

Leaders tend to live with this more intense consciousness of the drama inherent in the human condition, of the significance of human choices, of the exciting possibilities challenging human imagination. This kind of dramatic consciousness illumines and suffuses his technical performance of his management or administrative tasks. He dwells on the significance of the task, appreciates the inherent drama in the accomplishment of the task, and communicates an appreciation and sense of excitement about the task to the group.

Supervisory leadership behavior in education, then, involves not only the supervisor's appreciation of the considerable human resources of subordinates, but it also involves the supervisor's own beliefs about and vision of the dramatic possibilities inherent in all educational activity. This vision or set of beliefs provides the substance of supervisory leadership. The forms of supervisory leadership will vary frequently depending on the situation, but the substance or content of that leadership behavior will steadily flow out of this vision.²³

What Trainers Should Do

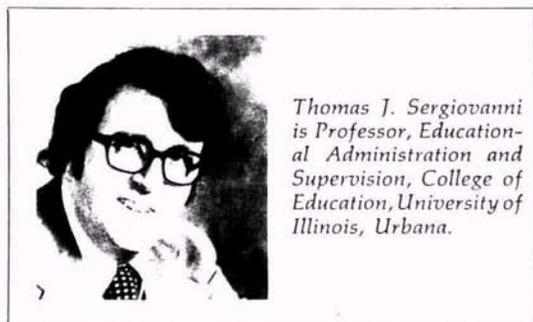
That leadership effectiveness models, materials, and workshops can be helpful I do not deny. But trainers need to be more "up front" with consumers. They need to help us understand that they are sharing leadership theories, not leadership facts. They need to exert a greater effort in capturing more fully the complexities of leadership effectiveness, and they must resist providing us with easy solutions and elixirs that can lead us astray. They need to be more accepting of the

very real likelihood that many of us will be able to adjust our leadership styles only modestly. Finally, they need to help us better link the valuable instrumental or managerial aspects of leadership they bring us with the more substantive aspects of leadership we refer to in our association community as educational leadership. We need a shift of emphasis from leadership training to leadership exploration. Perhaps better days are ahead.

By October, 1955, The Great Train Robbery was no longer of interest to anyone in England. It had come full circle, from a topic of universal and endless fascination to a confused and embarrassing incident that nearly everyone wished very much to forget.²⁴

²³ Thomas J. Sergiovanni and Robert J. Starratt. *Supervision: Human Perspectives*. Second edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979. p. 128-29.

²⁴ Crichton, *op. cit.*, p. 233.



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Responses to Sergiovanni

Fred E. Fiedler

I would like to comment on two issues that are raised by Sergiovanni's paper: (a) The evidence on whether or not leaders are able to "choose" or modify their basic leadership style at will; and (b) the feasibility of a leadership training program that does not depend on the leader's voluntary choice of a leadership style.

Can individuals change their leadership style? Leadership style, as used in the literature, is frequently defined by two major leader behaviors—consideration and structuring. These behaviors, identified by the Ohio State University group (Stogdill, 1974) are measured by asking subordinates to rate leader behaviors on such

Likert-type items as "He is concerned with the opinions and feelings of group members," and "He lets everyone know what is expected of them." While some people tend to be more democratic and considerate or directive and structuring in their approach than others, to what extent can these behaviors be changed at will as required by many leadership training programs?

There is little evidence that this can be done. One reason is that individuals do not see themselves "accurately" (that is, as others see them). Thus it is difficult to change one's leadership behaviors at will.

To illustrate, Gochman (1975) obtained self-descriptions of considerate and structuring behaviors from 40 leaders of small military units. She then asked their subordinates (average group size 5.1 members) to describe the leaders' behaviors on an identical questionnaire. Although the leaders and subordinates were in close daily contact, the correlation between leader and member described consideration scores was only .23, and that for structuring was only .18, neither significant.

