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THE BACKCOUNTRY
CLASSROOM
2ND EDITION

LESSONS, TOOLS, AND ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING OUTDOOR LEADERS

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The Backcountry Classroom:

Lessons, Tools, and Activities for
Teaching Outdoor Leaders

Second Edition

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Leadership

An older student struggling to balance the challenge of getting the task done (task behavior) and keeping people happy (relationship behavior) once said, "You know, this leadership is complex stuff. When I was foreman of a construction crew and someone wasn't getting the job done, I'd just hit them alongside of the head with a two by four. I see now that leadership is a lot more complex than that." We believe that leadership is indeed complex stuff, but that it is a skill that can be learned, developed, and nurtured. The research bears this out. The dispositions of leadership are essential. Good leaders must be disposed to value the characteristics of leadership listed in this chapter. We believe that these dispositions must be modeled if learners are to value them and incorporate them into their actions. The components of leadership have to be recognized, practiced, and observed. Feedback needs to be largely self-reflective, but feedback from all the people involved is essential as well. This chapter provides a foundation of knowledge about leadership and some tools and ideas for learning and developing leadership skills.

I. Outcomes

A. Outdoor leaders provide evidence of their *knowledge* and *understanding* by:

1. Describing and comparing definitions of leadership
2. Describing and comparing leadership styles
3. Describing and critiquing leadership traits
4. Explaining the Situational Leadership model
5. Describing their own strengths and limitations as a leader
6. Describing the role of followership
7. Describing communication and explaining the role it plays in leadership
8. Describing the basic decision-making process

9. Describing decision-making styles and explaining the role they play in leadership
10. Explaining the value of having a designated leader
11. Explaining how different leadership situations require different leadership styles

B. Outdoor leaders provide evidence of their *skill* by:

1. Exercising good judgment
2. Making and implementing good decisions
3. Demonstrating confidence and trust in group members
4. Maintaining credibility
5. Providing a safe forum for group members to express themselves
6. Identifying outcomes and prioritizing tasks
7. Distinguishing between fact, opinion, and assumption
8. Organizing information, time, space, materials, people, and tasks effectively
9. Delegating tasks efficiently and equitably
10. Setting and meeting deadlines
11. Combining and blending theory and experience to create new knowledge, action, or values (synthesis)
12. Recognizing and identifying leadership and decision-making styles in themselves and others
13. Communicating effectively
14. Balancing organizational tasks with individual needs and interpersonal relations
15. Proactively confronting and dealing with potential conflict, and managing conflict effectively when it occurs
16. Implementing various leadership styles and adapting them to various situations

C. Outdoor leaders provide evidence of their *dispositions* by:

1. Regularly self-assessing
2. Seeking alternative, original, and imaginative ideas
3. Setting and modeling high standards
4. Putting the group's needs above one's own interests
5. Being flexible
6. Challenging conventional thinking
7. Confronting difficult issues
8. Seeing humor and fun as part of learning

9. Implementing low-impact camping practices
10. Celebrating diversity
11. Modeling the behaviors they want in their followers
12. Being trustworthy individuals with integrity and ethical character
13. Having and sharing a vision
14. Valuing people
15. Taking appropriate risks
16. Empowering others

II. Content

Part 1. What Is Leadership, and What Does It Take to Be a Leader?

A. Defining *leadership*

1. "Leadership is a process which assists an individual or a group to identify goals and objectives and to achieve them. The leadership process is further defined by the need for some specific action, decision, or initiative by one or more persons acting in the leadership role. Outdoor Leadership means that the setting and program focus are directly related to the natural or cultural environment" (Buell 1983, p. 6).
2. "Any action that focuses resources toward a beneficial end" (Rosenbach and Taylor 1984, p. xv).
3. " . . . the ability to plan and conduct safe, enjoyable expeditions while conserving the environment" (Petzoldt 1984, p. 42).

Each of the cornerstones of leadership, described in the following section, requires leaders to demonstrate competency by providing evidence of their knowledge, skills, and dispositions. While the importance of knowledge and skills is obvious, dispositions are probably of greater importance. They are an indication of what an individual values, values which are then reflected in an individual's utilization of their abilities. It is the recognition that learning requires leaders to demonstrate competence in each of these three areas that has inspired us to create the knowledge, skill, and disposition outcomes used at the beginning of each chapter in this edition of the book.

B. The cornerstones of leadership

1. Definition and characteristics

   a) The cornerstones of leadership—critical thinking, personality, knowledge, and psychomotor skills—are what we have found to be the critical components that determine and influence an individual's ability to lead.

   b) These cornerstones do not stand alone. They are connected by and work in harmony with leadership qualities and traits that together form a solid and balanced foundation for further leadership development.

   c) As with all characteristics of leadership, no single person has perfected all these characteristics. The challenge is to understand our strengths and weaknesses, work on improving areas of weakness, and surround ourselves with people whose strengths complement our weaknesses.

   d) Weakness in one area does not necessarily mean our leadership is unsound. Just as a coach recognizes strengths and weaknesses and discovers how to win by maximizing one and minimizing the other, so too must leaders acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses.

2. The four cornerstones

   a) Critical thinking: Good outdoor leaders are good critical thinkers.

      (1) When a group of international experts was asked to reach consensus on the meaning of critical thinking, the following definition evolved: Critical thinking is understood to be "purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the . . . considerations upon which that judgment is based" (Facione 2004). The ideal critical thinker is:

         (a) Habitually inquisitive
         (b) Well informed
         (c) Trustful of reason
         (d) Open minded
         (e) Flexible
         (f) Fair minded in evaluation
         (g) Honest in facing personal biases
         (h) Prudent in making judgments
         (i) Willing to reconsider
         (j) Clear about issues
         (k) Orderly in complex matters
         (l) Diligent in seeking relevant information
         (m) Focused in inquiry
         (n) Persistent in seeking results which are as precise as circumstances permit

(2) Key attributes (i.e., indicators that will tell you that critical thinking is taking place) (Mobilia 1999). Critical thinkers:

    (a) Analyze information and events objectively and develop verification procedures

    (b) Discern cause and effect

    (c) Distinguish fact from opinion

    (d) Synthesize information and ideas

    (e) Seek to be well informed

    (f) Seek reasons

    (g) Judge the credibility of a source, use credible sources, and accurately credit resources

    (h) Are open minded

    (i) Ask questions for clarification

    (j) Deduce and induce

    (k) Make and evaluate value judgments

    (l) Identify assumptions

b) Personality: Good outdoor leaders consistently display certain desirable personality traits.

