

Course Learning Outcomes for Unit I

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

1. Summarize the major psychological foundations of leadership.
 - 1.1 Describe various foundational traits of leadership.
 - 1.2 Articulate the importance of correlating personal leadership traits and models.

4. Evaluate various leadership models.
 - 4.1 Analyze various leadership models.
 - 4.2 Relate leadership models to a successful leader.

Course/Unit Learning Outcomes	Learning Activity
1.1	Unit Lesson Chapter 1 Unit I Essay
1.2	Unit Lesson Chapter 1 Unit I Essay
4.1	Unit Lesson Chapter 3 Unit I Essay
4.2	Unit Lesson Chapter 3 Unit I Essay

Reading Assignment

In addition to a physical copy of the textbook, each unit contains the eTextbook version of the assigned reading chapters. If preferred, click on Unit I in the course navigation menu to access the online version of the assigned chapters.

Chapter 1: What Does It Mean to Be a Leader?, pp. 3–24

Chapter 3: Contingency Approaches to Leadership, pp. 65–88

Unit Lesson

Welcome to Unit !! There are many types of leaders in the business world today; some are successful at leading their team to accomplish organizational goals, while others are not. Leadership is a popular and sought-after asset in business today. Therefore, it is important to understand what is required for one to become a good leader and acknowledge the important aspects of leadership. Being that leadership is complex and often misunderstood, those who are seeking to become effective leaders must possess a desire to establish meaningful relationships with others while leading with a vision. Daft (2018) describes leadership as the “ability to support and inspire the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals” (p. 5).

**Daft’s Definition of LEADERSHIP:
“An influence relationship among
leaders and followers who intend real
changes and outcomes that reflect
their shared purposes”
(Daft, 2018, p. 5)**

This course covers the history and psychology of leadership studies, leadership vision, culture, courage, morals, and values. Our focus will be on leadership concepts and theories and correlating that knowledge into practical use. At the bottom of each study guide, there will be activities that focus on self-assessment, goal setting, and overcoming barriers—all related to how you can apply what you learn in the course to your everyday life. The activities are not graded but will assist in developing your own leadership skills.

Let’s get started, as your next step in becoming a leader awaits.

When we consider the psychology of leadership, the psychodynamic or systematic approach to studying human behavior, there are a myriad of ways of looking at leadership. The underlining forces that affect leaders’ ability to lead include their personalities, their feelings and emotions, and how they relate to others. Leaders’ personal perceptions, values, and beliefs influence the decisions they make in an organization and the decisions made by those they are influencing.

Not only must leaders understand their own behaviors and what might be best for their organization, but they must also understand what drives and motivates their followers. *Human capital* refers to how people vary in their experiences, learning abilities, and emotions. Each person is different and unique and evolves at his or her own pace. Leaders must understand that the people they are leading are likely at different levels of their human development so a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership may not be effective. Understanding the skills, knowledge, and experiences (i.e., the human capital) of their employees will allow successful leaders to utilize tools such as coaching to further develop their teams.

Understanding people is just one element required to become a successful leader. Leaders must also understand themselves and their own experiences, learning abilities, and emotions. Leadership is built on the leader’s experiences, knowledge, perceptions, values, and beliefs. No two leaders will be exactly alike. Leadership is constantly changing. Someone who was considered a good leader 20 years ago might not be a good leader today. In the past, charisma and intelligence were the psychological traits most valued in leadership. Today, as leaders continue to develop, a new psychology of leadership has emerged that focuses on effective leaders understanding the values, opinions, and skill sets of their followers. Effective leaders are those who can shape and nurture the actions of their followers. This differs significantly from the past psychology of leadership, which was top-down and autocratic in nature.

The psychology of leadership in the 21st century focuses on leaders’ ability to forecast the actions of their followers through consensus, collaboration, and communication. Leaders who have a solid understanding of their followers and what motivates them to succeed will be well on their way to becoming successful leaders. Are leaders born or developed? There are valid arguments on both sides of this question; however, what we do know is to be successful, leaders need to be fluid and continually evolving.

Leaders have little stability and are in constant change; some refer to this as a *fundamental change*. One paradigm shift has been leaders moving from being controllers to facilitators (Daft, 2018). Gone is the belief that leaders rule with strict enforcements without flexibility. As technology continues to change how we interact, so has the philosophy of how we think and lead. Some leaders still resist change in many forms.

“Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great* and *Great by Choice*, calls this new breed ‘Level 5 leaders’” (Daft, 2018, p. 13). These Level 5 Leaders, instead of having strong egos and larger-than-life personalities, seem shy and unconcerned with being in the spotlight. These leaders focus on the needs of their organization over their own personal needs (Daft, 2018). These leaders also take full accountability and responsibility for both their own actions and the actions of their organization. The relevance of this matters because one of the greatest challenges facing leaders today is the ever-changing world we live in that demands an ever-changing theory of leadership. All leaders should evolve. Can you think of a good example of a leader who evolved over time and became better with his or her leadership skills?

To best understand the foundations of leadership, a closer look at the leadership approaches and theories are warranted. First, we will examine the contingency model. Daft (2018) states that “contingency means that one thing depends on other things, and for a leader to be effective there must be an appropriate fit between the leader’s behavior and style and the conditions in the situation” (p. 66). Realistically, there is no one-way-fits-all model for leaders. What works for one leader may not be effective for the other. Daft (2018) notes that Hersey and Blanchard broadened contingency through the developmental study labeled *situational theory*, which describes four different leadership styles:

- S1: directing style,
- S2: coaching style,
- S3: supporting style, and
- S4: entrusting style.

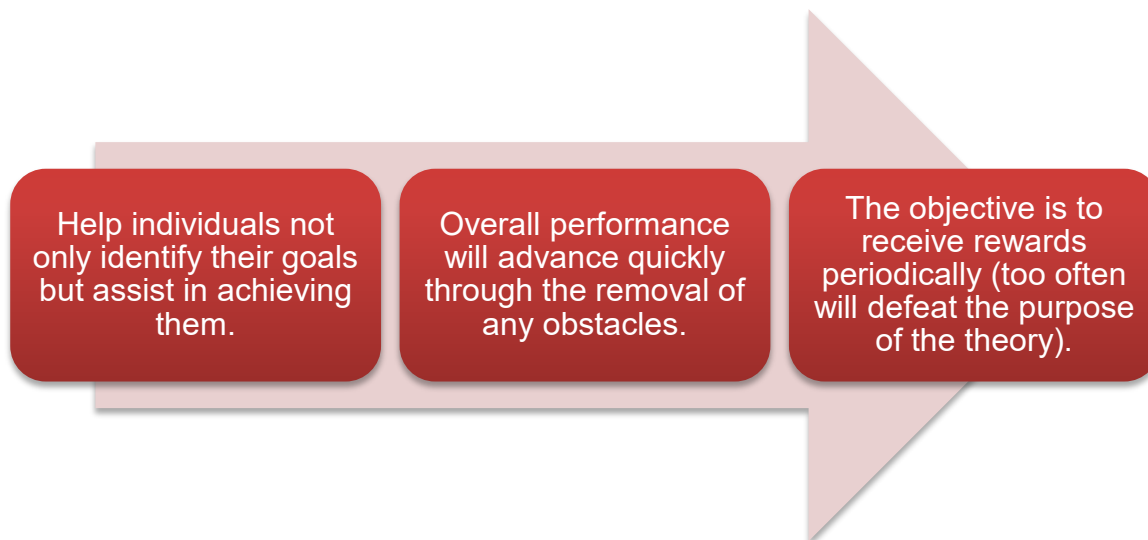
Let it be noted that Hersey and Blanchard’s situational model favors followers’ characteristics with each quadrant evaluated per particular situation.

S1: Directing Style	S2: Coaching Style	S3: Supporting Style	S4: Entrusting Style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates high concern for tasks • Demonstrates low concern for relationships • Provides detailed instructions • Closely supervises performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates high concern for tasks • Demonstrates high concern for relationships • Provides both instruction and support • Explains decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates high concern for relationships • Demonstrates low concern for tasks • Urges creativity and participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates low concern for relationships • Demonstrates low concern for tasks • Provides little direction and support

Situational model of leadership
(Daft, 2018)

Fiedler’s contingency model matches the leadership style (personal characteristics and motivation) with the most favorable situation posed to a group. This means that personality can play a dominant role in the situation and the group dynamics. The origin of Fiedler’s theory is to identify your leadership style as being naturally relationship-focused or naturally task-focused and then to analyze the situation to determine the most effective leadership style needed to resolve matters (Daft, 2018).

