People have wondered about what makes a great leader since the beginning of recorded history—and undoubtedly long before. The formal study of leadership dates back to the 1950s, and is probably one of the most researched topics in Organizational Behavior. Today, after decades of study, we believe that:

* Leaders are made, not born, and leadership can be taught.
* Leadership occurs in all kinds of organizations and at all levels.
* To be a great leader, one does not have to be charismatic.
* There is no one right way to lead that fits all situations.

The exercise of leadership, by definition, involves compelling people to do something they might not otherwise have done. The manner in which followers carry out these tasks varies, however.

The degree of motivation and enthusiasm with which a follower performs his or her work is related to the type of leadership that is used. Here are the most common reactions by followers:

* **Commitment** is characterized by the internalization of a leader’s goal or request and the follower’s decision to carry it out effectively. Frequently, the follower will go beyond what the leader has asked or expects—in other words, goes the extra mile.
* **Compliance** is an apathetic response where the follower does what the leader asks, but exerts no more than the required amount of effort.
* **Resistance** is a reaction where the follower opposes the leader‘s direction and avoids carrying it out (passively through avoidance or aggressively through rebellion).

In this module, we will review the major theories of leadership. Although some are more complex than others, each seems to have a nugget of truth and adds to our overall understanding of how leadership works and what makes great leadership. The following chart below and PowerPoint presentation below summarize the major approaches or models that we will cover.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Leadership Model:** | **Principles:** |
| Trait Model | Leaders have special innate qualities—Certain people are “natural leaders.” Traits describe successful (and unsuccessful) leaders (i.e., personality traits, emotional traits, personal history, economic/social background, intelligence, physical characteristics, and so forth.) |
| Behavioral Models | Leaders have certain behaviors. They may be concerned primarily with tasks or primarily with relationships—though the best leaders are concerned with both. |
| Contingency Models | Different leader behaviors are effective for different types of followers and situations. |
| Influence (Power) Models | Leadership consists of influencing others. |
| Transformational Models | Leaders are visionaries who change organizations and people’s behavior. |

**Let’s begin with a PowerPoint presentation that will provide some background on these different models:**

**Eveland, J. D. (n.d.)**[***Leadership***](https://tlc.trident.edu/content/enforced/47157-MGT501%284-Module%29/Modules/Module4/Leadership.ppt?_&d2lSessionVal=XZYh3C7N8ikHGP97Iu7AkbJ7J&ou=47157&_&d2lSessionVal=vbVuKgHvQBj3WaY8femGd8zLS&ou=57287&_&d2lSessionVal=9gXqjaI2435sD8K8AcRWWQfwO&ou=83112) **(attached)**

**Contingency Models**

Contingency models are based on the idea that the most effective leadership style is one that matches (is contingent upon) the demands of the situation. There are three basic models of contingency leadership that we will cover in this module. Each has slightly different factors that a leader needs to consider when exercising the most successful leadership style. These are the Fiedler Model, the Path-Goal Model, and the Normative Decision Model.

**The Fiedler Model (Contingency)**

Unlike the behavioral theorists who came before him Fiedler did not believe that there was one best style of leadership. He agreed that individuals tend to possess either a task-oriented or relationship-oriented leadership style, but that to know the appropriate style for a given circumstance, you also needed to understand the situation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Situational Factor** | **Characteristics** |
| Leader-Member Relations | Do the followers have trust and confidence in the leader? |
| Task Structure | Is the task structured or unstructured? Is the task clearcut? |
| Leader’s position power | Does the leader have the discretion to reward or punish? |

Read the following article to learn how these factors combine to indicate which leadership style would be most effective given specific situational constraints, and criticisms of the model:

Fiedler’s Contingency Theory (2013). Leadership-central. Retrieved from [*http://www.leadership-central.com/fiedler%27s-contingency-theory.html#axzz3OemkTtoM*](http://www.leadership-central.com/fiedler%27s-contingency-theory.html#axzz3OemkTtoM)

While Fiedler thought that different leadership styles worked better under different conditions, he did not think that people could change their preferred style. So the important task of management was to match the leader with the right style to the right situation.