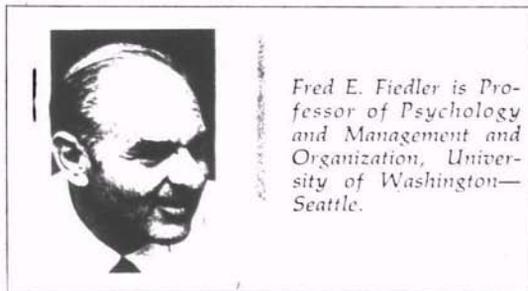
Mitchell (1970) conducted a study of 35 three-man groups that performed a construction task. He obtained self-ratings from the leaders and descriptions of the leaders by two subordinates as well as by two observers, again using identical consideration and structuring scales. A multitrait, multimethod analysis revealed that the agreement between members and observers was higher than between members and leader or between observers and leader. Correlation coefficients of .00 were obtained between leader self-descriptions and member scores for both consideration and structuring behaviors. Correlations between the leader and observer were .02 for consideration and -.01 for structuring.

These studies indicate that leaders are not even aware of the way members see their behaviors. It seems highly unlikely, therefore, that these leaders can choose to change their behavior in a specific way that will be apparent to the members of the group.

Can we train leaders to perform better without changing their leadership style? We obviously cannot change leadership performance without some changes in leadership behavior. The critical point is what behaviors leaders can change, and

how these changes can be implemented to improve leadership performance.

Research on the contingency model (Fiedler, 1978; Chemers, 1969; Sample and Wilson, 1965; Larson and Rowland, 1973) has shown that consideration as well as structuring behaviors change differently for individuals who are task-motivated and for those who are relationship-motivated. These behaviors change not so much in response to the leader's wish to behave differently, but



rather in response to the leader's control over the situation. The goal of training can therefore be redefined as teaching leaders to modify their situations rather than their leadership style to bring about improved organizational performance.

The Contingency Model has provided the basis for the development of a new leadership training program called *Leader Match* (Fiedler, Chemers, and Mahar, 1976), which uses this approach. This self-teaching guide shows leaders how to identify their leadership style (that is, whether they are relationship-motivated or task-motivated). Next leaders are taught how to diagnose the relevant aspects of their leadership situation: (a) leader-member relations—the degree to which the group accepts and supports the leader; (b) task structure—the degree to which the task is clearly spelled out in detail; and (c) position power—the degree to which the leader has the legitimate right to reward and punish. Also included are the effects of the leader's previous training and experience. Situations are thus classified in terms of high, moderate, or low control. Leaders are then shown what types of situations are most suitable for their particular leadership style. Task-motivated leaders perform best in situations that provide a high or low degree of control while relationship-motivated leaders perform best in moderate control situations.

The final section of the manual teaches leaders how to modify each of the three situational variables to obtain a better match between their leadership style and their work environment. Such modifications are easily made by, for instance, asking the superior for more or less detailed instructions, spending more or less time with subordinates, or organizing the task to create more structure.

Twelve validation studies have now been conducted. Each of these studies randomly assigned leaders to training and control conditions, and in each study, the leader's performance was evaluated two to six months later by supervisory ratings. Alternative training programs and blind supervisory ratings were obtained in several of the studies, assuring that the results could not be due to Hawthorn effects or rater biases. In each study, the *Leader Match* trained individuals were rated as performing significantly better than were those in the control condition.

In summary, research by Mitchell and Gochman thus supports Sergiovanni's argument that it is difficult to change leadership styles. Since (a) leaders and group members do not perceive the leader's behavior in the same way; (b) presumably, therefore, the leader will not be aware of how he/she appears to the group's members; hence, (c) he/she will find it difficult if not impossible to modify his/her considerate and structuring behaviors in the way in which these behaviors should be perceived by group members. The success of the *Leader Match* program, on the other hand, suggests that it is relatively easy to teach leaders how to change the situation to fit their

particular leadership approach, and that this method is effective in improving leadership performance.

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Gaylord C. Lasher



Some time ago, while planning a leadership development program for members of the elementary administration in our school district, I found much direction in Thomas Sergiovanni's positive contributions to the literature. It is, therefore, with a little amusement and considerable respect that I respond to his pessimistic view of leadership training programs.