    (1) Personality can be defined as the distinctive emotional, behavioral, and temperamental traits that make up an individual. (See "personal qualities," below, for examples.)

    (2) These qualities and traits are considered part of an individual's personality. While they can be developed and modified, they are a part of the individual's makeup regardless of whether or not the person is in a leadership position.

    (3) A dedicated leader recognizes his or her personality strengths and weaknesses and works on developing the positive personal qualities necessary to be an effective leader. (For example, an individual has little patience but, realizing this, works on improving that characteristic in order to be a more effective leader.)

c) Knowledge: Good outdoor leaders have a broad base of knowledge, both theoretical and experiential.

    (1) Theoretical knowledge:

        (a) Knowledge that is learned by reading, observation, and listening.

        (b) One of the limitations of theoretical knowledge is that, without experience, it provides too small a base for decision making, thus forcing the leader to be extremely conservative if objectives of safety and environmental protection are to be met.

(2) Experiential knowledge:
   (a) Knowledge that is gained/accumulated through doing.
   (b) If used appropriately, this is an excellent means of rein-
       forcing knowledge and refining the decision-making
       process.
   (c) This is limited by the fact that, unless experience is
       processed, it is worthless. In other words, we don't learn
       from our mistakes unless we make a conscious effort to
       do so.
d) Psychomotor skills: Good outdoor leaders have the physical abilities
   necessary to conduct the specific outdoor activities of the trip.
   (1) Psychomotor skills encompass the physical ability to do things,
       often among the most enjoyable parts of outdoor ventures.
   (2) Although not necessarily the most critical component of outdoor
       leadership, psychomotor skills are important to:
       (a) Provide for the safety of the group
       (b) Pass on knowledge
       (c) Provide a positive role model

C. Leadership qualities and traits

1. There is largely unanimity of opinion about the inclusion of many ideal
   qualities and traits.
2. We have broken these traits down into the following: essential leadership
   qualities, leadership traits, and personal qualities.
   a) Essential leadership qualities: These qualities are critical to effective
      leadership. (See fig. 29.1.)
      (1) Quality decision-making ability
          (a) Probably the most critical factor in leadership is the abil-
              ity to make quality decisions and facilitate the decision-
              making process. (See chapter 10, Decision Making, for a
              detailed discussion of the decision-making process.)
          (b) Leaders with good decision-making abilities and knowl-
              edge of their own limitations will be more likely to lead
              safe, enjoyable adventures.
      (2) Knowledge of one's strengths and limitations, sometimes defined
          as metacognition (thinking about thinking)
          (a) This ability is sometimes called self-regulation because it
              requires that leaders constantly self-assess themselves in
              order to evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses.
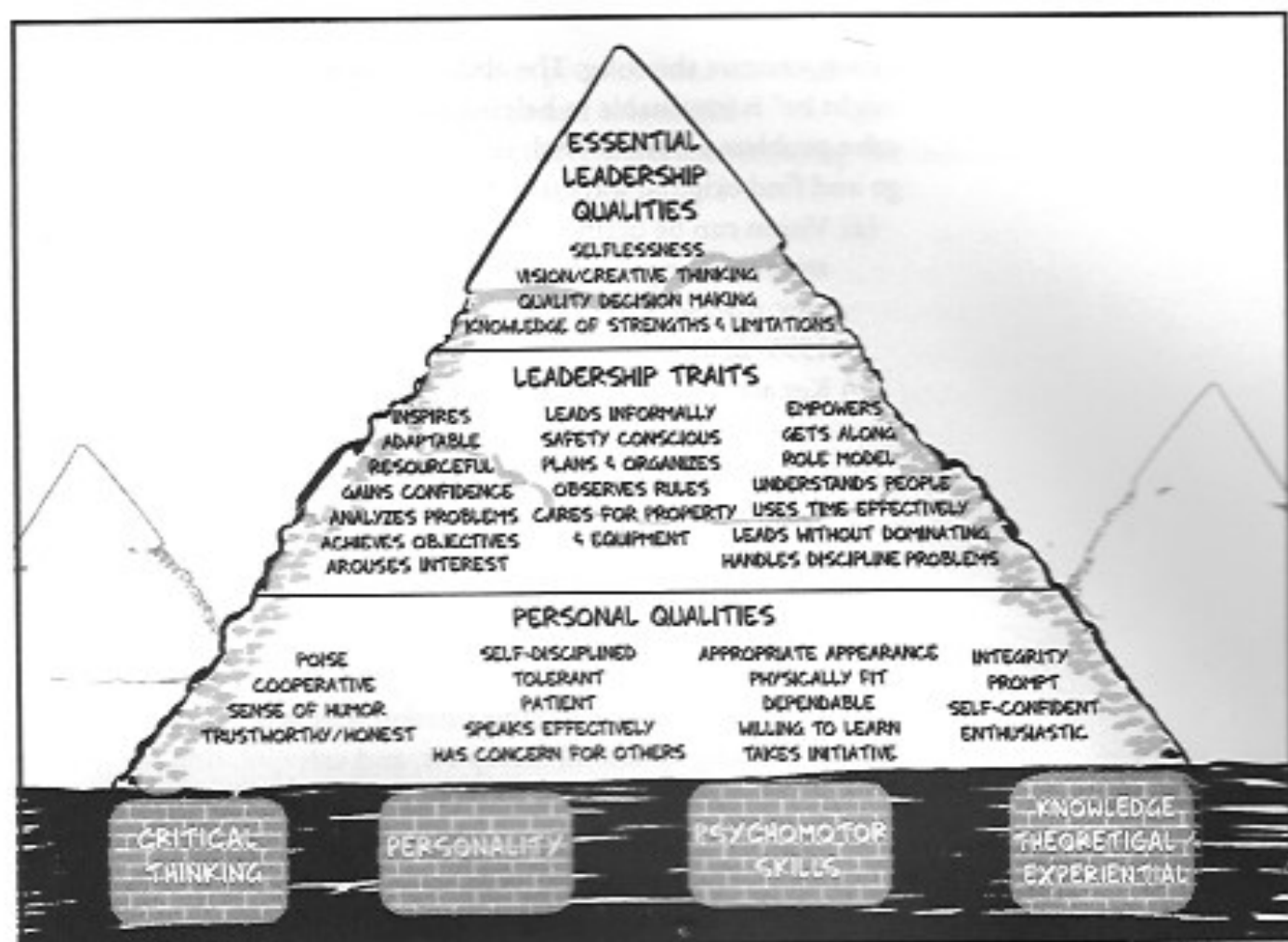
FIGURE 29.1. Essential leadership qualities

