

Chapter 23 Traditional Situation Leadership Theories

Spectacle is the 7th and last of the SEPTET elements. Aristotle thought spectacle was the least important of all the poetic elements. Yet, if you look at the spectacles all around you, spectacle now is at the top of the list. Spectacle is Outside-the-box of traditional leadership. In-the-Box idea of situation is Hershey & Blanchard's Managerial Grid, Fiedler's contingency theory, House's path goal theory, Vroom & Yetton's normative decision model, Boje's Problem Solving Template (in next chapter).



BEAR ISLAND (Spectacle Places)

Once upon a time, the on the Channel of Situation there were two islands: Bear (for spectacle situations), and Snail (for timing/rhythm). White bear first came to me in a dream. She whispered to me, “you do not have to be a Grizzly Bear, you can be a Gentle Bear.” I rarely dream in color, and to see this white bear with eyes of gold was rather shocking. I had been seeking my spirit animal guide, and White Bear was the first to reply. I decided to study the bear, to learn from her ways. My bear is female. Your bear may be either gender. Or perhaps you do not consider bears as your guide. Nevertheless, there is much to be learned from the bear. The bear takes care of its cubs, is quite playful. But get between the mama bear and her cubs, and she is mighty defensive.

Contingency Situationists on Bear Island had become an oppressive Grizzly Bear regime by 1960. All were forced to swear allegiance to LPC or do battle with Knight Fiedler. Most believed that the Situationists were as misguided as the Traitists. It was taboo to ever mention the TRAIT word. All other forms of leader study were banished from Bear Island (place contingency). Over time, the Bear Isle of Situation fragmented into several colonies.

Knight Fiedler fashioned the LPC colony and held that leader style and trait does not change to fit situation; best to just find the right style and fit them into their favorite situation.

All the other colonies formed around the idea that leaders were malleable and quite flexible beings, willing to change character (in consciousness and behavior) to fit in. The Path Goal colony of Sirs House, Vroom and Yetton married motivational expectancy theory with leaders who could change paths to get a goal done. They remembered the Isle of Behavior teaching that posited that leaders can be directive (autocratic and initiates of structure), supportive (even considerate), and after awhile readmitted the need to achieve, and even the participative style. These four became choice points for the flexible leader.

Sir George Graen decided that leaders change their character to please an in group and to abuse an out group.

This is a very flexible leader indeed. Graen founded the colony of LMX (leader member exchange).

Not to be outdone, the Vassals Hershey and Blanchard developed a colony called "Situation Theory." Not many researched there, but many trainers did settle in this colony. They took the dimensions of Task and Relationship from the Isle of Behavior, crossed the axes and posited appropriate leaderly behavior.

high task, low relationship *telling* is every leader's choice.
high task, high relationship requires *selling*.
low task, high relationship calls for *participating*
low task and low relationship needs leader to be *delegating*

Vroom and Yetton together with Jago founded one more colony on the isle of situation, giving group leaders choice of being autocratic, consultative, group-oriented, and even allowed for delegation.

Finally, nobles Kerr and Jermier decided, who cares about leaders anyway, why not let the situation rule.

Is it any wonder we have presidents who poll the public opinion, to not be out of step with the needs of the situation. Is this leadership?

To Situationists, the situation rules, only when the situation is conducive, is this or that leader style effective.

Ideally, the leaders have behavior styles and traits that are less subject to change. And when a situation arises that is out of step with their leader profile, then followers will alienate themselves, since the context calls for a new leadership. In the theory of great leaders, the man and the situation became married. The forceful Lions and shrewd Foxes (Princes) were able to change situations, while lesser men changed their style to meet situational contingencies.

On Bear Island, a new way of looking at situation came to be. Bears finally got out of the box. They noticed spectacle places, everywhere in society. These Bears are good at spectacle, they roar, carry on, and put on a pretty good show. We are out of the XYZ box, but behavior, power, and voice are still essential. We are now deeply into theatre of leadership. In spectacles, we look at places where the theatre is being put on, where characters take the stage. We as a society, say King Guy Debord are now in the society of the Spectacle. Baudrillard, the postmodernist, got his ideas on simulation from Debord. Look around you, at all the places where you are engaged in simulation. We have entered many virtual places, becoming avatars. It's easy to see spectacle places in Disneyland, and in Las Vegas. We see that the places have been set up like storyboards. We enter the spectacle places, begin strolling about, or enter a Space Mountain, or a Pyramid or some simulacra of an Eiffel Tower.

