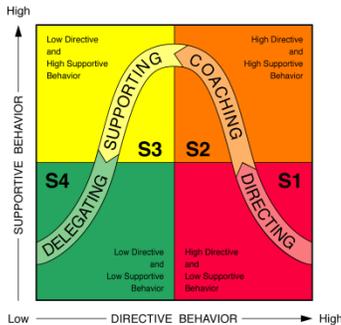


**Situational Leadership Simulation Exercises**

**Overview:** As you recall from the video, Dr. Blanchard said there are three skills involved in becoming a Situational Leader: flexibility, diagnosis, and partnering for performance. These skills will help you to more effectively respond to the needs of the associates you are managing. In addition, you have to understand the theory and language of situational leadership model. In **Part 1**, he described the first skill, **flexibility**, which involves being able to use a variety of leadership styles comfortably – at times directing and closely supervising, at other times offering support and encouragement, and at times letting associates run with the ball. In the end, he points out that there is no one best style: effective leaders provide people the direction and support they need, when they need it. The ultimate goal of a situational leader is to help people develop skills, motivation, and confidence – to help them get to a point where they can provide their own direction and support as self-reliant achievers.



To start, notice that the four leadership styles consist of different combinations of two basic **leader behaviors**: directive behavior and supportive behavior. **Directive Behavior:** The extent to which a leader sets goals and clarifies expectations. Tells and shows an individual what to do, when, and how to do it. Closely supervises, monitors, and evaluates performance. Four key words are: Structure, organize, teach and supervise. Other phrases associated with this type of behavior are: sets goals or objectives, plans and organizes work in advance, identifies job priorities, clarifies the leader’s and associate’s roles, establishes time lines, determines methods of evaluation and checks work, teaches associate how to do a specific task, and supervises progress.

**Supportive Behavior:** This is the extent to which a leader engages in more two-way communication, listens and provides support and encouragement, involves the other person in decision-making, and encourages and facilitates self-reliant problem solving. Key words are: Encourages, listens, asks, and explains. Other phrases associated with supporting behavior are: Encourages, reassures, and praises, asks for suggestions or input, explains why, encourages self-reliant problem solving, makes information about the organization accessible, discloses information about self and encourages teamwork.

Notice that the grid above that has four major quadrants that identify varying combinations of directive and supportive behaviors. As you travel along the leadership curve from right to left, i.e., Style 1 to Style 4 notice that the amount of the behaviors utilized by the leader differs such that the key descriptor word changes to reflect the various combinations. And always remember - while you always want to move from S1 to S4 with individuals, you may have to regress from time to time and move backwards too. Key point: It’s not always a one way street when you are traveling on the leadership curve.

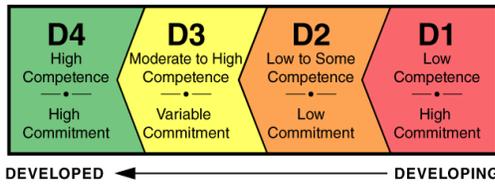
<b>S1</b> – Directing = high direction/low support
<b>S2</b> – Coaching = High direction/high support
<b>S3</b> – Supporting = High support/low direction
<b>S4</b> – Delegating = low direction/low support

Effective managers are comfortable using more than one style; they have good diagnostic skills that allow them to accurately size up situations; and they are willing to discuss changes in their leadership style with their associates. An important question for you to address is: Are you willing and able to transverse along the leadership curve in any direction, forward or reverse, to accomplish what needs to be on the job through associates? He summed it up with the phrase “Different strokes for different folks” and “different strokes for the same folks depending on the task or goal.”

In **Part 2**, Dr. Blanchard discusses the **diagnosis** phase, i.e., how to determine the developmental level (**D Level**) of the associate so that the leader can match the most appropriate leadership style (S1-S4) to the needs of the situation. It starts with identifying the appropriate competence level (task, knowledge, skills, experience and transferable skills) and commitment levels (motivation and confidence) of the associates you manage for a given task. If there is a successful match, we get a **HPM**, otherwise known as a **High Probability Match** that ensures the highest probability of success for

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goal/task attainment, associate satisfaction, and progressive development of the associate becoming a self-reliant achiever.



