried to its extreme can become a weakness.

4. Give this example

In the sport of tennis, if someone has a great net game, can he or she be beaten? The answer is yes—by a great serve or a lob.

So, just like tennis players can’t rely on just one part of their games in all situations, leaders need to develop more flexibility to respond to all the situations they manage. If they rely on just one style, they will overplay that strength.

Conclude LBAII Style Effectiveness Scoring

1. Make these remarks

The effectiveness score is a numerical representation of a leader’s diagnostic skills. The closer the score is to 80, the more the leader tends to match his or her choice of a leadership style to the development level of the individual, which is the goal of Situational Leadership® II.

2. Solicit questions from the group.
Practice Diagnosing Development Level and Finding the Match

1. Refer participants to workbook page 27—Quick Model for Diagnosing Development Level

2. Display visual aid 37—Model for Diagnosing Development Level

3. Refer to Decision Point 1.

4. Make this remark

   Diagnosing someone’s development level essentially boils down to asking two questions:

   First, is the individual “learning”—D1 or D2? Or is the individual “doing”—D3 or D4?

5. Refer to Decision Point 2.

6. Make these remarks

   Second, does the individual have a positive or negative attitude?
If the individual has a negative attitude—is demotivated or insecure—then he or she is a D2 or D3 depending on if the individual is learning or doing.

If the individual has a positive attitude—is enthusiastic or self-assured—then he or she is a D1 or D4 depending on if the individual is learning or doing.

7. Refer participants to workbook pages 27–28—Practice Diagnosing Development Level and Finding the Match.

8. Make this remark

This learning activity is a chance to practice your diagnostic skills and your ability to match the right leadership style to the situation.

9. Form teams of three to five people.

10. Give these instructions

As a team, read each situation and determine the goal or task, diagnose the development level, and choose the best leadership style response. You need to agree on the answer as a team. In other words, there needs to be consensus.

11. Give this direction

Use your workbook to help your team determine the development level and leadership style needed.

12. Provide the “right answers” to the three situations and the rationale for the right answers and other answers, as needed.
Rationale for Correct Answers to Practice Diagnosing Development Level and Finding the Match

Situation 1

You have an experienced and knowledgeable employee who is well regarded in the department. His performance during your three-month tenure has been excellent. Your company has just gone through a planning cycle, and you now must make project assignments. Since the company is just getting through a difficult financial period, it is important that these projects be handled by the right people. You should

Diagnosis—D4: It appears that this employee is both knowledgeable and experienced and that he has an excellent track record within the department. His performance indicates that he also has a high level of commitment. A D4 level employee, such as this one, needs an S4 (Delegating) style of leadership. Correct Response: B

A. Give him his project assignments. Be clear about timelines, priorities, and activities that must be accomplished. Set up interim meetings with him to monitor results. S1–2

Rationale—This Style 1 (Directing) approach undermines and degrades the employee’s high level of competence and commitment. It could demotivate the employee or cause him to consider leaving the organization. This approach is going to yield negative results.
B. Give him his project assignments and ask him to call you if problems arise. Monitor progress by requiring that all project managers submit biweekly status reports. S4/+2

**Rationale**—This Style 4 (Delegating) approach is exactly what is called for with this employee. You are clear in making the project assignments, and you leave the decision to call, if he has a problem, up to his own discretion. By setting up status-reporting procedures, you allow him to monitor his own progress while keeping you informed.

C. Give him his project assignments. Share your feelings and thoughts about the company’s delicate financial position. Ask him to review with you how he plans to handle these projects. Encourage and support his ideas and meet with him occasionally to help him if you can. S3/+1

**Rationale**—This Style 3 (Supporting) approach gives the employee the latitude to operate and the freedom to direct his own behavior. One drawback is that it wastes your time by providing him with a lot of unnecessary support and encouragement. An occasional pat on the back is really all that is needed in this situation. Let the performance of the job provide its own positive feedback.
D. Give him his project assignments. Stress the importance of these projects to the company’s future profit picture. Tell him how to handle these projects, including timelines and priorities. Get his suggestions and modify the plan based on his ideas and expertise. Set up regular meetings with him to keep informed on the projects. S2/1

Rationale—This Style 2 (Coaching) approach is overkill in this situation. The employee knows how to handle the projects and has the motivation to do it. You are oversupervising the employee by telling him what to do, discussing alternatives, and following up with regular meetings. These steps are not in the best interests of heightening the employee’s commitment, and they are also a waste of your time.
Situation 2

As a newly appointed manager at corporate headquarters, you are in charge of a support team that provides monthly information to line business units. The business units have given you feedback that one of your people has a poor attitude toward customer service. This person has been with your support team for four years and knows the technical aspects of the job very well; however, he seems unable to deal with the more experienced users in the business units and is unconcerned that user complaints are on the rise. You should