PROBLEMS ON ISLE OF SITUATION

Progress Myth - Situationists seem to invent situation as the natural progress of leadership science. Will it ever get beyond a three-sided XYZ box? It's time to start over.

Situation was stressed as far back as Plato. And Aristotle saw six elements to the Poetics of leadership (350 BCE). There are also Frames that assume an Invisible Hand of God or Free Market Competition (or both hands) steers economies toward progress through human applications of science and technology (division of labor, automation, Biotech). Marxist progress is through the exploited class revolting against the class of oppressors.

Too Linear - Most situation rhythm is a temporal line, linearity. I resist the very idea of Progress as inevitable; perhaps we get worse instead of better as a society which does consume more than its fair share of resources. Perhaps there is an eternal return, a cycle not a line.

Leaderless Theory - With the rise of situation studies, attempts to validate the hero theory ceased. Historical studies of great leaders were discarded as noble fiction. An alternative explanation is that there are failures in Situation measuring instruments. Or perhaps the box is too small when the scene of leadership is just the task and the small group; why not extend leadership to Frames that are world-changing?

Stereotypes -The situations have become stereotypes. Yes, there are country differences, but everyone from a country does not behave the same.

Determinism - The Situation theory is too tightly coupled. The situation determines appropriate styles of leadership. This ignores the ability of leader to modify situations. It also (except for Burke) ignores Frame and Purpose. Even the Hexad seems deterministic, sometimes mechanical.

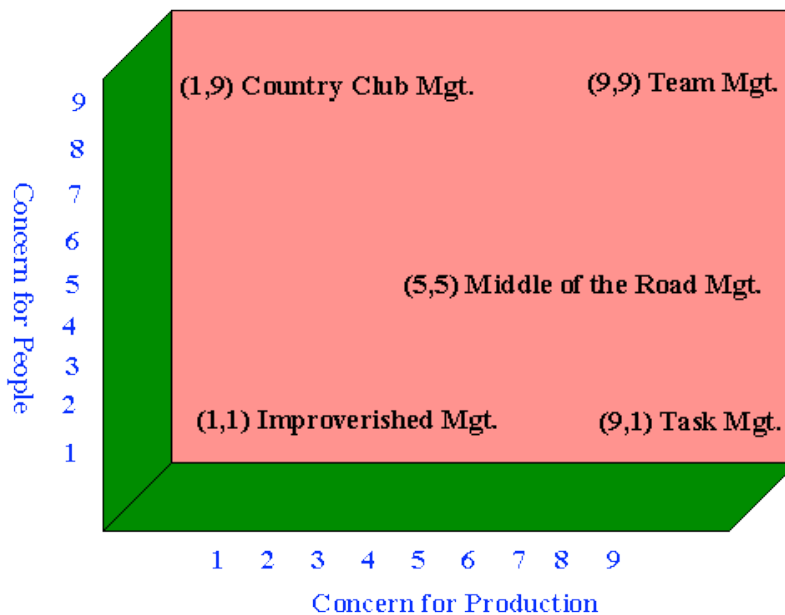
Cause and Effect - There is no more evidence that great situational forces rule men than there is evidence that great men rule these forces (Jennings, 1960: 217). When does situation or scene, act or agency rule?

TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP SITUATION THEORY

Let's start with a leader model that is taught in every course, in every training seminar, but has absolutely no research validity. It is taught and trained because it is simplistic, and easy to remember.

Hershey & Blanchard 1969 Situation Model adapted from Blake & Mouton's Managerial Grid. This is the very famous but totally invalid Blake and Mouton, Managerial Grid. It is taught everywhere, and researched no where. The two dimensions are appropriated from the old Ohio State two behavior-style theory of leadership. It is a retreat to a two sided box: situation (task or people) and agent (their orientation to task or people). They do add a third side, the ACT (telling, selling, participating or delegating).

The Managerial Grid



The Managerial Grid forms the basis for Hershey and Blanchard (1977) model of Situational Leadership. The four leaderly choices are to tell, sell, participate, or delegate depending upon the High and Low combinations of relationship (supportive or considerate concern for people) or task (initiating structure or directive concern for production). There are four acts, leaders (agents) chose depending upon the situation (scene):

high task, low relationship telling is every leader's choice.

high task, high relationship requires selling.