Unless leaders can stay within their own limitations, they will not be truly safe leaders.

(b) "Know what you know and know what you don't know" is a phrase frequently used by Paul Petzoldt in describing this characteristic to potential outdoor leaders.

(c) Leaders must be realists and not bluff either themselves or their followers. Famous humorist Will Rogers said it well when he stated, "It isn't what we don't know that gives us trouble, it's what we know that ain't so" (Canadian Conservative Forum n.d.).

(3) Selflessness: To be effective in achieving group objectives, it is essential that leaders have the ability to put group needs above their own interests.

(4) Vision/creative thinking: The ability to anticipate or to "see what might be" is invaluable in helping to come up with unique ways to solve problems. Leaders with vision see where the group needs to go and find original ways to get them there.

    (a) Vision can be defined as having unusual foresight. Creative thinking can be defined as the ability to generate new, diverse, and elaborate ideas (Infinite Innovations Ltd. 1999–2003).

    (b) Key attributes (i.e., indicators that will tell you that creative thinking is taking place) (Mobilia 1999):

        i) Seeking alternatives to "in the box" thinking (i.e., thinking in new and nontraditional ways)

        ii) Expanding on existing ideas

        iii) Seeking the original

        iv) Synthesizing old ideas into new or unique approaches

        v) Integrating seemingly unrelated ideas

        vi) Using intuition, metaphor, and extrapolation to broaden the scope of one's thinking

        vii) Taking risks

b) Leadership traits: These qualities are generally recognized as desirable in a leader. An effective leader:

    (1) Achieves objectives

    (2) Understands people's needs

    (3) Gets along with people

    (4) Is resourceful

    (5) Gains the confidence of others

    (6) Has the ability to analyze problems

    (7) Is adaptable to situations

    (8) Has the ability to arouse and develop interest

    (9) Leads without dominating

    (10) Has the ability to handle disciplinary problems

    (11) Has the ability to inspire others

    (12) Has the ability to lead informally

    (13) Empowers/encourages leadership in others

    (14) Has the ability to plan and organize

    (15) Observes rules and regulations

    (16) Takes proper care of equipment and property

    (17) Uses time effectively

(18) Is safety conscious but permits freedom of adventure

(19) Has the ability to serve as a role model

c) Personal qualities: The distinctive traits that make up the individual (Buell 1983). An effective leader:

(1) Has a sense of humor

(2) Is trustworthy/honest

(3) Has poise

(4) Has a cooperative attitude

(5) Has self-discipline

(6) Is tolerant

(7) Is patient

(8) Has concern for others

(9) Models appearance appropriate for the task

(10) Is physically fit

(11) Is dependable

(12) Has a willingness to learn

(13) Has an ability to speak effectively

(14) Has integrity

(15) Is prompt

(16) Has self-confidence

(17) Is enthusiastic

(18) Takes initiative

D. The Leadership Challenge. The research-based book *The Leadership Challenge*, by James Kouzes and Barry Posner (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), reinforces our own leadership experience. There is extraordinary consistency between the work of these authors in the world of business leadership and our wilderness leadership experience.

1. Kouzes and Posner speak of surveying several thousand business and government executives about the values they found most important in good leadership. Their research consistently shows four characteristics at the top. Leaders need to be:

a) Honest

b) Forward looking

c) Inspiring

d) Competent

2. From this research, they also found "five fundamental practices that enable leaders to get extraordinary things done" (pp. 8–9):

a) Challenge the process: Good leaders find ways to do things better. They learn from failures and successes alike.

b) Inspire a shared vision: Good leaders see what can be, enthusiastically share the vision with others, and inspire them to reach for it.

c) Enable others to act (empower): "Leaders enable others to act, not by hoarding the power they have but by giving it away" (p. 12). Good leaders build relationships based on trust and confidence.

d) Model the way: Good leaders are good examples. Their actions speak louder than words.

e) Encourage the heart: Good leaders "breathe life into the hopes and dreams of others . . . Leaders communicate their passion through vivid language and an expressive style" (p. 11).

Part 2. Leadership Styles and Leadership Implementation

A. Leadership styles. One of the keys to effective leadership is mastering various leadership styles and developing the ability to adapt them to various situations. While it is important to recognize one's dominant leadership style, it is even more important to recognize that different leadership situations require different leadership styles. Effective leaders are able to adapt their leadership style to the situation.

