Chapter 5

Contingency Leadership Theories

Contingency Approach to Leadership

Leaders are most effective when they make their behavior contingent on **situational** forces, including group member characteristics.

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Fiedler's Contingency Theory

- The best style of leadership is determined by situational factors
- Leadership style may be relationship-motivated or task-motivated
- Leadership style is relatively enduring and difficult to change
- Leaders should be matched to situations according to their style
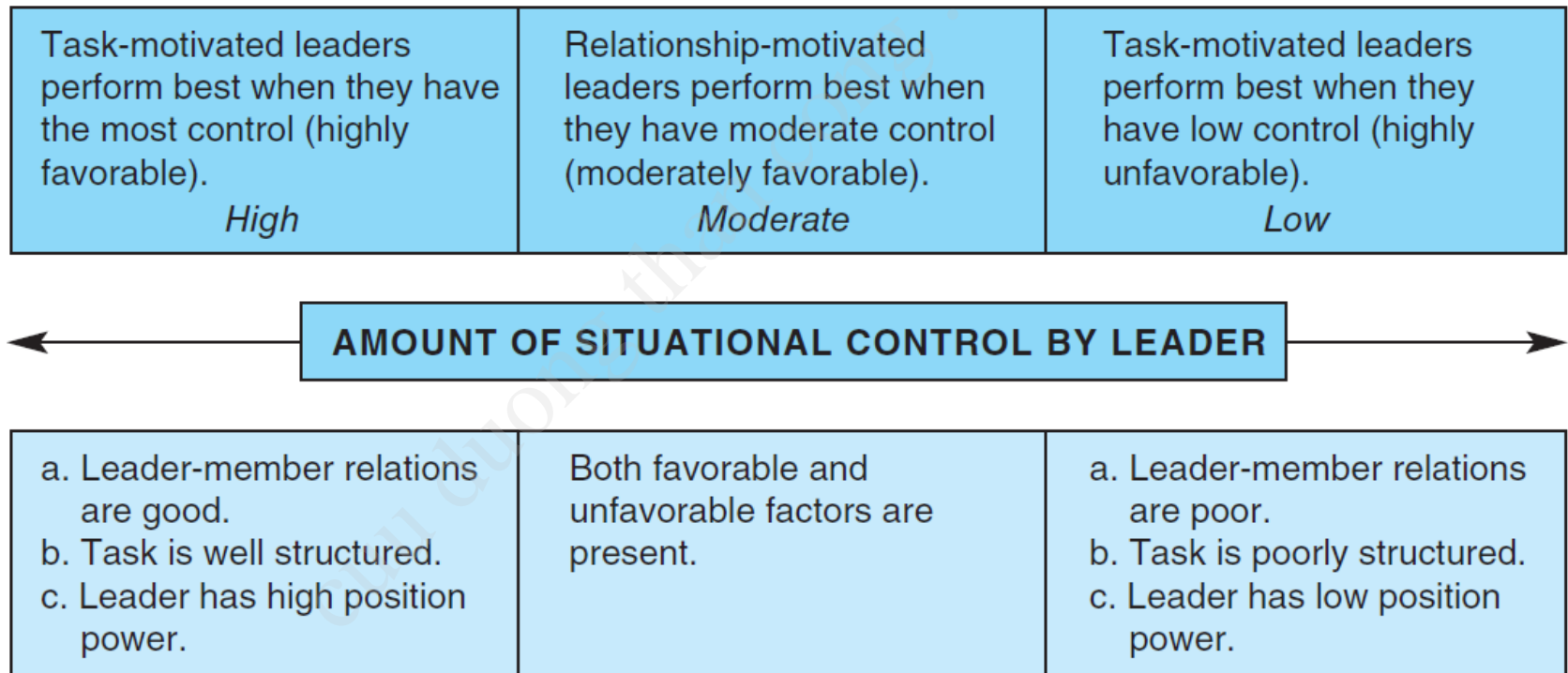
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Least Preferred Coworker (LPC)

- The LPC scale measures the degree to which a leader describes favorably or unfavorably an employee with whom he or she could work least well
- A relationship-motivated leader tends to describe their LPC in favorable terms
- A task-motivated leader tends to describe their LPC in an unfavorable manner

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Measuring the Situation

- Leadership situations are classified as high, moderate, or low control
- More controllable situations are viewed as more favorable for the leader
- Control is determined by three dimensions:
  - Leader-member relations
  - Task structure
  - Position power

Figure 5-1 **Summary of Findings From Fiedler's Contingency Theory**

Task-motivated leaders perform best when they have the most control (highly favorable). *High*	Relationship-motivated leaders perform best when they have moderate control (moderately favorable). *Moderate*	Task-motivated leaders perform best when they have low control (highly unfavorable). *Low*

← **AMOUNT OF SITUATIONAL CONTROL BY LEADER** →

a. Leader-member relations are good. b. Task is well structured. c. Leader has high position power.	Both favorable and unfavorable factors are present.	a. Leader-member relations are poor. b. Task is poorly structured. c. Leader has low position power.