- low task, high relationship calls for participating
- low task and low relationship needs leader to be delegating

While this is a favorite model for trainers it appears to have not been subjected to rigorous research. Other problems include no task structure variables. No timing (e.g. rhythm) sense. The concept of follower maturity is not well defined. The model lacks empirical support. It is considered by most scholars as the weakest situation model. Still it lives on and on. Simple triumphs again.

1. FIEDLER'S CONTINGENCY THEORY LPC

This next model is very complex and while it has intuitive appeal, it also is not been empirically able to stand the test. It is popular because LPC test is short and simple to use, but what does it mean? No one but Fiedler knows for sure.

40 years ago, Fred Fiedler took Stogdill's advice and sailed from the Isle of Traits through the Isle of Behavior and landed in the Isle of Situation, founding its first Contingency Colony, called LPC. LPC is Least Preferred Co-worker, and as the theory goes, how a leader perceives their LPC is the whole show. The situation was a scene with tasks and followers, in which the leader (as agent) did perform.

Think of a person with whom you have had difficulty working, someone with whom you have had the most difficulty working. Rate this person on a number of eight-point scales. Given your LPC score, describe the nature of situational control in which you will be most effective as a leader.

in Table One we have Fiedler's formulae. Leaders have two primary motivations (that do not change), to be TASK MOTIVATED or RELATION MOTIVATED. The TASK-MOTIVATED leader (have low LPC scores) focuses on details and will be tough and autocratic to get any failing subordinates to just get the task done. Their self-esteem comes from completing tasks. They are only considerate when tasks are going well.

RELATION-MOTIVATED leaders (have high LPC scores) get bored with details and focus instead on pleasing others, getting loyalty, and being accepting. Their self-esteem comes from interpersonal relationships.

These leaderly types are more or less effective, depending upon three Sit Con (Situation Control) variables: LMR - Leader-member relations can be good or bad. The group can be cohesive and supportive to the leader or divided and unsupportive.

TS - Task Structure can be high or low. In high TS there is clarity of task, clear goals, clear procedures, and few pathways to get to the goal, and outcomes are easy to measure. In low TS, goals, procedures, paths, solutions, outcome-criteria are all unclear.

PP - Position Power can be low or high. In high PP, leaders have official power and influence over hiring, firing, rewarding and punishing subordinates. In low PP, all influence and power is informal.

Table One: Fiedler's Contingency Model

Dimensions:	3 Situations				
Sit Con (Situation Control)	High Sit Con Situation		Moderate Sit Con Situation		Low Sit Con Situation
LMR – Leader-member relations	Good		Good	Poor	Poor
TS – Task	High	Low	Low	High	Low

structure								
PP – Position power	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Situations	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
Predictions	TASK MOTIVATED BEHAVIOR LEADER IS BEST FIT TO SITUATION I, II & III			RELATIONSHIP MOTIVATED BEHAVIOR LEADER IS BEST FIT TO SITUATION IV, V & VI			TASK MOTIVATED BEHAVIOR LEADER IS BEST FIT TO SITUATION VII & VIII	

FORMULA: LMR+TS+PP equals Sit Con

In High Sit Con situations, the Task-Motivated (low LPC) leaders are effective, while the Relation-Motivated ones are not. The Low LPC feels at ease with High Sit Con since the task is getting done there are no threats to self esteem and this leader relaxes to take care of details and can actually be considerate (recall Ohio State). The High LPC (Relation-Leader) in a High Sit Con situation feels bored; no one needs the leader when the group is cohesive, the task is clear, and there are no obstacles for the leader to remove. the Hi LPC leader gets into trouble by trying to be needed; they interfere with group task performance to try to demonstrate their leadership must be needed. They end up initiating structure (Recall Ohio State), when they should leave well enough alone.

In Moderate Sit Con situations, the Low LPC (Task Master) feels threatened by the ambiguity in the task, or by lack of group support or unclear official power. The task master turns autocrat and can kill off a group's creative search for solutions in unclear tasks. No tolerance for ambiguity. The High LPC (Relations Master) turns to participative and interpersonal management skills well suited for the relational conflicts or unstable task.