My experience inclines me to agree with Sergiovanni's claims about the inherent weak-

nesses in most leadership development programs. However, there is evidence that leadership skills can be taught, assuming prior conditions exist. I believe it depends in part on the relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate. One of the most important points among many made by Sergiovanni is the difference between bureaucratic management and educational leadership. The difference is well-stated in the quotation from Robert J. Starratt, who calls for vision and a sense of purpose in order for genuine leadership to exist.

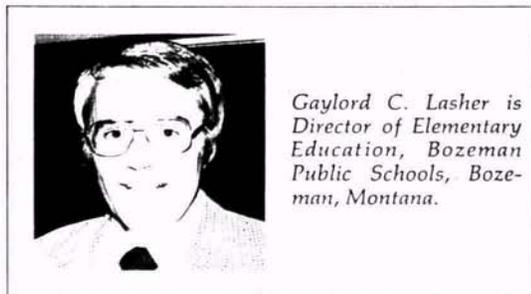
Although it is not an original thought, I would extend Starratt's contention a bit further to suggest that development of leadership skills is highly dependent upon an environment in which the leader's *leader* plays a significant role. In a recent article, Abraham Zaleznik¹ of the Harvard Business School suggests that a bureaucratic society, which breeds bureaucratic managers, may stifle leaders who need mentors and emotional interchange to develop.

We have had considerable growth in educational leadership among administrators in our district. However, we don't assume it has been solely the result of the formal leadership training programs we have scheduled. We believe it is important to establish an interdependent relationship between supervisor and subordinate, and to challenge that relationship by taking risks with each other. As Zaleznik says, "Risks do not always pay off, but the willingness to take them appears crucial in developing leaders."²

One way to improve leadership training in school systems is to require the trainer to design a program based on an analysis of the local school environment, with special attention to the existing administrative relationships within the system. If the trainer takes the time to understand the local administrative climate, is aware of the limitations of leadership training, and is honest with the local school district throughout the planning and training process, leadership training has a reasonably good chance of producing positive results. Those who would hire leadership trainers or attend training workshops must bear the bulk of the responsibility for knowing their own needs and finding good trainers, for training robberies, unlike train robberies, can easily be the fault of the victim.

¹ Abraham Zaleznik. "Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?" *Harvard Business Review*, May-June 1977, p. 67.

² *Ibid.*, p. 76.



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Gordon L. Lippitt



The article by Sergiovanni is stimulating and true. Leadership training, however, did not rob us, it just stayed on one track and did not realize the complexities of leadership in today's society.

Our leadership theories have been short-range and atomistic, focusing on leader-group relations and neglecting the leader-group-system relationship. In Stogdill's (1974) massive review, no section deals with the systems concept. Sergiovanni is joining the chorus of practitioners and scientists who are frustrated at the many ways of looking at leadership. Some caustic critics (Perrow, 1972; Minere, 1975) even suggest that the term "leadership" is no longer useful.

It seems to me we have expected too much of the leader. We teach leadership as an independent variable and ignore the reality of organizational life (McCall and Lombardo, 1978). Many

organizational variables are outside of the leaders' control—such as tax cuts, public expectations, inflation, political realities, and cultural changes.

In my concept of six stages of organization maturity (Lippitt, 1969), it was my contention that *different* leaders are needed at different stages of organization life.

I have felt that the numerous attempts to classify leaders as one type or another is neither accurate nor helpful. Whether one is a "wolf," "fox," "craftsman," "bureaucrat," or "gamesman" (Maccoby, 1977) is descriptive, but a too narrow way to define leadership complexity.

In my frame of reference, there are four methods that an educational leader may use for directing the activities of people:

1. *Force*—the leader uses his/her control of means to *force* the choice of certain activities that he/she desires as goals.

2. *Paternalism*—the leader provides means, and hopes for acceptance of his/her leadership out of loyalty and gratitude.

3. *Bargain*—the leader may arrive at a *bargain*, a more or less voluntary choice, made by each party to furnish certain means in return for certain means.

4. *Mutual means*—the leader creates the situation in which certain activities of his/hers and of the group, if performed together, will serve as *mutual means*, means for each to satisfy his/her own (perhaps different) needs.

