

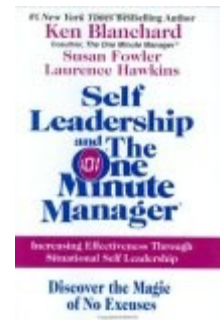
VENTURING MAGAZINE

LeaderThoughts #19 by Michael Brown

January 2015

Situational Self Leadership

In prior Thoughts, we covered the concept of **Situational Leadership**, which deals with how a leader needs to change their manner of leadership with a follower as the situation changes, and the concept of **Situational Team Leadership**, which applies the concept to the stages of Team Development (sometimes these are called the Team Development Model and the Team Leadership Model). With this Thought, we 'complete the trilogy', so to speak, by covering **Situational Self-Leadership**. This applies the concept of Situational Leadership to "self leadership". This concept is covered by Ken Blanchard's "Self-Leadership and the One Minute Manager" (2005) as well as in a chapter of his more recent "Leading at a Higher Level" (2006, 2009).



What, there for, is "self-leadership"?? Self leaders are those who take the initiative to get things done. And this means that to be an effective self leader, you need the skills (or seek out those skills) to help enable you to do so. And this may (should) include going to others, including other leaders, to get the assistance to get things done. This means seeking out others to serve as mentors/coaches. This means using skills like assertiveness, self motivation, time management, and others. (and many of these skills and others will be touched on by future Notes).

Now, to Blanchard et al, it is thru self-leadership that makes empowerment work. (Which is why I did that previous Notes on that topic. See, there is some logic in the topics I cover). As Blanchard puts it "Empowerment is what leaders give to their people. Self leadership is what people do to make empowerment work."

First off, Blanchard covers what is called the 3 Skills of a Self Leader. Which are:

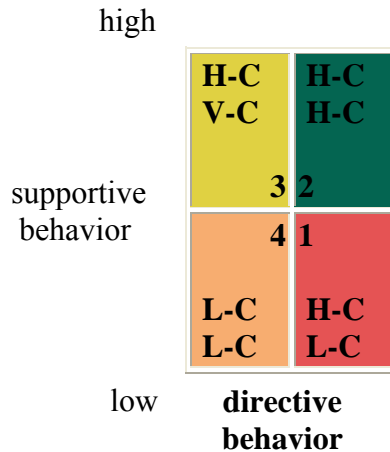
1. Challenge Assumed Constraints
2. Celebrate Your Points of Power
3. Collaborate for Success

"Challenge assumed constraints" is about challenging any belief (assumed constraint) that holds you back. These beliefs are limits that have been mistakenly imposed. Assuming you aren't allowed to do something, when such a limitation actually doesn't exist is a perfect example. We see this many times when the youth who think they can't do something, so don't even try. We as advisors sometimes have to remind them that yes, they can do that, and we are here to help them do so.

"Celebrate your points of power", deals with 5 "points of power". These are **position, personal, task, relationship, and knowledge**. Many aren't aware of these. Position is the job or position you hold. Many positions come with certain power. Personal is about your skills and ability. Some may be innate, some you may develop. Task is about a task or job. Some carry with them a certain power. Relationship is about your relationship with others, and being able to call up them and their points of power. Knowledge is about a special expertise or skill. With these points of power, you are able to get things done.

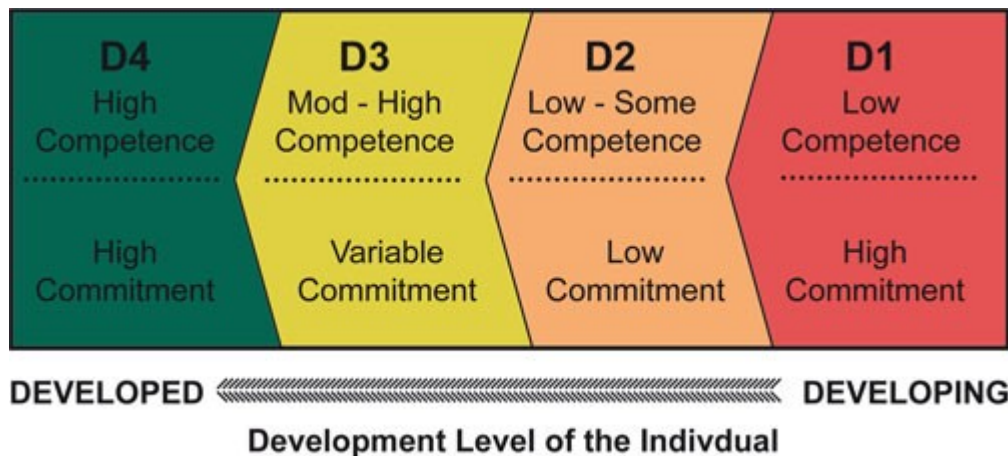
"Collaborate for success" is where self leaders take the initiative to get direction and support to achieve their goal. And this is where Situational Leadership comes in, tho here it's sort of 'turned on its head'; where the self leader must self diagnose where they are and what support they need. In fact, the SL quadrant becomes a "Needs Model".

So, here then, is the "Needs Model"



Here, the left-right axis goes from being task support to directive behavior. The up-down axis goes from relationship to supportive behavior. The four quadrants (1-4) remain the same: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. (AGAIN, WARNING, the BSA uses different terms for these 4 quadrants!!)

Readiness (or Development) levels still exist:



Here, the self-leader is working to improve their task or skill or achieve a goal. And the terms for these levels are a little different:

- D1 - enthusiastic beginner (low competence, high commitment)
- D2 - disillusioned learner (low/some competence, low commitment)
- D3 - capable but cautious performer (moderate-high competence, variable commitment)
- D4 - self-reliant achiever (high competence, high commitment)

(Advisors - does this sound like some of your Venturers as you mentor them to becoming a better leader??)

So as the self-leader works thru these stages, he is "collaborating for success" with his leader to help achieve his goal/task:

behavior style

D1 → Telling/Guiding/Directing

D2 → Selling/Persuading, explaining

D3 → Participating/encouraging, problem solving

D4 → Delegating

But again, the difference here is that the self-leader is initiating the conversation, so to speak. In Situational Leadership, the leader oversees the follower and helps them move thru the readiness levels. In Situational Self-leadership, the self-leader seeks out the leader to help them move thru the levels. In some ways it's more of a mentoring relationship, then a leader-follower relationship. Further, as I look at both empowerment and self-leadership, these concepts fit hand in glove with servant leadership. Realize that a big part of servant leadership is the leader serving those they lead, helping them develop into leaders themselves. So empowerment & self-leadership is the flip side of this, where the follow is coming to the (servant) leader for guidance/help in developing themselves.