1. Examples:

a) A moderately experienced (autocratic leaning) leader is leading a group of peers; i.e., a group of similar age with similar skill and experience levels. When the leader arrives at the first night's campsite, instead of telling everyone where to camp, how to dispose of waste, and whether or not they can use campfires, she asks a series of questions to take advantage of the group members' expertise. Recognizing the situation, she doesn't tell them what to do but rather hears what they recommend and builds consensus that is consistent with outdoor-ethics camping practices. (Note that even though the leader is most comfortable with an autocratic leadership style, she recognized that this situation called for consensus or democratic-oriented leadership style. In this case, she would have stepped in only if the group's recommendations were inconsistent with outdoor-ethics camping practices.)

b) A group of outdoor leadership students has arrived late at a reration point in a moderate rain due to a series of problems, including getting lost and having to take a trail that was much more difficult than anticipated. The leader (who tends to always want to reach consensus) assigns tasks fairly and efficiently without input. He moves around the various

groups, letting them know exactly what they have to do and when he hopes they will be done. He shares with them his desire to get the tasks done correctly and as soon as possible so they can quickly move to their campsite, get out of the rain, and relax for the balance of the day. (In this case, knowing that the group was tired and not in a mood to sit down and reach consensus on who was going to fill peanut butter containers and who was going to refill spice containers, the leader used a more autocratic style in assigning tasks and timelines. The followers could recognize and appreciate that by listening to the leader and following his "orders," they had a better chance of getting into camp early, where they would then be able to get a good hot meal and relax.)

2. The leadership continuum

   Leadership styles fit on a continuum (see fig. 29.2). At one end of the continuum, the leader makes the decision and tells the group what to do. At the other end, the group makes the decision and takes total responsibility for it.

3. Primary leadership styles: Historically, this continuum has been broken down into the following three primary leadership styles:

   a) Autocratic

      (1) The decision-making function resides primarily with the assigned leader (Buell 1983).

      (2) Characteristics:

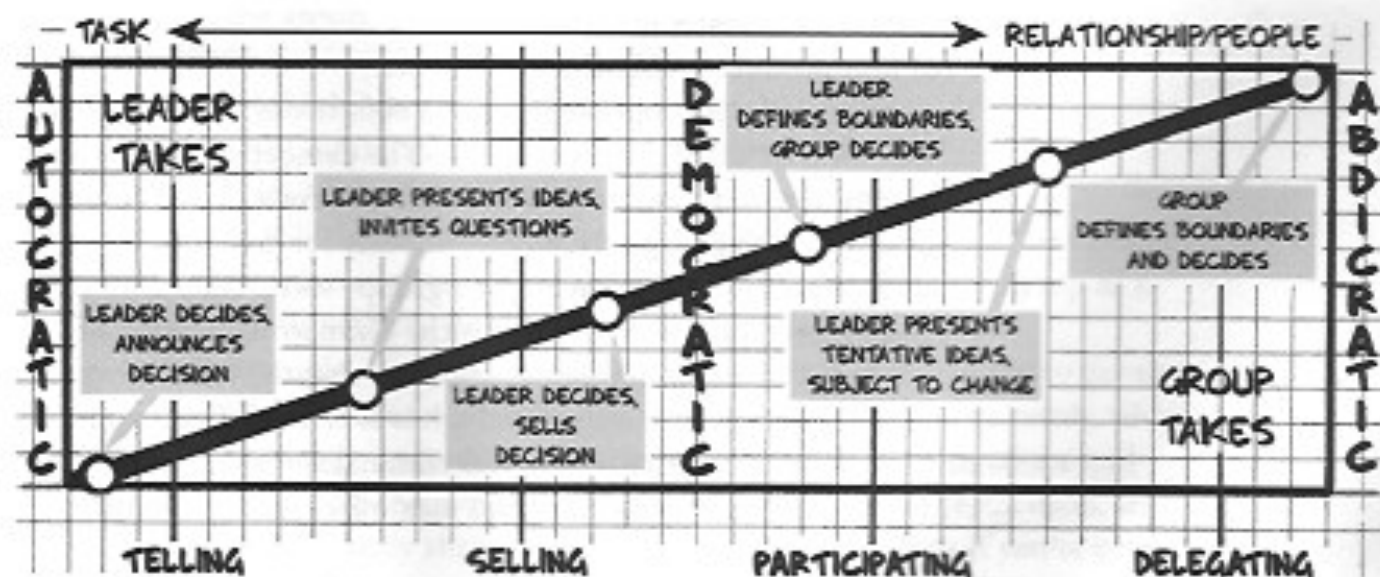   (a) Fast process

FIGURE 29.2. Leadership style continuum

(b) Discourages a group commitment

(c) Does not promote spontaneity or creativity within the group

(3) This is an effective method when the assigned leader has the most knowledge and experience. It is also effective in a dangerous situation when quick, decisive action must be taken. It is probably the most efficient style in terms of time and communication.

(4) Example: An outdoor leader is working with a young and inexperienced group of campers (ten to twelve years old). The leader sets down very specific rules and clear consequences. The leader makes it clear that while he wants the group to have fun, safety must come first. The leader has determined where they are going to go and the schedule, and he has given the campers some choice of games and activities and some dinner options from which to choose. (Note that the leader has primarily used an autocratic style by making the big decisions for the group [itinerary and schedule]. On the other hand, he recognizes that, in order to encourage the group's commitment and participation, he may want to give them some choice. In this case, he has given the group some choices regarding meals and the games they might play.)

b) Democratic

(1) The decision-making function resides with the group (Buell 1983).

(2) Characteristics:

(a) Slow process

(b) Encourages a group commitment to the outcome

(c) Produces greater initiative

(d) May produce a disenchanted minority

(3) This style may be appropriate when the objective is to build group cohesiveness or when time is available. The democratic style is an important one to use when it is desirable to have a shared commitment or have the group accept responsibility for decisions.

(4) While a democratic style may imply a group "vote," consensus can often be used more effectively and is the ultimate expression of democracy. Consensus implies unanimity—that the whole group has agreed with the decision. Although it is often difficult and time consuming to reach, consensus eliminates the disenfranchised minority of a democracy and maximizes group commitment.

