19MEE312

PRINCIPLES

OF

MANAGEMENT

UNIT IV

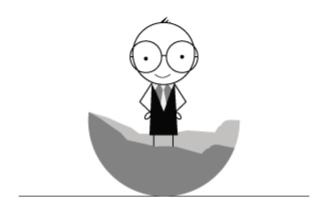# STAFFING & DIRECTING

What are the core leadership theories?

1. Great man theory

According to the Great Man Theory, leaders are born with the right traits and abilities for leading. The theory suggests that the ability to lead is inherent – that the best leaders are born, not made.

True leaders are born, not made.

Thomas Carlyle proposed the Great Man Theory in the 1840s. This theory was criticized due to many reasons. For instance,

- This theory believes that leadership cannot be learned; instead, it is an inherent trait.
- There is no scientific validity in support of this theory.
- Its male-centric approach is questionable as women have also proved to be great leaders.
- It ignores situational factors that can affect how a leader behaves.

While the theory sounds pretty discouraging to those wanting to learn leadership, it's still an interesting take on leadership. This theory highlights the qualities of great leaders. These qualities have more or less remained unchanged over time.
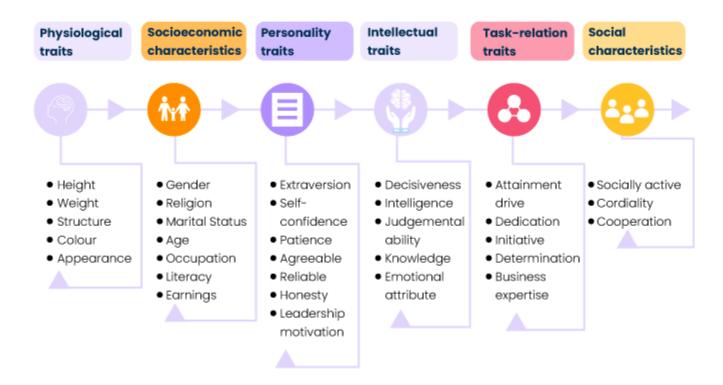
2. Trait theory

The Trait Theory is like the Great Man Theory. Ralph M. Stogdill proposed the trait theory of leadership in the late 1940s.

This theory was founded by studying the characteristics of different leaders. The characteristics are compared to those of potential leaders to determine their potential to lead effectively.

Scholars researching trait theory focuses on the following trait categories of individuals-

Trait Theory of Leadership

Physiological traits	Socioeconomic characteristics	Personality traits	Intellectual traits	Task-relation traits	Social characteristics
• Height • Weight • Structure • Colour • Appearance	• Gender • Religion • Marital Status • Age • Occupation • Literacy • Earnings	• Extraversion • Self-confidence • Patience • Agreeable • Reliable • Honesty • Leadership motivation	• Decisiveness • Intelligence • Judgemental ability • Knowledge • Emotional attribute	• Attainment drive • Dedication • Initiative • Determination • Business expertise	• Socially active • Cordiality • Cooperation

- **Physiological traits**: Such as appearance, weight, and height.

- **Demographics/ Socioeconomic characteristics**: Such as age, education, and familial background

- **Intellectual traits**: Such as decisiveness, judgment, and knowledge.

- **Task-relation traits**: Such as dedication, initiative, determination, and business expertise.

- **Social characteristics**: Such as cordiality and cooperation.

- **Personality traits**: Such as extraversion, self-confidence, honesty, and leadership motivation.

- **Other traits**: Such as charisma, adaptiveness, creativity, and uniqueness.

This theory was also criticized due to many reasons. For instance,

- This theory also ignored environmental and situational factors like the great man theory.

- The list of traits is vast, which makes it complex.

- These listed traits kept changing from time to time.