Diagnosis—D2: In this case, it appears that this person has a low level of commitment. He is unconcerned that complaints are on the rise and that he has been providing poor customer service. Although this employee is technically qualified to do the job, his inability to deal with experienced users is inhibiting performance. In essence, this person seems to have low competence for dealing with experienced users. He has probably let himself slide back to the D2 level of development, and he is in need of an S2 (Coaching) style of leadership at this time. Correct Response: D

A. Present the data about customer complaints to this employee. Let him know that his performance must improve. S4/–2

Rationale—This Style 4 (Delegating) approach does not provide the kind of direction that is needed. It also fails to deal with the low job commitment. Few positive results will occur by using the Delegating approach.

B. Tell the employee that customer service to the business units must be improved immediately. Give him specific action steps and be sure to follow up to ensure that results are achieved. S1/+1
Rationale—This Style 1 (Directing) approach deals only with the issues of your employee’s competence and his inability to work with experienced users. It does not recognize or deal with your employee’s low commitment and poor attitude about customer service. It is unlikely that the S1 (Directing) approach will yield the best results.

C. Discuss specific customer complaints and participate in problem solving with him. Stress that this is his problem and that you will support him by providing resources as needed. S3/–1

Rationale—This Style 3 (Supporting) approach assumes that the person knows how to solve the problem himself and that all he needs in order to get the job done is some support and encouragement from you. The problem is deeper than that. This employee seems to lack the skills needed to deal with experienced users. Thus, providing support to the employee without giving him a sense of direction is not going to solve the problem.

D. Present the data about customer complaints to your employee. Outline an action plan to remedy the situation and ask for the employee’s feedback on the proposed solutions. See that actions steps are taken. S2/+2

Rationale—This Style 2 (Coaching) approach appears to be the best because it deals with both elements of the problem. It helps provide structure and guidance in this situation, since your employee is unclear about what he needs to do. Coaching also supports and encourages him through follow-up actions that help him deal with a poor attitude and lack of concern.
Situation 3

You are a manager of a highly specialized development organization that has grown quickly over the last few years. While your expertise is not in the software area, you manage several people who are software experts. One of your new employees is having problems with a new software program that’s under development and has asked for your help. You should

Diagnosis—D1: In this situation, you are dealing with an organization that has grown rapidly. Although you manage several people who are software experts, your expertise is not in the software area. This new employee is at a D1 level of development and needs technical training even though you, personally, will be unable to provide it. He needs an S1 (Directing) style of leadership. Correct Response: C

A. Listen to the new employee’s problems. Ask facilitating questions that might lead him to generate alternative solutions for himself. Encourage the employee to take some risks and praise him for his willingness to try. S3/–1

Rationale—There are several reasons why this Style 3 (Supporting) approach is not going to work. First, with your lack of expertise, you probably do not know the right facilitating questions to ask. Second, given the new employee’s lack of expertise, he is not going to be able to generate alternative solutions on his own. The only advantage with this approach is that you are encouraging the employee as well as praising his willingness to learn. Otherwise, this style is not going to provide the needed assistance for the problems.

B. Tell the new employee to find someone else to help him. Check back to make sure he has. S4/–2
Rationale—This Style 4 (Delegating) approach leaves too much responsibility to the new employee. Just saying, “Find someone else to help,” provides very little direction for solving the problem. It also does not provide encouragement for helping the employee if he runs into problems.

C. Ask the new employee to work with a specific coworker who is an experienced software expert and has worked with the company for many years. Reassure the new employee that he will receive detailed instructions and procedures on how to accomplish the task. Direct the coworker to help with the problem and check back frequently with the coworker to see how everything is going. S1/+2

Rationale—This Style 1 (Directing) approach recognizes not only that this employee needs a high degree of direction but also that you are not the person to provide the help he needs. Your role is to match the employee with an experienced software expert so that the employee gets the necessary direction and guidance. This approach allows you to fulfill your responsibility to the employee even though you do not have the answers yourself.

D. Ask the new employee for his input, stressing that the problem must be solved. Ask him to generate alternative solutions and critique the ideas he presents. Praise his initiative. Frequently check on his progress. S2/+1

Rationale—This Style 2 (Coaching) approach is not likely to provide much help, largely because you do not have the expertise and ability to help this employee generate alternative solutions or to help him evaluate his ideas. This employee needs direction, and it is your duty to find someone who can provide that direction.
Action Planning: 10

1. Refer participants to workbook page 29—Action Planning.

2. Ask participants to consider the first question on this page. Refer to the flip chart of “greatest challenges” you created at the beginning of the class.

3. Solicit observations in the large group.

4. Review the actions participants can take to continue learning about Situational Leadership® II. These are listed on page 29 in the participant workbook.
Leader’s Notes