(5) Example: The group has to decide how to get to the final pickup

destination. Looking at the map, it is clear that there are a number of possible routes and that some are much more challenging than others. The leader, understanding the need for the group to commit to the selected route, reminds people of the course objectives, and then carefully facilitates a democratic group decision-making process on what route to take. The options are carefully explored so that the group understands the pros and cons of each one. The group finally uses the "thumb tool" (see chapter 1, Teaching and Learning, for a description of the thumb tool and its use) to ratify the decision and selects one of the more difficult routes. (Note that the leader, who has more knowledge and experience and could have easily selected the route, understood the importance of getting a commitment to the route and therefore encouraged a group decision. Although it took a long time to make the decision, there was no complaining once they started the arduous trip because they all had ownership of the decision. It should be pointed out that the leader had to keep in mind that if the participants selected a route that was unsafe or too challenging, then she would have had to step in and perhaps be more autocratic.)

c) Abdicratic or laissez-faire (Lunenburg and Ornstein 1991)

   (1) The decision-making function has been relinquished and resides with the individual.

   (2) This style should not be confused with consensus decision making. Consensus assumes unanimity, while laissez-faire permits each individual to go his or her own way independent of others within the group.

   (3) Characteristics:

      (a) Inhibits a sense of common group purpose

      (b) Inhibits the development of group cohesion

      (c) Allows for maximum individual freedom

   (4) In wilderness education, an adaptation of this style may be used by instructors to empower a member of the group or the group as a whole with the decision-making prerogative.

   (5) Example: A wilderness leadership instructor is struggling to get students to use an effective decision-making process. As a result, when the students come to a trail intersection and want to take a trail that takes them in the opposite direction of their destination, she nonchalantly shrugs her shoulders and says, "Okay, if you're sure that's the way to go." After walking about fifteen minutes in the
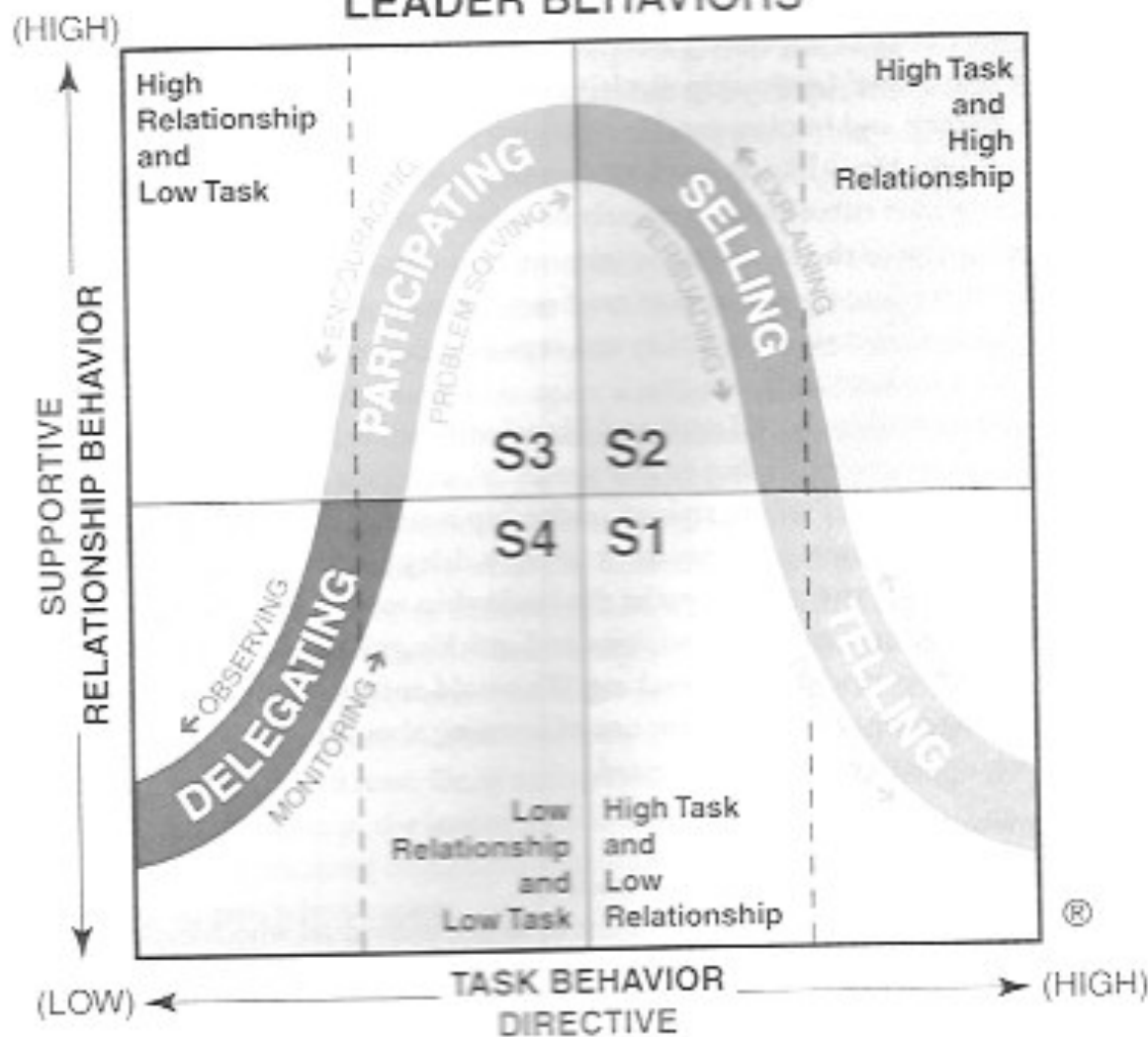
wrong direction the instructor says she needs to stop to put some moleskin on a potential blister. While she is tending to her foot, a couple of students look at their maps and figure out they are going in the wrong direction. After a short discussion, they turn back in the correct direction toward their destination. That evening they debrief the decision-making process. (Note that the instructor temporarily appeared to abdicate her decision-making responsibility, by design, in order to get the students to become aware of the decisions they make and how they are making them. Rather than wait until the group had gone miles out of their way, the instructor found a subtle way to get the students to look at their maps and figure out that they were going in the wrong direction.)