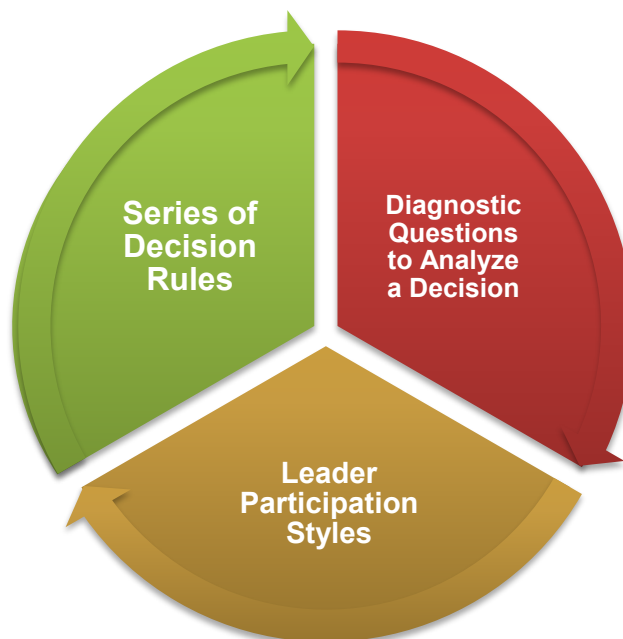
An additional theory is the *path-goal theory*, which states that a leader's chosen style directly relates to a reward or compensation (Daft, 2018). The path-goal theory was first developed in 1971 by psychologist Robert House. Later, in 1996, House updated the major elements detailing the theory. The commonality of the theory is simply that there are three ways to enable individuals (as illustrated below).



Three ways of enabling individuals
(Daft, 2018)

Note that each of these paths are directives through either the supportive, directive, participative, and/or achievement-oriented leadership approach. For example, companies like Apple give bonuses for good work in addition to a salary.

Lastly, the Vroom-Jago model “focuses specifically on varying degrees of participative leadership and how each level of participation influences the quality and accountability of decisions” (Daft, 2018, p. 81). The three major components of the Vroom-Jago model are:



Vroom-Jago model
(Daft, 2018)

The Vroom-Jago model allows the leader's preference based on contingencies of quality, commitment, knowledge, and expertise (Daft, 2018). Time, development, and needed adjustments to particular situations are taken into consideration. Each leadership approach and respective model has a critical role in the development and understanding of a leader and leadership. A deeper understanding of the characteristics and styles increases the effectiveness of developing attainable skills to be a successful leader. It is important to note that most leaders develop their skills and traits over time, trusting their followers and focusing on being continuous lifelong learners.

Reflecting on leadership approaches and models, we can look at one company that is known for its leadership: Disney. Walt Disney was an innovative leader. Walt was involved in leadership but also gave detailed insight for the creative process. Many of the innovations Walt developed still remain today in the parks, such as the Enchanted Tiki Room and the Carousel of Progress. Many wonder if Walt Disney was ever really focused on company profits as it seemed he was mostly concerned with creating new and innovative products. Disney has gone through several different leaders—all with varying approaches—over the years. Each leader has brought different strengths and weaknesses while overseeing the company. Robert Iger is the current leader at Disney. While Iger has traits that compare to those of Disney himself, Iger is clearly using a different approach for his leadership. Iger is mainly concerned with the bigger picture of Disney Corporation and what it takes to maintain profitability. Iger does not actively participate in the artistic and creative processes but, instead, relies on others for guidance. Some may attempt to compare Robert Iger, the current leader, to Walt Disney, the first leader and founder, but the two leaders are different—as are their approaches to leadership. If Walt Disney was still here with us today, we might see a different leadership approach and model used by Disney himself. This example illustrates that two leaders can use different approaches focusing on individual concerns/interests and yet both be successful.

As we conclude Unit I, reflect on the idea that no two leaders are exactly the same. There is not one particular model or theory that can be applied to every single situation. It is critical that you learn to evaluate all the information you are learning to practically (and slowly) apply it to your everyday and long-term goals. This course will hopefully support you in that journey!

Reference

Daft, R. L. (with Lane, P. G.). (2018). *The leadership experience* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Learning Activities (Nongraded)

Nongraded Learning Activities are provided to aid students in their course of study. You are not required to submit these to your instructor but are encouraged to keep a copy for your personal files. If you have questions, contact your instructor for further guidance and information.

Apply the Concepts: Take the Self-Assessment!

You might be wondering, "How am I going to use this information?" The first step in understanding how these leadership concepts pertain to you is to explore what type of leader you are or what type of leadership qualities you possess. This will support your search and journey in becoming a stronger leader.

To take the Chapter 1 and 3 Self-Assessments, click on Unit I in the course navigation menu, and then click on Nongraded Learning Activities. Here, you will find different assessment tools. To get the most out of these tools as you use them, take notes in order to track your progress. Ask yourself:

- What are these tools telling me about my leadership qualities?
- How can I create new goals for myself using these tools?
- What are some things that might motivate me to focus on improving my leadership skills?