

## Situational Approach Analysis Paper

From reading the description of Situational Leadership (Encyclopedia of Management) provided in this module, to then watching the 27 minute documentary on the *Endurance* expedition and *These Men Should Have Died: How did they Survive* for a total of 19 minutes, to thirdly reading Blair Browning's *Leadership in Desperate Times* I was able to view the voyage of the *Endurance* and Ernest Shackleton's leadership through the lens of the Situational Approach to leadership. The content of my essay will be centered around a few core prompts, and they will be supported individually by supported evidence derived from the given articles focused on situational approach in our module.

The first situational approach prompt question demands answers for a common circumstance in a leaders' role on different occasions. "Does a leader's motivation for adapting his or her leadership style have an effect on followers? In other words, would a leader with a high concern for tasks differ from a leader with a high concern for relationships?"

My personal take on this question is derived and supported by the article, *Leadership in Desperate Times: An Analysis of Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage through the Lens of Leadership Theory*, written by Blair W. Browning. In this article Browning states, "Shackleton frequently led his men by example, resolved interpersonal conflicts among the crew, and tackled the insurmountable task of survival-making the style approach a natural fit with this historic account." This statement here is a supporting factor in my answer to the prompt that I do indeed believe that a leader's motivation for adapting his or her leadership style has not only an effect on followers, but has a very contagious and positive effect on them. Shackleton's situational

approach to adapt to the needs of his followers at the specific time of what each individual situation was a successful tactic to the extension of survival on the voyage taking place.

In addition to the first prompt presented, another prompt provided questions “If a leader (for example, Shackleton) matches his or her style to the overall development level of the group he or she is leading, how might this affect the performance and motivation of the workers who are different from the mean (more or less committed, more or less competent)? The answers to this prompt are retrieved from my own personal perception of the given question. Through research and provided examples in this module I am able to make this connection to Shackleton’s circumstantial journey.

Shackleton was faced with various hard and life-threatening situations while on his voyage, and though he was surrounded by many accredible peers, he was one to be considered an outlier. His motivation to make critical decisions, and use his prior expertise intertwined with his human skills, to unite his followers left no room for those who may have been more or less committed, or more or less competent.

The following prompt to answer and support in great detail is retrieved from the article, *Situational Theory of Leadership*. This given prompt asks me to, “*Explain the two steps leaders must fulfill to be effective. Apply these steps to the leadership of Ernest Shackleton.*” After researching and reading the article focused on situational theory I was able to obtain two steps that are essential to the fulfillment of an effective leader. According to the article, “To be effective as situational leaders, managers need to (1) assess the competence and the confidence of their subordinate in relation to a specific task; (2) use each of the four leadership styles, which may entail overcoming the manager’s own preferences for one or two of the styles.” This in summary means that first as a leader you must get to know each of your follower’s, and then

merely use your technical and human skills to assess them in relation to their specific task or tasks at hand. Then follow up by using a combination of all your leadership styles, which are directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, to then better your situational approach.

The final prompt asks me to give my personal analysis of Shackleton's leadership and my personal opinion of if I believe I could have survived this dangerous voyage or not. Overall, this voyage is very life-threatening and I believe all the characters in this story are very strong individuals to even participate in this critical situation. I do understand, personally, that sometimes when you have a common goal, and a motivational leader with technical and human skills to lead you to your goal, you are able to accomplish things bigger than yourself.

I know this because I am a collegiate athlete. Being a collegiate athlete nearly forces you to take the everyday steps, or shall I say journey, with your peers to accomplish common goals. On my collegiate team I was awarded the experience of being under amazing leaders who have motivated me to dream, and have faith to accomplish goals of my own personally and collectively with my peers. With that being said, I believe with my personal background and my drive to accomplish goals for a bigger picture, I would have survived this voyage by any means necessary. I am basing that solely off of my participation in my collegiate sport, as I know this voyage was facing very different situations than a couple sprints, and long bus rides.

All in all, From reading the description of Situational Leadership (Encyclopedia of Management) provided in this module, to then watching the 27 minute documentary on the *Endurance* expedition and *These Men Should Have Died: How did they Survive* for a total of 19 minutes, to thirdly reading Blair Browning's *Leadership in Desperate Times* I was able to view the voyage of the *Endurance* and Ernest Shackleton's leadership through the lens of the Situational Approach to leadership and answer all of the prompts required. I successfully

centered the content of my essay around a few core prompts, and supported them individually by evidence derived from the given articles focused on situational approach in our module.