In Low Sit Con situations, the Low LPC (Task-Motivated) leader manages the chaos that is everywhere apparent and initiates more structure, more group control, and stronger position power. The Task leader needs to see tasks completed, above all else, and pushes hard using an autocratic style of decision making. This leader is not worried about how the group feels. The High LPC (Relation) leader sees the Low Sit Con as a nightmare of chaos. They can not reconcile a group that refuses to be cohesive, tasks that are completely ambiguous, and react by withdrawing, which is said to cause even worse performance by their laissez faire abandonment. What is the Story Fiedler Tells? Fiedler moved away from the Great Man, heroic trait theories of Carle and combined the Behavioral theory (Ohio State initiating structure vs. consideration) with the Bureaucratic theory of Weber and the Structural theory of Woodward to create his contingency model. See- Fiedler's Genealogy of his Leadership Theory.

There are some specific problems with contingency theory.

What does LPC really measure? The scale lacks face validity, but it is short and easy to administer to classes and trainees so it has manifested much data.

Predictability is in the direction of the model in Table One, but not always stable.

The model assumes that leader behavior does not change (except in narrow band width). The leader's self-esteem motivation (Task or Relation) is thought to be stable. There are no intersecting styles.

2. EVANS, HOUSE et al PATH GOAL MODEL

This is a more solid model, one that has stood up well. Victor Vroom's expectancy theory, that effort can lead to performance and (2) the instrumentality calculation that performance is the path to valued rewards, is the underpinning of Path Goal Model (Evans, House et al 1970; House, 1971; House & Dessler, 1974). The Path Goal makes Agent (leader) and Scene (Situation) three-side (an odd box) by adding Purpose (the motivation of the actors).

The Path-Goal began with two leader behavior options (from Ohio State behavior leader model: directive (initiating structure) or supportive (consideration). It was later expanded to include (McClelland's) achievement orientation, and participation (House and Mitchell, 1974).

Table Two: Path Goal Situation Model

LEADERSHIP FACTORS Leadership Behavior Options:	CONTINGENCY FACTORS Subordinate Attributes:	CONTINGENCY FACTORS Work-Setting Attributes:	SUBORDINATE OUTCOMES Motivational Behavior:
1. Directive	Authoritarianism Internal-external orientation Ability	Task Formal Authority System Primary Work Group	Expectance that effort leads to performance Instrumentality that performance is path to valued rewards
2. Supportive			
3. Achievement Oriented			
4. Participative			

- Directive - When task is unstructured, complex or novel or subordinates lack skills, then be the directive leader because they need your instruction and you to remove any obstacles in their path.
- Supportive - When task is unambiguous, boring or stressful, be this leader to increase satisfaction of your subordinates.
- Achievement Oriented - When task is unstructured, you can be achievement-oriented by challenging followers so as to increase their self-confidence and satisfaction.
- Participative - When task is unstructured then your style is to call for participation.

House, B. (1996) "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership: Lessons, Legacy, and Reformulated Theory", Leadership Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 3, 323-352.

Vroom & Yetton 1973 Normative Decision Style Model

Vroom and Yetton decided that there must be more than three sides to a leadership box. They decided that Leaders have Acts (Styles) that they use in various situations. If you are keeping count, that gives us Agent (leader), Scene (situation), with Purpose (motivations), and now Acts (decision making styles). That is at least a four-sided box (still very odd as boxes go).

Decision Making Styles:

1. Autocratic - Consult no one, decide alone.
 - AI - Leader makes decision and does not seek information
 - AII - Leader makes decision but asks specific info from subordinates.
2. Consultative -
 - CI - Leader makes decision, but asks specific info from each group member
 - CII - Leader decides with considerable group input and asks info from whole group.
3. Group - Democratic group decision
 - GI - Leader and one other person from group do mutual info exchange and decide.
 - GII - Group decides with input from leader and a consensus is reached.
4. Delegative

DI - Other person analyzes problem and makes the decision.

Contingency Factors in the Normative Decision Model

QR Quality requirement - How important is the technical quality of this decision?

CR Commitment requirement - How important is subordinate commitment to the decision?

LI Leader information - Do you have sufficient info to make a high-quality decision?

ST Structure of the problem - Is the problem well structured?

CP Commitment probability - If you were to make the decision by yourself, is it reasonably certain that your subordinates) would be committed to the decision?

GC Goal Congruence - Do subordinates share the organizational goals to be attained in solving this problem?

CO Employee Conflict - Is conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely?

SI Subordinate Information - Do subordinates have sufficient info to make a high-quality decision?

The eight questions are set into a decision tree with more branches than I care to display. At the end of all the branching, you can determine if you are to behave as AI, AII, CI, CII, G1, GII, or D1.

More on Vroom and Yetton Model includes survey.

