
Consideration and Initiating Structure

Consideration and Initiating Structure are two dimensions of leader behavior identified as a result of the Ohio State Leadership Studies. According to the findings of these studies, leaders exhibit two types of behaviors, people-oriented (consideration) and task oriented (initiating structure), to facilitate goal accomplishment.

Ohio State Leadership Studies

Prior to 1945 most studies of leadership sought to identify the individual traits of effective leaders. Trait theories of leadership were the first to attempt a systematic approach of studying leadership. However these studies yielded disappointing results when no set of traits were found that explained effective leadership. In 1945, a group of researchers at the Ohio State University sought to identify the observable behaviors of leaders instead of identifying personality traits.

To accomplish this they generated a list of 1790 statements. This was narrowed down to 150 statements designed to measure nine different dimensions of leader behavior. These statements were used to develop the Leaders Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The surveys would be given to members of a group and asked to respond to a series of statements about the leader of their group. Respondents of the LBDQ would rate leaders on how frequently they engaged in a certain behavior. The results showed two factors accounted for most of the variance. These two factors were labeled Consideration and Initiating Structure.

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Consideration

Consideration is the extent to which a leader exhibits concern for the welfare of the members of the group. This factor is oriented towards interpersonal relationships, mutual trust and friendship. This leadership style is people-oriented. Some of the statements used to measure this factor in the LBDQ are:

- being friendly and approachable
- treating all group members as his/her equal
- looking out for the personal welfare of group members
- making him/herself accessible to group members

Initiating structure

Initiating Structure is the extent to which a leader defines leader and group member roles, initiates actions, organizes group activities and defines how tasks are to be accomplished by the group. This leadership style is task-oriented. Some of the statements used to measure this factor in the LBDQ are:

- letting group members know what is expected of them
 - maintaining definite standards of performance
 - scheduling the work to be done
 - asking that group members follow standard rules and regulations
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References

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- Tracy, L. (1987). "Consideration and Initiating Structure: Are They Basic Dimensions of Leader Behavior?" *Social Behavior and Personality*. 15(1), 21-33.

External links

- 1957 Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire ^[2]

References

[1] <http://www.academicleadership.org/volume4/issue1/articles/22/index.html>

[2] <http://fisher.osu.edu/supplements/10/2862/1957%20LBDQ.pdf>

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