Here are the four developmental levels and their descriptions. Again, notice the varying combinations of competence and commitment in each segment. At **D1** a person has low competence but high commitment. We call a D1 an **Enthusiastic Beginner**. At **D2** a person is has low to some competence, but often their confidence and motivation are low. We call a D2 a **Disillusioned Learner**. At **D3** a person has moderate to high competence but variable commitment. Interest in doing the task may vary from day to day, as may confidence. We call someone at D3 a **Capable, but Cautious, Performer**. At **D4** a person is competent and committed, confident and motivated. We call a D4 a **Self-reliant Achiever**.

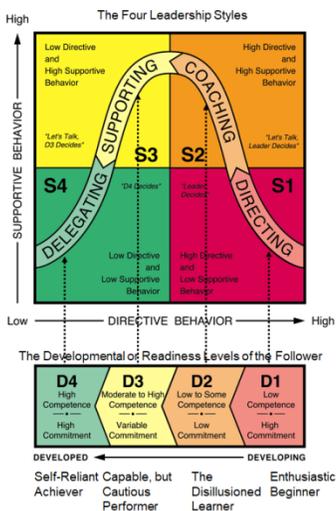
The table on the right displays an additional way to think about D levels. It emphasizes “learning” modes versus “doing” modes of associates. Also, remember that that much of the decision making is being done by the leader in D1 –D2 scenarios. But much of the decision making in D3-D4 scenarios is initiated by the associate.

	D4	D3	D2	D1
Decision Point 1 →	<b>Doing</b> Can do goal or task without direction		<b>Learning</b> Cannot do goal or task without direction	
Decision Point 2 →	<b>Commitment/Attitude</b>			
	+	-	-	+
	D4	D3	D2	D1

The critical point to remember now is that the leadership style with highest probability of success is the one that matches the D level of the associate on a given task. Merging these tables into the final picture of the process model looks like the chart below.

**The Process of Determining the Proper Leadership Style**

The leadership style with the highest probability of success is the one that matches the development level of the associate. Start by selecting the D level and then draw a perpendicular line up to the curve line and the quadrant where it intercepts the leadership curve that is the Style type that should be applied. If, for example, you analyze someone as a D4 on a particular task, then S4 is appropriate leadership style to apply. When you are dealing with highly competent and committed people, the most effective leadership style is Delegating – you let them run with the ball.

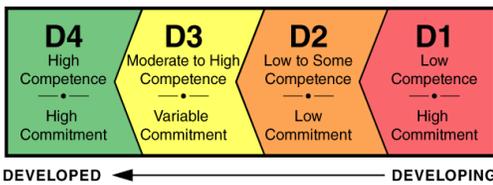


**Partnering for Performance**

The third skill pointed out by Dr. Blanchard is partnering for performance (PFP). PFP is a process for coming to agreement with your associates and deciding how much direction and/or support they need to do a good job. The steps in PFP are: 1, identify the goals and performance standards. 2. Determine the associate’s developmental level. 3. Decide on an appropriate leadership style for the future. 4. Plan how to work together in the future. 5. Follow through and deliver the appropriate leadership style. PFP helps a manager plan how to provide ongoing coaching and counseling in a way that is useful to the associate. Goals should reflect the SMART acronym: S—specific, M—measurable, A—attainable, R—relevant, and T—trackable. Finally, always avoid the conditions of over supervision and under supervision. These conditions occur when, for example, the associate is a D4 and S1 style is used, or when the associate is a D1 and S4 style is used.

**Simulation Exercises**

**Directions:** Look at the leadership situations that follow. For questions 1 – 7, consider the situation analysis and then



“diagnose” the associate’s development level. Next review the multiple choices of action items a-d to determine which one best describes the leadership style (S1 – S4) that you think best fits what is needed for the associate in order to create the best match (**HPM**).