Chapter 13 - Improving the organization and management of extension M. W. Waldron, J. Vsanthakumar, and S. Arulraj

George Graen et al 1975 LMX - Leader-Member Exchange Model

This is one of the least taught, but perhaps the most sensible model. The George Graen Vertical Dyad Linkage Theory -- aka LMX model. Now we look at agents and counter-agents, at the leader-follower dyads to assess purpose (motive) and scene (situation).

The contingency here is the emergence of in versus out group and how the leader responds differently to each situation (sub-group). Graen and his colleagues observed that leaders develop different relationships with each member of their work group. Leader forms a vertical dyad with each follower. And as a High quality relationship develops with some members, a feeling is being part of "in-group" evolves from a series of exchange relationships. The in group has more responsibility, decision influence, higher satisfaction and access to valuable resources. A Low quality LMX relationship occurs when members feel they are in the "out-group". Leaders use a more participative/consultative style with in-group members, and a more directive style with out-group members.

In and Out groups evolve across three phases.

- Phase 1: Role-taking as leaders and members come to understand how the other views and desires respect.
- Phase 2: Role-making is the trust that develops in order for leaders and members to further extend the relationship and influence over each other's attitudes and behaviors
- Phase 3: Role-routinization of the social exchange pattern becomes routine

For More -

Graen, G., Novak, M. A., and Sommerkamp, P. (1982) "The Effects of LeaderMember Exchange and Job Design on Productivity and Satisfaction: Testing a Dual Attachment Model", *Organizational Behaviour and Human Performance*, August, 109131.

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective: Special Issue: Leadership: The multiple-level approaches (Part 1). *Leadership Quarterly*, 6, 219-247.

For More on the power implications of Vertical Dyad Linkage (LMX) theory

Group Maintenance Theory/Substitutes for Leadership Theory (Kerr & Jermier)

Table 3: Substitutes and Neutralizers of Leadership

CHARACTERISTICS	CONSIDERATION	STRUCTURING
Follower Experience and Training Professionalism Lack of value for goals	? Substitute Neutralizer	Substitute Substitute Neutralizer
Task Unambiguous Direct feedback fro task Challenging	? ? Substitute	Substitute Substutite ?

Organizational Cohesive team Leader's lack of power Standardization and formalization Organizational rigidity Physical distance between leaders and followers	Substitute Neutralizer ? ? Neutralizer	Substitute Neutralizer Substitute Neutralizer Neutralizer
---	--	---

Adapted from Kerr & Jermier (1978). If the followers are experienced and professional and the task is clear with good feedback, and the team is cohesive then who needs a leader? The subordinates can initiate their own structure and be considerate to one another. The leader can lack the power to deliver outcomes or be in such a rigid corporate culture that they have no latitude in being considerate or initiating anyway. There is also good application of the model in determining when self-managing teams will work. The Substitutes model been tested widely and studies continue. The results have been supportive. Howell et al (1990); (also Howell, 1997) argue that it is difficult for the leader to be effective when many neutralizers in Table 3 are present.

For more, see

Kerr, S. & J. M. Jermier (1978) "Substitutes for leadership: their meaning and measurement." *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*. 22: 395-403.

Howell, J. P. (1997) "'Substitutes for leadership: Their meaning and measurement.' - an historical assessment." *Leadership Quarterly* 8(2): 113-116.

Finally, someone decides that besides (Burke's) Agents, Scene, Act, and Purpose, we must like at Agency. Substitutes for leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978) asks why do we need leaders anyway? If certain situational criteria are met such we may not need them at all. The writers begin with the old Ohio State model of Consideration and Initiating Structure (as if leaders could do but 2 things), and look at follower characteristics, task characterizations, and organizational characteristics, that can act as substitutes or neutralizers.

Substitutes - reduce the need for leaders (be they considerate or initiating of structure).

Neutralizers- counteract leadership behavior and make it difficult for leaders to be effective.

Example: if situation is

GLOBE LEADERSHIP PROJECT

In the big Scene, there are country (and within country) differences that are important. This ten-year study is still in progress, having begun in October 1993 by Robert House and others. It involves a sample of over 15,000 leaders from 779 organizations in 62 cultures around the globe. It enlists the help of 170 co-investigators.

For More See

[Global Leadership Publication efforts](#)

Likert - Effective leaders were thought to be those who adapted behavior to fit the expectations, values, and interpersonal skills (cultural background) of the group.