

## Situational Facilitation

**Background:** Lea Edwards and Wayne Vick developed the concept of the Situational Facilitator in a workshop given on 27 September 1997, which combined the concepts of Stages of Team Dynamics and the Hersey-Blanchard's Situational Leadership as used by a Group Facilitator.

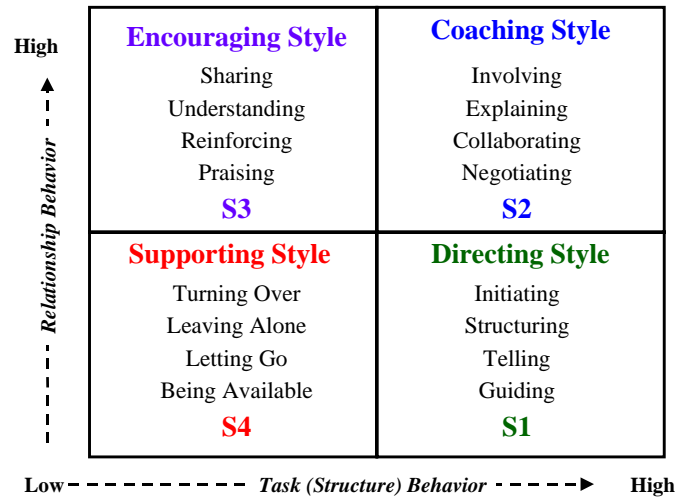
Situational Facilitation was defined as "Being skilled in assessing the current level of a team and applying tools and techniques to move a group forward while striving and working toward the goal, using assessment and diagnosis to know what to apply. Adjusting our style as facilitators to meet the needs and phases of group dynamics." This is the active use of Roger Schwarz's Basic & Developmental Facilitation Continuum where the facilitator starts out in the basic mode and works with the group to develop their understanding and capabilities for self-facilitation.

Three models were discussed in the context of this concept; Team Dynamics (as the assessment mode), Situational Team Leadership (as the basis for interventions style to be used with the group), and the Personal Profile System (DiSC) (used as the basis for the type of intervention approach to use with individuals).

Team Dynamics is the understanding that groups go through four fundamental phases of performance throughout the life of the group; Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing. The duration and intensity of each phase differs for every group. This provides the baseline for the facilitator's style with the group.

Situational Team Leadership is an adaptation of the Hersey/Blanchard Situational Leadership Model for

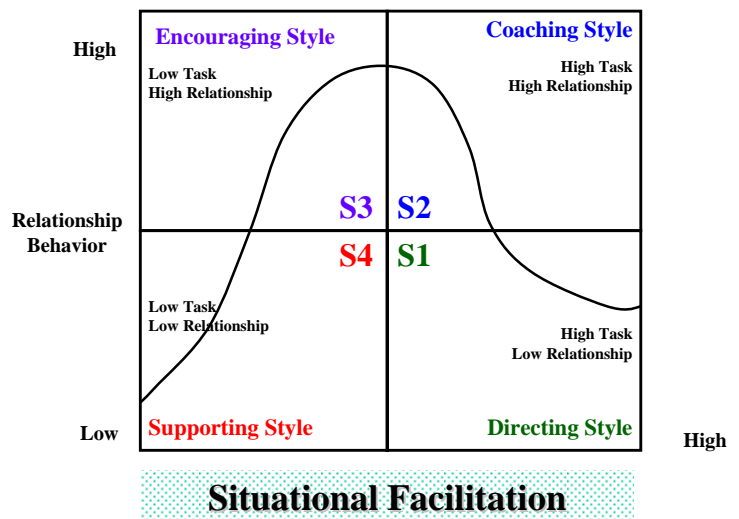
### Effective Styles



Facilitators. The titles of each quadrant have been adapted to reflect the style of facilitation support the facilitator uses with a group. (See graphics above and below)

The Personal Profile System, or DiSC, (see the diagram on the next page) is a model that the facilitator uses to help determine the way to intervene with each individual.

An example of how a facilitator uses these models: a group that is just starting is normally in the Forming Stage (S1). In this stage the facilitator will give directions and



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provides structure in a Directing Style. While in this stage the facilitator will appeal to an individual with a Steadiness Profile to their work ethic, contributions in the past, and getting on with the job.

This approach covers the situation the group finds itself in, the individual approach to the group, and the facilitator's style. It enables the facilitator to pick an intervention approach for an individual and a facilitation style that fits the group in a specific stage.

To some extent this concept is the basic approach that all facilitators use. The models used to make up the approach may vary from facilitator to facilitator but the concept remain valid. Other models one may find useful in this are the Power and Conflict Modes.

**Application:** This model is of value because it helps facilitators understand how these models overlap and may apply to each other. Facilitators can use it as a basis for reviewing various models to increase their understanding of the environment and create success for their groups.

When working with a group facilitators can use this model to determine the maturity and capability of the

group and adapt their style and techniques to match the groups needs.

### Resources:

Edwards, L., Vick, W., "Applied Team Dynamics and the Situational Facilitator"; AQP Capital Chapter Facilitator's Workshop Series 24 Sep 1997

Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K.H. Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources (5<sup>th</sup> Edition), Prentice Hall, 1988

AQP, Basic Facilitator Development course Manual with Teaching Notes, 1996, Cincinnati, Ohio, Tab 4 pages 15 to 25.