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Evaluation of Fiedler's Contingency Theory

- Fiedler's work prompted others to conduct studies about the contingency nature of leadership.

- The model has alerted leaders to the importance of sizing up the situation to gain control.

- However, contingency theory is too complicated to have much of an impact on most leaders.

Path-Goal Theory
Developed by Robert House

- Specifies what the leader must do to achieve high productivity and morale in a given situation

- Based on expectancy theory of motivation

- The manager should choose a leadership style that takes into account the characteristics of group members and the demands of the task

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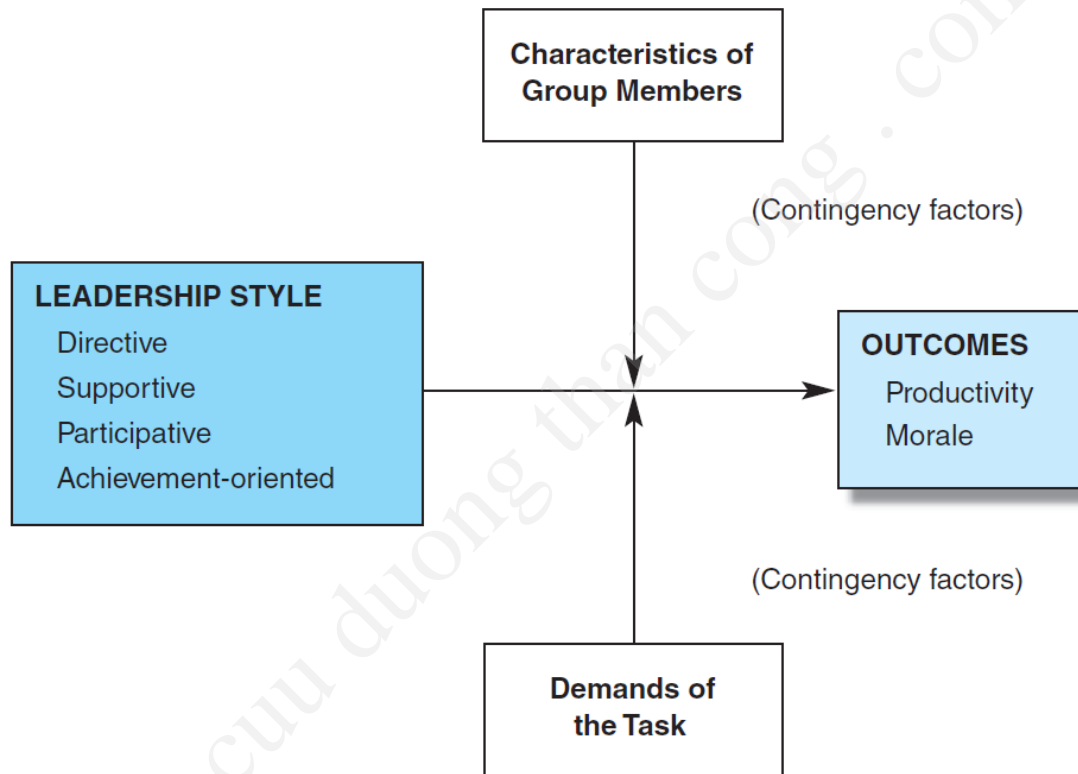# Figure 5-3 The Path-Goal Theory of Leadership

FIGURE 5-3 The Path-Goal Theory of Leadership.
To achieve the outcomes of productivity and morale, the manager chooses one of four leadership styles, depending on (a) the characteristics of the situation, and (b) the demands of the task.

