

Situational Leadership During Crisis Situations

Situational leadership in crises is an important field of knowledge as it helps to address the unwanted or traumatic events and reduce their negative impact on the organization and all processes within it. For instance, the recent COVID-19 pandemic is an illustration of a situational crisis that required effective management. The pandemic and its effects showed that problems of this kind are always associated with specific features and tactics. First, there is the urgency and the need for immediate solutions to ensure that the problem will not become more complex in the future (Su, 2024). Second, it can lead to the emergence of global insecurities threatening the lives of many individuals in different regions (Newman, 2022). This implies that the scope of the challenge is significant, while the actions should be taken immediately to avoid the escalation of the problems. Also, crises are characterized by uncertainty since in many situations, leaders do not have experience in dealing with similar problems. Finally, there is a strong emotional element because of the higher responsibility and the need to select the most effective approach to manage the problem within a short time.

Situational leadership can help leaders to be prepared for problems and act as champions in these unfavorable settings. The leader can successfully deal with a crisis primarily by acquainting themselves with the existing situational leadership models, such as the Skill-Will matrix and the path-goal theory (Gruenewald & Mueller, 2025). These models provide a framework for acting in complex situations and allow for adjusting leadership styles to the current crisis through teaching them how to be adaptable, flexible, and proactive. Next, it is vital to learn and master effective styles of interacting with the employees, such as coaching, supporting, and delegating (Woodard & Hyatt, 2024). The adherence to the situational leadership style helps to boost employee morale and cultivate the ability to react flexibly to the presenting problems. Additionally, since crises are associated with emotional

strain, emotional intelligence and regulation are two critical factors that can help leaders to be more effective in challenging situations. Paying attention to these elements will help the leader to develop expertise in addressing situational challenges.

References

- Gruenewald, H., & Mueller, M. (2025). *Reskilling and upskilling in a globalized economy: Essential strategies for workforce transformation*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Newman, E. (2022). Covid-19: A human security analysis. *Global Society*, 36(4), 431-454.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13600826.2021.2010034>
- Su, M. (2024). Adaptive leadership in times of crisis: Exploring situational responses and contingent factors at sub-national levels. *Journal of General Management*, 03063070241250092. <https://doi.org/10.1177/03063070241250092>
- Woodard, M., & Hyatt, K. (2024). The relationship between coaching behaviors by situational leaders and new employee engagement. *Strategy & Leadership*, 52(2), 6-16. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SL-01-2024-0003>