- Trait theory was unable to explain failures in leadership. Failures existed even though leaders possessed certain traits specified in the list.
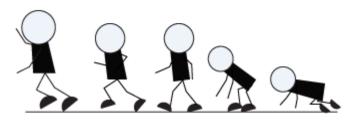
3. Behavioral theory

Behavioral theory focuses on the specific behaviors and actions of leaders rather than their traits or characteristics.

The behavioral theory of leadership evolved in the 1950s. The theory suggests that effective leadership is the result of many learned skills.

Leadership is learned.

After researchers understood the effectiveness of leadership traits, they were keen to know what leaders do differently. Hence, to study the behavior of leaders, two major research programs were started by two different universities -

1. **The Ohio State Leadership Studies**- Ohio State University researchers developed a questionnaire to be administered in military and industrial settings. It aids in understanding how subordinates perceive their leaders' actions. Findings show two major categories of leadership behaviors:

- People-orientated behaviors: Leaders are supportive and friendly towards their subordinates. They also build excellent interpersonal relationships with them.
- Task-oriented behaviors: Leaders focus on the achievement of goals and structure work accordingly. They consider subordinates as resources of the company and make optimal utilization of them.

Don't lead by results, lead to results;
and only behavior will get you there.

2. **The University of Michigan Studies**- Researchers at the University of Michigan Studies examined leadership behavior relating to group members' performance. They made comparisons of effective managers with ineffective ones.

Findings show two behaviors vital behaviors to differentiate between the two:

- Job-centric behaviors.
- Organizational-member-centric behaviors.

Four other behaviors are found for effective leadership:

- Support.
- Goal attainment.
- Work felicitation.
- Interaction.

Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton developed the Managerial Grid, also called a leadership grid, to support this theory. According to them, the leadership styles are identified based on the manager's concern for people and production.

They discovered five distinct leadership styles by categorizing the managers into 81 possible ways based on ratings.

Following are the various styles of leadership according to this model:

- **Indifferent** - Neither work nor employees are given importance. It is the most ineffective style of leadership.
- **Country Club** - More attention towards employees' well-being and employee engagement is given rather than tasks.
- **Task-oriented** - Leaders have more attention towards work than employee engagements.
- **Status Quo** - These leaders place a moderate and equal emphasis on employee wellness and work.
- **Sound** - The most effective style among all. These leaders have a high level of concern towards both employees and output.
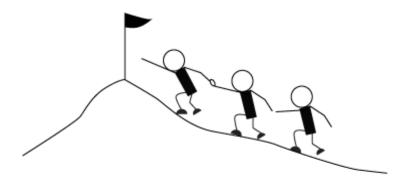
4. Contingency leadership theory

Contingency theory is a general theory that says there is no one singular best way to structure your organization and lead your team. According to this theory, the best leadership style will be contingent on the situation.
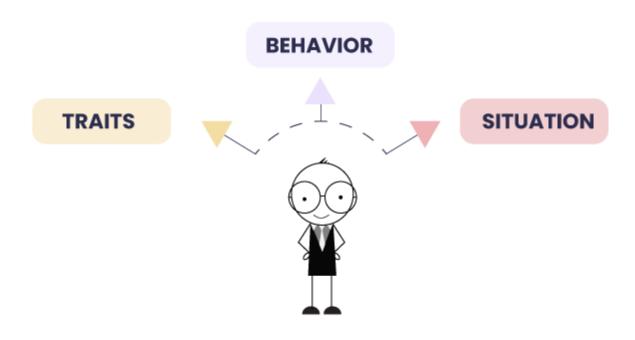
Effective leadership is based upon
the situation they are in.