Path-Goal Theory: Matching the Leadership Style to the Situation

- Tasks are unclear → **Directive** style
- Tasks are frustrating and stressful + workers are apprehensive → **Supportive** style
- Tasks are non-repetitive + workers are capable and motivated→ **Participative** style
- Tasks are unique or entrepreneurial + workers are competent and committed → **Achievement-oriented** style

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Situational Leadership II (SLII)
Developed by Kenneth H. Blanchard and others

- Explains how to match leadership style to the capabilities of group members on a given task

- SLII is designed to increase the frequency and quality of conversations about performance and professional development between managers and group members so that **competence** is developed, **commitment** takes place, and **turnover** among talented workers is **reduced**

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SLII (cont'd)

Effective leadership depends on two independent behaviors:

- **Supporting** behaviors, e.g., listening, giving recognition, communicating, encouraging, coaching
- **Directing** behaviors, e.g., giving explicit directions, controlling, supervising, ruling, regulating

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Figure 5-4 **Situational Leadership II (SLII)**

Supporting (Relationship Behaviors) (vertical axis)

S3
Supporting Leadership Style: Low on directing and high on supporting behaviors

D3
Capable but Cautious Performer: Growing competence and variable commitment

S2
Coaching Leadership Style: High on directing and high on supporting behaviors

D2
Disillusioned Learner: Some competence but low commitment

S4
Delegating Leadership Style: Low on directing and low on supporting behaviors

D4
Self-Reliant Achiever: Highest level of commitment and competence

S1
Directing Leadership Style: High on directing and low on supporting behaviors

D1
Enthusiastic Beginner: Low competence but high commitment

Directing (Task-Related Behaviors) (horizontal axis)

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SLII (cont'd)

- Quadrants indicate the desired match of leader's style to group member's development level
- No one style is best
- An effective leader uses all four styles, depending on the situation and the individual group member
- Challenging to apply SLII consistently because leaders must "stay tuned" and tasks shift rapidly

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Normative Decision Model

Another leadership theory in which leadership style is matched with situational factors to achieve the best results.

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The Normative Model: Five Decision-Making Styles

- **Decide** – Leader makes decision alone
- **Consult (individually)** – Leader makes decision after consulting group members
- **Consult (group)** – Leader makes decision after consulting entire group
- **Facilitate** – Leader defines the problem and decision boundaries, then group makes decision democratically
- **Delegate** – Leader permits the group to make the decision without directly intervening. Leader works "behind the scenes" providing resources and encouragement

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Time- & Development-Driven Model for Choosing a Decision-Making Style

Factors to Consider

- Decision Significance
- Importance of Commitment
- Leader Expertise
- Likelihood of Commitment
- Group Support
- Group Expertise
- Team Competence

Characteristics of the Time-Driven Model

○ Focus
- The model is concerned with making effective decisions with minimum costs
- Time is costly

○ Value
- Value is placed on time
- No value is placed on follower development

○ Orientation
- The model has a short-term horizon

Characteristics of the Development-Driven Model

- Focus
  - The model is concerned with making effective decisions with maximum development of followers
  - Follower development is worth the cost
- Value
  - Value is placed on follower development
  - No value is placed on time
- Orientation
  - The model has a long-term horizon
  - Development takes time

Leadership Substitutes Theory

- There are factors outside the leader's control
- Have a larger impact on outcomes than do leadership actions
- Include characteristics of the subordinate, task, and organization that replace the need for a leader
- Can neutralize the leader's behavior

Substitutes and Neutralizers

○ Characteristics of followers

- Ability
- Knowledge
- Experience
- Training
- Need for independence
- Professional orientation
- Indifference toward organizational rewards

Substitutes and Neutralizers (cont.)

○ Characteristics of the task

- Clarity
- Routine
- Invariant methodology
- Provision of own feedback concerning accomplishment
- Intrinsic satisfaction

Substitutes and Neutralizers (cont.)

○ Characteristics of the organization

- Formalization
- Inflexibility
- Highly specified and active advisory and staff functions
- Closely knit, cohesive work groups
- Organizational rewards not within the leader's control
- Spatial distance between leader and followers

Contingency Leadership in the Executive Suite

- Based on interviews with 163 top executives on six continents

- Reviewed 12,000 pages of interviews to determine how these leaders delivered consistently extraordinary results

- Result: Top-level CEOs assess their companies' needs, then adapt their leadership style to fit the situation

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Leadership During a Crisis- Attributes and Behaviors

- Be decisive
- Lead with compassion
- Reestablish the usual work routine
- Avoid a circle-the-wagons mentality
- Display optimism
- Have a disaster plan
- Provide stable performance
- Be a transformational leader