**Developmental Levels:**

D1 – (“enthusiastic beginner”, unsure about what to do, most decisions made by leader, still learning details)

D2 – (“disillusioned Learner” has had some success- still unsure, motivation/confidence low, final decision made by leader)

D3 – (“capable but cautious performer” – maybe lacks confidence- de-motivated- will need to discuss concerns with leader and looks for opinions of others, but final decision made by associate)

D4 – (“self-reliant achiever” – competent, committed, confident and motivated, can run with the ball, decisions made by associate.)

- For the past few months, you have been meeting with your team as part of a documentation improvement plan. During that time, you have found one of your staff members has consistently demonstrated all DC planning initiatives in her documentation and during meetings has taken the lead in providing quality examples. She also gets along with all other team members and you have observed her successfully training others. Because of time restraints, you need to move on to focus on other initiatives. You have asked her to take on the role of further mentoring the team. Others on the team are pleased with your decision.

The appropriate D level is?

**Development Level:** \_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

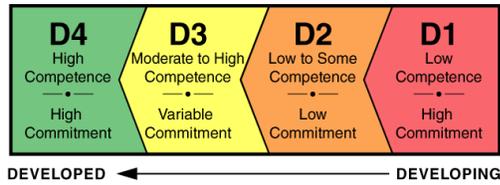
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- Involve her in thinking about problems she may encounter and support her efforts to take charge of the project
- Let the group continue to work on the documentation improvement plan under her leadership.
- Talk with her and set goals for the project but listen to and consider her suggestions.
- Stay in close contact with her so you can direct and closely supervise her efforts to complete the project.

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

- You have asked one of your team members to take on the role of scheduling when you are on vacation. In his other responsibilities, he has performed well with direction and support from you- although he has never done scheduling before. He is enthused about the new challenge. He may not have all the necessary skills- has never adjusted projections, and no experience with the assignment board/appointment book features in NetHealth.

The appropriate D level is?



Development Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

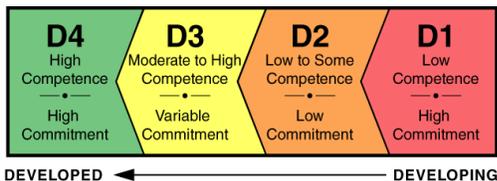
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- a. Give him the scheduling duty and let him determine how to do it.
- b. Define the activities necessary to complete scheduling successfully and supervise his work closely.
- c. Listen to his concerns but encourage him to take on the scheduling and support his efforts.
- d. Direct his efforts but solicit any ideas he may have about the scheduling process.

Action: \_\_\_\_\_

3. As part of your role as the supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring that the D/C planning process is followed. You have been making sure that each of your team members understands their responsibilities, what is expected of them, and have supervised them closely. For the past few months, your PT has had a few D/C planning issues, documentation occasionally requires reminders for missing less items, but performance has generally been improving. When making recommendations for the d/c plan and date, the PT often defers to the supervisor and OTR and ST for final decisions.

The appropriate D level is?



Development Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

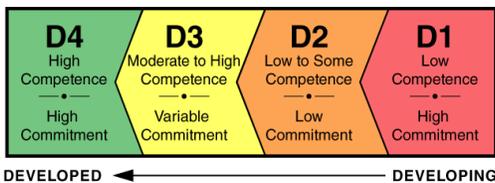
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- Let the PT work on their own with very little supervision but keep track of what they continue to miss in documentation and any D/C issues brought from the facility.
- Keep track of what they continue to miss in documentation and any D/C issues brought from the facility and use them to praise and encourage their efforts.
- Continue to set direction in areas where improvement is still needed but praise them for the reduction in errors and DC concerns from the facility and support their efforts to improve.
- Continue to direct and supervise their efforts closely.

