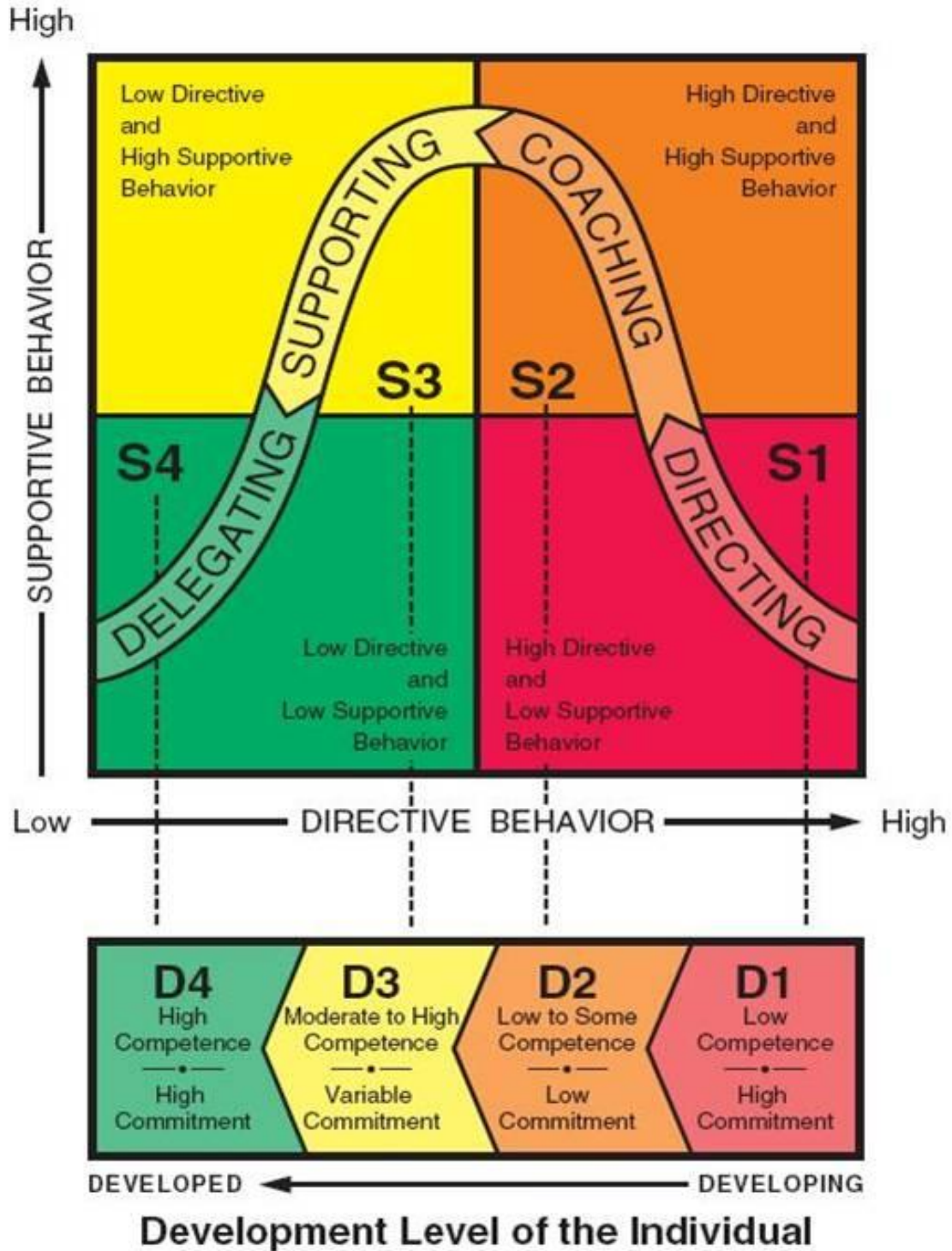


# SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

“Different strokes for different folks, depending on their developmental level.”  
and  
“Different strokes for the *same* folks, depending on the situation.”



**Levels of development of the individual.** The individual who is to do the task will take the first crack at categorizing their developmental level for that task, in to one of the following categories:

- **D1: Low Competence, High Commitment** – They generally lack the specific skills required for the job in hand. However, they are eager to learn and willing to take direction.
- **D2: Some Competence, Low Commitment** - They may have some relevant skills, but won't be able to do the job without help. The task or the situation may be new to them.
- **D3: High Competence, Variable Commitment** – They are experienced and capable, but may lack the confidence to go it alone, or the motivation to do it well or quickly.
- **D4: High Competence, High Commitment** – They are experienced at the job, and comfortable with their own ability to do it well. They may even be more skilled than the leader.

*Commitment means: motivation + confidence to do the job*

Styles / levels of **supportive/directive behavior a manager should provide** to the individual:

- **S1: Directing/Telling:** Leaders define the roles and tasks for the “follower” and supervise them closely. Decisions are made by the leader, so communication is largely one-way.
- **S2: Selling / Coaching:** Leaders still define roles and tasks, but they focus why this task is appropriate for the employee. It's a dialogue. Decisions remain the leader's prerogative, but communication is much more two-way.
- **S3: Supporting:** Leaders pass day-to-day decisions, such as task details and plans, to the follower. The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the follower.
- **S4: Delegating:** Leaders are still involved in decisions and problem-solving, but control is with the follower. The follower decides when and how the leader will be involved.

Who decides the leadership style? First, the employee defines which leadership style they would like from the manager, on this task. Then, the manager suggests the style that they think is appropriate. If they disagree, start with the employee's suggested style, and schedule a checkpoint to see how that is working toward the successful completion of the task. Change the style, if necessary.

Managers make sure employees get the support they need to do the task, but aren't necessarily the ones providing it (i.e., they may bring in experts to help, or other team members).