The leader, however, is *not* free to choose among these methods. To a greater or lesser extent, the method is prescribed by the nature and policy of the organization. The initial concept of leadership seems to have been that of force. Paternalism enjoyed popularity for many years among some managers. The rise of unions created the necessity for bargaining.

The fourth method is not too impossible a step, although it requires skill, understanding, and imagination of a very high order. When management successfully creates the necessary conditions, the organization and its objective become a means not only to school employees but to the purposes of education. Sergiovanni critiques the effectiveness of the training of leaders. His points are well stated. Atomistic skill development is not enough when schools are such complex systems.

J. R. Gibb (1974) sums up the need for an integrated systems view in a statement about T-group and encounter-group training that is echoed in other reviews of general management and human relations training:

(They) are ineffective unless they are integrated into long-range efforts that include such elements as a total organizational focus, system-wide data collection, provision for feedback and information flow, organization-focused consultation over an extended time and data-supported theory (p. 160).

Training is required in many areas of skill development such as communication, conflict resolution, financial management, problem solv-



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ing, systems concepts, and so on, that are needed in effective educational leadership. However, I feel that leadership is a *performing art*, not a science. Professional standards, skills, and values are required. To lead complex school systems we need to broaden our ways of examining leadership beyond academic research and educational writings. My favorite sources of data about leaders are the *New Yorker*, *Business Week*, *Wall Street Journal*, biographies, historical reports on TVA, World War II, Apollo II moon flights, and other sources that can broaden our concepts, practices, and values about educational leadership.

A poem from Chuang-Tsu (fourth century B.C.) perhaps says it best:

How shall I talk of the sea to the frog,
if he has never left his pond?
How shall I talk of the frost to the bird of
the summer land,
if it has never left the land of its birth?
How shall I talk of life with the sage,
if he is the prisoner of his doctrine?

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Gordon Cawelti



Although I'd scarcely describe a single journal article and one videotape as "mania," it is fair to say we're giving added attention to the more broadly defined concept of leader behavior here at ASCD. This clearly reflects the needs of our many new members, and provides an added dimension of understanding to supervision.

Sergiovanni argues that the models being taught (presumably referring to situational leadership) are too simple and the claims of trainers unrealistic. The art of leadership is so complex that it seems to me we need to be knowledgeable about several models or ways of conceptualizing leader behavior—situational leadership is *one* that is useful. I know of no "trainers," although I'm sure there are some, who claim that their "model" offers a complete explanation of leadership.

It is true that maturity level is an insufficient determinant of leadership style. But it is an important factor which was not developed in the well known Ohio State studies nor is it used in Blake and Mouton's managerial grid. We will never have a sufficient theoretical base for research or for application unless we use selected variables which present the "if-then" requirement of theory. It may well be that maturity level is less useful in developing a leadership relationship between teachers and principals than between an associate superintendent for instruction and a

group of supervisors. The distinction between administrative and consultative supervision is an important one which is delineated by A. W. Sturges and one of ASCD's committees working on the supervisory role this year.

In addition to Sergiovanni's reservations, other variables must be recognized as important limitations to the situational leadership model:

- Weber's principles of bureaucracy—a very enduring form of organization;
- The different leadership styles appropriate for organizations in emerging or third world nations vs. more advanced civilizations;
- Reddin's analysis of the importance of the technology of the work itself as a determinant of style;
- The "personal power" vs. "position power" issue articulated by Etzioni;
- The tremendous difference in the value bases implicit in curriculum development as classified by Eisner and Vallance, (for example, self-actualizing curriculumists vs. technologists).

For me, a far more difficult aspect of leadership training is the matter of appropriate relationship behavior. People can be trained to improve task behaviors (goal setting, MBO, structuring work, and so on) more easily than to learn how to use "praise," "strokes," and socioemotional sup-



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port (relationship behavior) effectively. How many leaders seriously seek ways of meeting the social and esteem needs of their subordinates? What are the implications for interpersonal relationships of Yale psychologist Daniel Levinson's important adult stages of development theory?