B. Situational Leadership (Hersey and Blanchard 1982; see fig. 29.3)

1. A leadership model based on three things:
   a) The amount of direction (task behavior): The degree of specific guidance and instruction the leader must give the group to get a specific task accomplished. Regarding task behavior, the leader might ask, "What do I have to do to make sure the task gets done efficiently and correctly?"
   b) The amount of socioemotional support (relationship or people behavior): The degree of encouragement and instruction required to help the group work together effectively to accomplish its task. Here the leader might ask, "What do I have to do to keep the group happy so they can do a good job?"
   c) The level of "readiness" of the group members: The ability and readiness of individuals or a group to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. This time the leader might ask, "How involved in this task do I have to be? Can the group handle it with minimum support from me, or do I need to take a very hands-on approach in this particular case?"

2. This model allows the leader to assess the group's readiness to accept responsibility for directing its own behavior, as well as monitor its progress through the stages of group development.

3. Situational Leadership reinforces the fact that there is no "best" style of leadership and provides four styles:
   a) Telling: Leader-centered. The leader "tells" the group what to do.
   b) Selling: Problem-oriented versus people-oriented leadership. The leader proposes solutions to problems.
   c) Participating: Shared decision making. The leader actively involves the group in identifying and solving problems.

Situational Leadership®
LEADER BEHAVIORS

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d) Delegating: The leader delegates decision making and assumes a supportive role.

4. The Situational Leadership styles parallel Jones's group development theory. (See chapter 23, Group Development, for more details.)

5. The Situational Leadership model is very practical and relatively easy to understand and implement. The principles are easy to apply across a variety of settings. Many like its emphasis on the concept of leader flexibility and treating each subordinate uniquely based on the task at hand. Some feel that the use of the model must take into account the need to push followers with a relatively low level of readiness to use a participating or delegating leadership style so that they can rapidly increase their leadership and decision-making abilities.

   a) Example: Based on Hersey and Blanchard's model, on the second day of a wilderness leadership course students' readiness level is low; therefore, theoretically, a telling style of leadership would be the appropriate style to use. An instructor may want to use a delegating style, however, thus immersing student leaders in the leadership role and providing opportunity for them to make decisions and quickly grasp the complex nature of leadership and decision making. We would encourage the use of a delegating style so that the amount of learning about leadership and decision making will be maximized.

C. Implementing leadership

1. The role and importance of the leader

   a) Quite often the leader is thought of as the individual who handles emergencies. While this ability is of the utmost importance, it is the exceptional responsibility. The definitions of leadership imply a much broader role.

   b) The leader is not the person at the front of the line, but rather the person floating among the group and checking that everything is all right.

   c) The leader is an organizer who anticipates and tries to make things go smoothly, becoming a problem solver as the need arises.

   d) Individual versus team leadership:

      (1) In many instances, team or consensus-based leadership may work, but one person needs to be in charge and take responsibility when a crisis develops.

      (2) Without one individual taking overall responsibility for the group, the potential for problems greatly increases. As President Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here," referring to the fact that as

president he was ultimately responsible for what happened in the federal government.

e) There are some trips that operate on a leaderless philosophy. We do not endorse this philosophy and strongly feel that someone has to take responsibility for the overall leadership of a group. Saying that your group has no leader is a recipe for creating a trip that will have more negative memories than positive.

2. Communication
   a) A leader will rarely get into trouble by effectively overcommunicating but may often get into trouble by undercommunicating.
   b) There is a tendency to overestimate the group's understanding of situations. If in doubt, explain it again a different way. Find ways to determine how well you are understood. Ask them to paraphrase what you have just said in their own words. When complex tasks are given to individuals or groups, one of the first things to do is ask them to "chunk" the task; i.e., to explain what the different components (chunks) of the task are. It is a way to determine how well the task is understood.
   c) Leaders should take the time to explain as much as possible in every given situation. For example, if the group is taking a break, the leader should let everyone know how long it will be and why the group is taking it here and now. Or, if unforeseen circumstances change the objectives of the trip, the leader should communicate those changes.
   d) Communicating minimizes misunderstanding and lessens individual and group frustration.
   e) Keep in mind that only 7 percent of a message is provided by the words you speak. Tone of voice provides 38 percent of the message, and facial expression provides 55 percent (Mehrabian 1971). Understand, be aware of the nonverbal messages you are/may be sending.
   f) Half the job of communicating is listening. Frequently, people in a position of authority are too busy sharing what they consider to be the important information to listen well. Leaders who paraphrase what they think they heard back to the person talking to them demonstrate and model the ability to listen (e.g., "This is what I understand you to be saying . . . ").
   g) Remember: It takes as much or more energy to listen as it does to speak.

3. The leader as a role model
   a) A leader does not have the choice whether or not to be an example. The choice is whether to be a good or bad example (Resource Ministries International 1999).

b) A leader must serve as a role model and must not follow the creed, "Do as I say, not as I do."

c) Double standards must be minimized. If they must exist at all, the reason should be communicated and explained to the group.

    (1) Example: Perhaps an instructor may leave the expedition at a reration point in order to attend his daughter's birthday party. Students may be upset that the instructor gets to leave the course for personal reasons and they can't. If the instructor is able to effectively explain to the students that he has taught these courses for ten years while it is a one-time-only experience for them, and also that being able to attend his daughter's birthday is an important family event, perhaps the participants will be more understanding and less resentful.

d) The leader who serves as a good role model will develop a group of excellent followers.

e) An adaptation of what author Robert Fulghum says in *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* says it all: "Don't worry that your followers don't listen to you; worry that they are watching everything you do" (Fulghum 1990).