The next contingency theory of leadership we will examine does not hold that leadership style is static and instead proffers the argument that leaders can change and adapt their style to fit the situation.

**Path Goal Model (Contingency)**

The path-goal model of leadership proposes four different leadership styles and considers two situational factors (the capabilities and motivation of followers) to match an effective style for a particular situation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Appropriate Leadership Style (Behaviors)** | **Situation** |
| Directive behaviors, (i.e., set goals) | Employee role ambiguity is high.  Employees have low abilities  Employees have external locus of control |
| Supportive behaviors (i.e., look out for worker’s best interests) | Tasks are boring and repetitive  Tasks are stressful |
| Participative behaviors (i.e., give workers a say in matters that affect them) | Employee abilities are high  Decisions are relevant to employees  Employees have internal locus of control |
| Achievement-oriented behaviors (i.e., set challenging goals and believe in worker abilities) | Employees have high abilities  Employees have high achievement motivation |

In other words, a leader does not use the same approach with employees with limited skills the same way she would lead employees who are highly educated and skilled. Read more about this approach to leadership:

Path-goal Theory of Leadership (n.d.) In Encyclopedia of Group Processes & Intergroup Relations. Retrieved from[*http://www.uk.sagepub.com/northouse6e/study/materials/reference/reference7.2.pdf*](http://www.uk.sagepub.com/northouse6e/study/materials/reference/reference7.2.pdf)

**Normative Decision Model (Contingency)**

The last contingency model we will consider is the Normative Decision Model (also called the Vroom-Yetton-Jago Decision Tree). It is a tool leaders can use to decide exactly which of five leadership styles is appropriate for a given circumstance. In this way, followers have the greatest likelihood of acceptance. By asking a series of questions and following the answers through a decision tree, the leader can select the style that is most likely to yield the response he desires. The five leadership styles are

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Decision style** | **Characteristics** |
| Autocratic (A1) | Leader gathers information and decides alone |
| Autocratic (A2) | Leader gets information from followers but decides alone |
| Consultative (C1) | Leader shares problem with individual followers, asks for input, but decides alone |
| Consultative (C2) | Leader shares problem with group of followers, asks for input, but decides alone |
| Group based (G2) | Leader shares problem with group, seeks consensus on solution |

Find out what the key questions are and see how the decision tree works by reading the following article. You may want to click on the interactive tool that allows you to try out the decision tree for yourself!

Vroom-Yetton-Jago Decision-making Model of Leadership (2013). Leadership-central. Retrieved from [*http://www.leadership-central.com/Vroom-Yetton-Jago-decision-making-model-of-leadership.html#axzz3OjpF9lI8*](http://www.leadership-central.com/Vroom-Yetton-Jago-decision-making-model-of-leadership.html#axzz3OjpF9lI8)

**Influence (Power) Models**

Let’s take a look at power and possible employee reactions to different forms of power:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Power** | **Most Common Reaction** |
| Reward | Compliance |
| Coercive | Compliance or resistance |
| Legitimate | Compliance |
| Referent | Commitment |
| Expert | Commitment |

This chart would indicate that the most a leader can hope for if he relies on legitimate, reward, or coercive power is compliance with his directives, but if he relies too heavily on coercive power, he risks resistance. If, however, a leader needs to have the follower’s commitment (the knowledge that she will follow through regardless whether she is being monitored or not), the leader must rely on personal sources of power—such as referent or expert power.

While commitment is very often the most desired reaction, sometimes compliance is enough to accomplish the leader’s objectives. Resistance, however, is something all leaders should want to avoid as it renders them ineffective.

**Transformational Leadership Model**

Transformational leaders inspire followers to exert their greatest efforts toward achieving a future vision of the organization. To do this, the transformational leader needs to clearly communicate his vision for the organization and this vision must be linked to strong values that followers will find motivating. The transformational leader works hard to build trust with his followers—so that his “open area” of the JoHari Window is maximized. (See Module 2 for an explanation of the JoHari Window.)