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Your Therapy aide that started with the team about 4 months ago, has missed the deadline for an important end of month task for the second month in a row. The task is important and holding up the monthly closeout. You have set objectives and timeliness for this person, as well as provided encouragement and support. The aide asks a lot of questions, however, often forgets the responses and directives.

The appropriate D level is?:



**Development Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

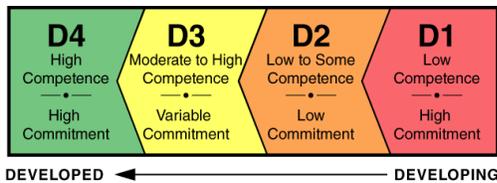
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- Review therapy aide training manual, supervise him closely make sure that he checks in with you throughout the day to make sure each responsibility assigned to him is completed.
- Discuss the problem with the therapy aide, identify any barriers and assist with problem solving, set a new deadline, and support and encourage him to get the task completed.
- Emphasize the importance of getting the task completed as soon as possible and ask him to check in with you once a week.
- Make sure he knows the task is overdue and assume he will get it done as quickly as possible.

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Since you have been given an increased workload, you have asked one of your team members to take charge of a new responsibility: printing the documentation due report and following up with any late documents to ensure they are completed. You have worked with him before and know that he has the knowledge and experience to be successful in the assignment. However, he seems insecure about his ability to do the job.

The appropriate D level is?



**Development Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

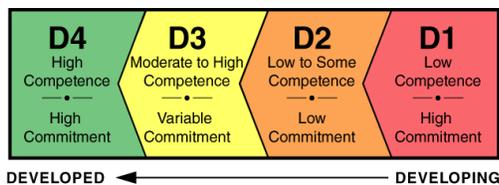
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- Assign the new responsibility to him and let him do it on his own.
- Consider his suggestions but tell him exactly what you expect from him with clear written instructions.
- Listen to his concerns about his abilities but assure him that he can handle the new responsibility.
- Tell him exactly what the new responsibility involves and then work with him closely.

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Your OTR has a fine record of accomplishment and is serious about her responsibilities. Even though you have spent little time having to review the day-to-day operations, she has surpassed productivity expectations, and works well with the team. You have noticed that she has been late competing evaluations the day of assessment and has been needing reminders to complete section GG.

The appropriate D level is?



**Development Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, what is the best leadership action to take in this situation (a, b, c, or d)?

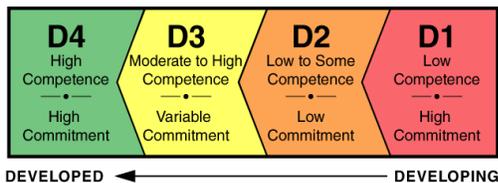
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- a. Inform her that her notes are late, and that the expectation is for her to complete evals the day of assessment.
- b. Take corrective action after listening to and considering her suggestions.
- c. Discuss the situation and explore ways to correct the problem, let her identify the best solution to ensure that the evals are completed timely.
- d. Define the problem as you see it, outline the steps necessary for its solution, and see that these steps are carried out.

**Action:** \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Situation example:** A new modality system has just been introduced at your facility. One of the employees is reluctant to learn the new equipment. She claims she does not have the 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 this system to her. So far, your efforts have been ineffective. The reluctant staff member continues to find excuses not to learn the new equipment.

The appropriate D level is?



**Development Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the diagnosed D level, consider if the leadership style described below was a match to the developmental level. If not, was it over supervision or under supervision?

<b>S1</b> – Directing = high direction/low support
<b>S2</b> – Coaching = High direction/high support
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<b>S4</b> – Delegating = low direction/low support

**The Leader’s actions were:** You explained again to the employee the rationale and benefits of the new system and arranged times to work with her on it. You listened to her suggestions about ways in which she can gain the skills necessary for the new system. You helped her identify appropriate patients that may benefit from the modality.

**Is this a:**

- match? Or a
  - mis- match? If it is a mis-match, what type is it? Check one.
    - over supervision? Why?
    - under supervision? Why?