4. Followership

a) Definition: "The American Camping Association defines followership as the ability to serve in a democratic group situation under leadership of a member of that group but still retain the capacity to suggest, criticize, and evaluate, as well as serve in the project" (Buell 1983, p. 8). Buell also lists additional qualities for being a follower:

    (1) Stress the importance of the individual

    (2) Accept a lesser role so the group can reach its goals

    (3) Keep communication open with leaders and other followers

b) Good followership is as important as good leadership. Individuals should be committed to followership because:

    (1) Without followers, goals will not be met.

    (2) Being a good follower allows a leader to develop empathy for followership.

    (3) Most people go through life primarily as followers. Unfortunately, just as leaders are frequently not formally trained, neither are followers.

5. Leading versus instructing: Does a good leader have to be a good teacher? Does a good teacher have to be a good leader? It is generally recognized that a good teacher does not have to be a good leader, but a good leader must be

a good teacher. Many feel good leaders are even better teachers.

6. Recognizing and identifying leadership styles: An important means of developing positive leadership abilities is to recognize and identify the leadership styles of others. This can be done through observation and documented through debriefings and journaling.

7. Credibility and leadership

a) To be credible is to be believable or trustworthy. Leaders do things that either increase their credibility, becoming more believable and trustworthy, or decrease their credibility. Think of it as a savings account. When you lead by acting and speaking in believable ways to your followers, you make deposits into your credibility savings account and gain credibility. When you act or speak in unbelievable ways, you make withdrawals from your credibility savings account. The problem is that it only takes a few withdrawals to outweigh all your deposits. It takes many believable and honest actions and a long period of time to make up for one or two unbelievable or dishonest actions. This is why it is important to be as believable and honest with your followers as possible.

b) There is a very simple, yet often difficult, thing a leader can do to gain credibility: Do what you say you are going to do. In other words, if you don't think you can get something done, don't offer to do it. It means saying "no" sometimes, but most people would prefer that to hearing someone say they are going to do something and then not have it get done.

8. Identifying outcomes and prioritizing tasks

a) Leadership, by definition, is about helping people determine outcomes and achieve them. Sometimes the outcomes are predetermined (e.g., a college course), and sometimes they need to be determined (e.g., a family trip). In either case, the job of the leader is to communicate or facilitate what it is the group hopes to accomplish.

b) Once the outcomes are determined, the challenge is then to prioritize the tasks that will help accomplish the outcomes.

c) Tasks will need to be reprioritized through a process of constant assessment. This is an incredibly important and necessary step in accomplishing outcomes.

9. Delegation and leadership

a) Some leaders struggle to delegate and want to have their hand in every activity related to the task. Others delegate readily but struggle to monitor what their followers are doing. The challenge is to find a balance that allows the leader to delegate many of the tasks while monitoring and supporting ongoing activities.

b) Avoiding micromanagement
   (1) Micromanagers try to oversee every detail of every activity. They think that this is their job, but what they really do is discourage the followers' sense of their ability to make a contribution and possibly strip them of an identity with the task. The followers get frustrated because of their lack of sense of purpose. They develop a sense of, "why bother, because he'll redo it anyway."
   (2) Frequently, the reasons leaders micromanage are:
      (a) There is no clear understanding of who is supposed to do what. Job or task descriptions are helpful in preventing micromanagement.
      (b) Many leaders fall victim to the belief that if they don't do it, no one else will, or no one will do it as well. Leaders need to recognize that there is more than one way to do something. The leader is better off making sure the task is clear and that standards for quality are clear, then getting out of the followers' way.
   (3) One way to cut down on micromanaging is to allow followers to regularly give anonymous feedback to the leaders. In this way, they will become aware that they are doing it.
   (4) President Theodore Roosevelt said it well: "The most effective executive is one who hires good people and then has the good sense to stand back and watch them do their work" (Daniels 2002).

10. Setting quality criteria: What do we mean by quality criteria? The simplest way to determine quality criteria is to ask the simple question, "What things will we see or hear that will tell us we have done a good job?" Taking the time to have that discussion will increase the chances of the group having a safe, environmentally sound, and enjoyable experience.
   a) Example: Suppose the task was to find a route to the next food drop. Quality criteria might be:
      (1) We arrive with energy to spare and don't get too exhausted.
      (2) The route is safe.
      (3) We get to see new and unique countryside.
      (4) We get to see some culturally and historically interesting sites.
      (5) We camp in environmentally sound campsites.
   Having quality criteria allows us to debrief the experience and accurately measure our success.

11. Appropriate risk taking: Competent leaders use good judgment to balance many factors while still allowing for acceptable risk taking.

III. Instructional Strategies

A. Timing. Although the teaching of leadership starts on day one of a course and is reinforced daily with the activities listed below, the content of this chapter is usually taught once all the students have had an opportunity to be Leader of the Day (LOD) at least once. The activities below can be used in the classroom before the course or within the first half of a trip.