Although he does not use the term “transformational,” leadership expert Simon Sinek is clearly describing what constitutes this type of leadership in the following TED talk:

TED (2010) Simon Sinek: How great leaders inspire action. Retrieved from[*https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\_sinek\_how\_great\_leaders\_inspire\_action*](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

Much of what is written about transformational leadership focuses on the role of top management – particularly CEO’s. But what about the rest of us who lead people on a daily basis, but from the middle of the organization? Does the model of transformational leadership have anything to offer individuals who are not at the top of the leadership ladder?

The following article makes clear how managers at all levels of the organization can become more effective leaders by infusing transformational principles into the meaning of work. Drawing on the Job Characteristics Model (remember this from Module 1?), the authors show how “transformational leaders promote (i.e., shape) subordinates’ perceptions of work by influencing their perceptions of key job characteristics.” (p. 354)

Dean, J., Cleavengera, D. J., & Munyonb, T. P. (2013). It's how you frame it: Transformational leadership and the meaning of work. *Business Horizons 56*(3), 351-360. Available in the Trident Online Library.

Assignment:

View the following six video clips\* and follow the Instructions listed below:

1. This clip is from *Dead Poets Society*. Compare and contrast the leadership styles of both Mr. Keating and Mr. Nolan.  
   *CineGraf (2014). O captain, my captain!*
2. This clip is from the movie *Office Space* where the main character is asked to work the weekend. What leadership style is Lumberg using?  
   *ResoluteProductions (2011). Office Space—Working tomorrow.*
3. The third clip is a scene from *Remember the Titans* where the coach tells the players about the Battle of Gettysburg.  
   mikedaquila (2011) *Remember the Titans Coach Boone Speech*
4. This clip is from *The Princess Bride* and depicts a battle of wits between Vazzini and Roberts where Vazzini has to decide which cup is poisoned.  
   *Vecchiarelli, M.S. (2013) The princess bride—Battle of the wits.*
5. The fifth clip is from *The Blind Side*. What leadership style does the coach use and then what style does the mother use when she goes onto the field to tell Michael that the football team is like his family and he has to protect them?  
   *MacPherson, J. (2011). Blindside p and p 2*
6. The last clip is from *The Devil Wears Prada* where Andrea arrives at the offices of *Runway* to interview for a job as assistant to Miranda.  
   *moviemomentsAUS’s channel (2012). Devil Wears Prada*.

*\*Note: These clips are all on YouTube. If you cannot access YouTube from a network that blocks access, you will need to use a different network or borrow another computer to complete the assignment. If neither is possible, contact your professor for instructions for an alternate assignment for writing a research paper on the*Complexity Theory of Leadership.

**Instructions:**

* Discuss what leadership model(s) best describe the approach to leadership exhibited in the video clip.
  + Trait Model
  + Behavioral Model
  + Contingency Model (identify which one—Fiedler Model, Path-Goal Model, and/or Normative Decision Model)
  + Influence (Power) (identify which one—Reward Power, Coercive Power, Legitimate Power, Referent Power and/or Expert Power)
  + Transformational Leadership
* Devote a section in your paper to each of the video clips. Each section should have a heading with the name of the video clip followed by the leadership style/styles portrayed. For example: *Return of the Jedi*(Coercive Power).
* For each of the video clips, you will need to use at least one of the leadership models listed above, and a few have more than one portrayed. Also you must use of all five of the leadership styles at least once in your paper.
* Analyze the effectiveness of this leadership approach. Give examples of how specific behaviors or attitudes illustrate specific tenets of the leadership model you have chosen. Defend your answer with examples from the clip and references to the appropriate background material.
* Is this leadership style appropriate for this situation? Do you think it will be effective? Why or why not? Under what conditions might this approach be most appropriate? Most inappropriate?

There is not one right answer to which leadership style is being represented in each clip—it is open to interpretation. However, the critical thinking in this assignment hinges on how well you defend your choice of leadership style. Make a strong and logical argument by using examples from the clips to demonstrate the characteristics of the style as presented in the background materials.

Keep in mind there may be more than one leadership style represented in a video clip.

You may want to do additional research to supplement what is on the background page. Outside research does not substitute for citing and referencing the background material, but may add additional support and depth to your arguments.