The contingency theory emphasizes different situational variables to determine the style of leadership best suited for the situation. These theories of leadership state that effective leadership comprises all three factors, i.e., traits, behavior, and situation.
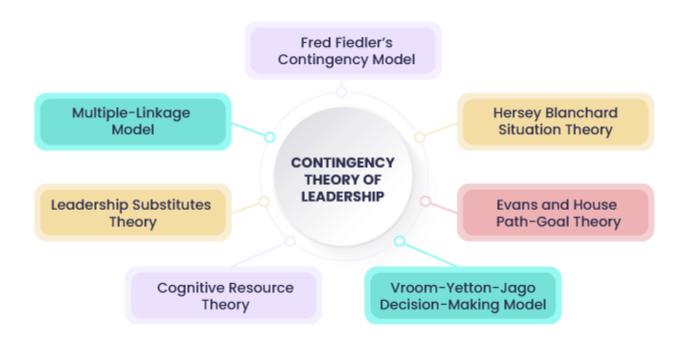
BEHAVIOR

TRAITS

SITUATION

This leadership theory evolved in the 1960s and was founded on the principle that no one leadership style applies to all situations.

Good leaders not only have the right qualities, but they're also able to evaluate the needs of their followers and the situation at hand. To support this theory, various Contingency leadership models were developed. Few such models are -

- Fred Fiedler's Contingency Model or LPC Contingency Model
- Situational Theory
- Path-Goal Theory
- Leadership Substitutes Theory
- Multiple-Linkage Model
- Cognitive Resources Theory
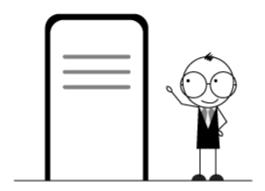- Normative Decision Theory

5. Contemporary leadership theory

Contemporary theory is a group of modern literary approaches to leadership. Contemporary leaders use personal influence to develop and inspire people to achieve organizational goals.

This theory considers that leadership skills are present in every individual. Hence, this theory believes that leadership can be developed.

Leadership is development. It considers rapid change, technological innovations, and increased globalisation.

This theory of leadership evolved in the 1990s and is considered the New Era of leadership theories. Today's researchers believe that one dimension of leadership isn't enough. It cannot cover the complexity that arises in an organization.
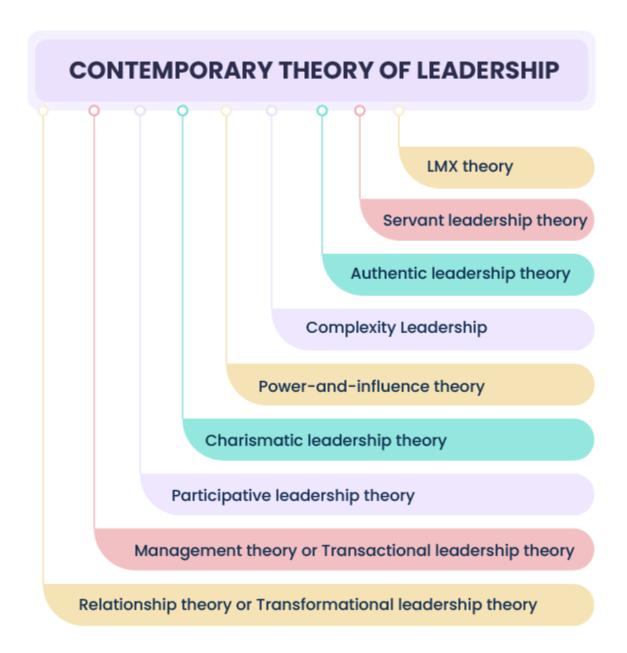
Earlier approaches were traditional and based on leader-follower influences and interactions. However, contemporary theory focuses on more complex dynamics of interactions and situations.

This theory addresses various contemporary leadership theory approach such as -

CONTEMPORARY THEORY OF LEADERSHIP

- LMX theory
- Servant leadership theory
- Authentic leadership theory
- Complexity Leadership
- Power-and-influence theory
- Charismatic leadership theory
- Participative leadership theory
- Management theory or Transactional leadership theory
- Relationship theory or Transformational leadership theory

Reference: https://blog.vantagecircle.com/leadership-theories/