I believe leadership training helps one understand our behavior better regardless of whether one uses the work of Fiedler, Reddin, Likert, or Blake and Mouton. We need to do more, though,

James Huges

The ASCD videotape, "Selecting Appropriate Leadership Styles for Instructional Improvement," has been helpful to me personally and has served as a valuable staff development tool in assisting other administrators to understand, develop, and apply appropriate leadership styles. For the practicing administrator, it can be a vehicle for linking theory and action.

The idea of situational leadership—fitting leadership style to the maturity level of a group of followers—is particularly helpful. Maturity level varies a great deal within a group and with the task involved. A successful leader uses a style appropriate to the general maturity level of the group, but recognizes and responds to individual differences.

This approach is particularly valuable and practical in dealing with large groups who must work together to ensure the success of a given task. Ways the situational leadership model can be used include: (1) analyzing what needs to be done prior to launching a major project; (2) assessing progress during the project and adjusting strategies appropriately; and (3) at the completion of the project, evaluating the effects a par-

in enriching the quality of work life for teachers and others in education so that their motivation to excel is increased. Sergiovanni himself has shown a keen sensitivity to this by arguing for a more authentic kind of participation for teachers in school policy and operation.*

* See: Thomas J. Sergiovanni, editor. *Professional Supervision For Professional Teachers*. Washington, D.C.: ASCD, 1975.

ticular leadership behavior may have had on the outcome of the project.

I have used some of the follow-up activities suggested in the discussion guide that accompanies the videotape, both in analyzing my own leadership style and as an inservice tool in working with the development of other administrators.

Leadership style is obviously personal and individualized. However, leaders can improve their understanding of leadership by analyzing leader behavior and asking for feedback from others about their own style. With greater understanding, they will find it more feasible and more natural to modify their leadership style to fit the situation.



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Karolyn J. Snyder

Although Sergiovanni says he intends to examine the concept of leadership and the effectiveness of leadership training, he concentrates on the limitations of the maturity model and warns that it is not *the* answer to successful leadership. The warning is valid, although one wonders who all the "unrealistic" trainers are whose programs are

"conceptually flawed" and "mechanistic," and which neglect substantive questions of "value, mission, and worth." If there are many, let us hope they heed the Sergiovanni message.

It would be a pity, however, if training programs were to focus only on substantive matters, depriving trainees of useful conceptual and pro-



Many school administrators neither see themselves as charismatic giants, nor are they sure of their capability to foster educational reform. Most are happy to learn new ways to sift and sort the essential from the trivial and to fulfill their responsibilities more effectively. Until recently it was not expected that every school leader should have an educational vision. Now school leaders are expected not only to have a vision, but also to plan ways to realize that vision. Therefore, training programs must provide for both substance and process.

We are indebted to the educators who have advanced the contingency concept and researched the structure/consideration dualism in leadership, for they have opened the dark cavern of school improvement, enabling school leaders to see some light. But Sergiovanni is right in saying that available theories are too simplistic. While administrators continue to receive their long overdue leadership and management training, researchers must keep on searching for other variables affecting leadership. By the year 2000, educational leaders may be out of the cavern altogether.

cedural guidelines. The Hersey-Blanchard maturity model has finally given school administrators a candle of light to enable them to continue groping through the overwhelmingly uncertain paths that lead to so-called "school improvement." The specific concepts of "structure" and "support" offer important guideposts to school leaders, with the maturity variable being at least an indicator of how much of which to offer in a given situation.

In my experience as a trainer of school administrators, I am constantly amazed at how the concepts of "contingency," "situational," and "maturity" ignite imaginations, provoke exploration of gnawing problems as well as new questions, and generate creative solutions to perpetual dilemmas. People in training are prompted to:

1. Identify typical staff behaviors and appropriate leader responses for each of the four maturity quadrants;
2. Analyze staff members and assign each to one of the four maturity quadrants;
3. Identify specific motivational and supervisory strategies for dealing with staff members in each quadrant;
4. Identify potential staff leaders through maturity analysis. If administrators are prompted to pursue such tasks, it seems they will be more likely to accomplish their missions.



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