B. Considerations

1. Teaching leadership: In teaching leadership there are two important components:
   a) Instructors need to make sure that students understand leadership theory.
   b) Instructors must provide opportunities for students to lead and have students reflect on their leadership experiences and of those around them.
2. Typical activities that need to take place on a wilderness course for students to be able to learn about leadership include:
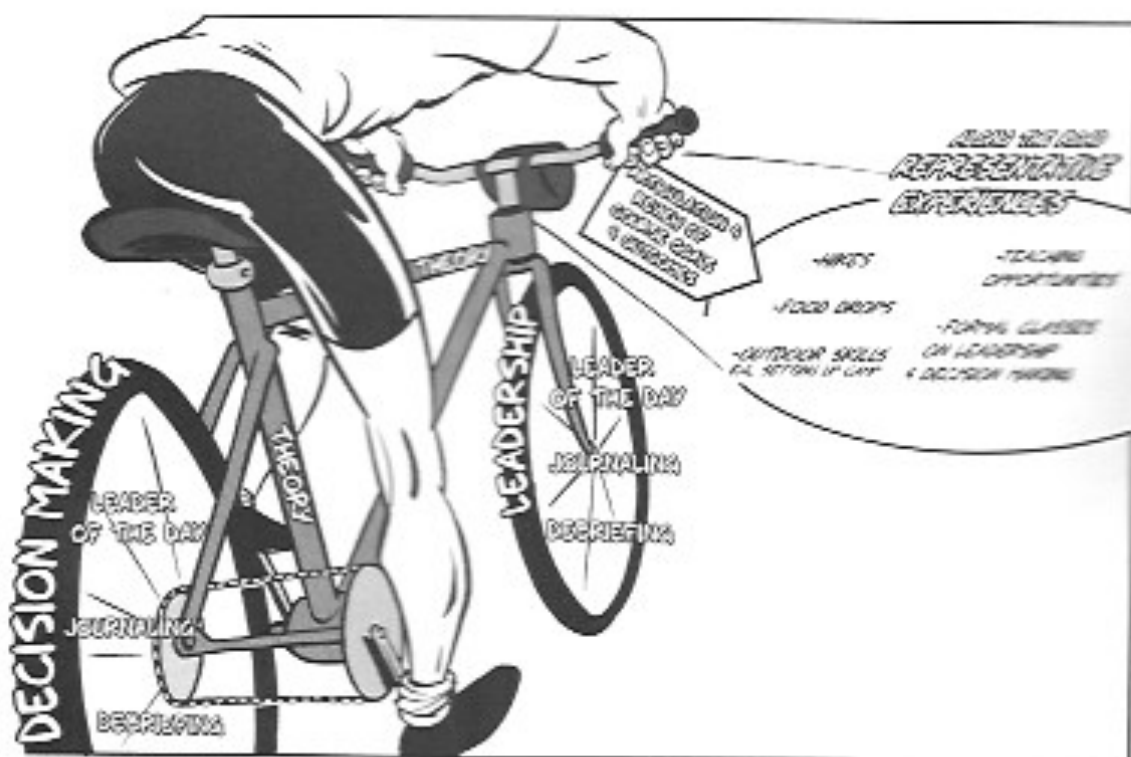

FIGURE 29.4. Teaching decision making and leadership

a) Articulation of course outcomes: Participants need to understand the role and importance of leadership in relation to the course outcomes. Is it clearly communicated that leadership is an important learning outcome within the course? Our experience dictates that this needs to be done at the beginning of a wilderness course and at least once more during the course.

b) Review of the assessment process: Participants also need to understand the role and importance of the assessment process as it relates to the assessment of leadership. How will they receive feedback, when will they receive feedback, and what role will their leadership ability play in grading, certification, or other forms of evaluation?

c) Journals: Writing in journals encourages participants to formally identify and analyze their own leadership of others. The journals provide instructors with an opportunity to see into the student's mind and observe whether he or she sees the decisions that are being made and whether he or she is beginning to grasp how decisions are being made.

d) Leader of the Day (LOD): This provides opportunities for each student to take on the leadership role. For participants to develop their leadership abilities to the greatest extent possible, it is important to:

    (1) Let the LODs take as active a role as possible.

    (2) Let them take charge with as little interference as possible.

    (3) Let them make mistakes, and then help them constructively and positively learn from them.

    (4) Have the LOD and the group evaluate leadership roles in terms of successes and failures. Also, have the LOD and the group describe the leadership styles, cornerstones, traits, and personal qualities exhibited.

    (5) Encourage future LODs to build on the previous leaders' strengths and weaknesses.

    (6) Give participants time to grow.

    (7) Communicate to the participants what they can do to improve.

    (8) Be objective: Avoid letting personal likes and dislikes interfere with evaluating someone's leadership.

    (9) Be cautious and understand that, in group discussions, the instructor's words carry more weight than the words of students.

e) Debriefings: Daily group debriefings give participants the opportunity to share and reflect on their analysis of leadership observed during the day. (See chapter 25, Group Processing and Debriefing, for more information on debriefing.)

f) Leadership theory lesson: This lesson usually takes place after students have been the LOD at least once. This lesson allows the students to begin to understand the theoretical aspects of leadership and to view leadership both theoretically and practically through the lens of their own experience. This lesson can be taught with a traditional or SPEC approach. (See chapter 1, Teaching and Learning, for more information on teaching strategies.)

g) Opportunities for students to lead: These are the daily activities that take place naturally or are designed by the instructor that provide the grist of leadership for the mill of reflection. We have provided a sample list of activities that typically occur on a course that provide such opportunities:

   (1) Student-led hikes: Trail and off-trail hikes, with and without instructor supervision, provide a multitude of opportunities for students to take on leadership roles.

   (2) Reration/food drops: The numerous tasks associated with this activity provide numerous opportunities for leadership.

   (3) Use of daily "camping skills": Finding a tent site, preparing meals, packing the pack, and most of the other camp skills also provide opportunities for taking on leadership roles.

   (4) Designing lessons: As students design teaching lessons for a variety of learners, they also engage in the leadership process.

3. Assessment: Observation and feedback

   a) The above activities take place within a framework of instructor observation and feedback. Instructor observations provide participants with feedback concerning their progress in mastering the role of leader.

   b) Peer feedback affords participants additional input from the group concerning their role as leader.

C. Activities

1. The Outdoor Leaders R' Us challenge (see the end of the chapter)
   a) Purpose:
      (1) To develop an understanding of leadership styles and traits
      (2) To explore alternative, original, and imaginative ideas
2. The Ideal Outdoor Leader challenge (see the end of the chapter)
   a) Purpose:
      (1) To develop an understanding of leadership characteristics
      (2) To practice the synthesis of ideas and information