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Q&A

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Exam : L6M1

Title : Strategic Ethical Leadership

Version : DEMO

1.SIMULATION

Explain 5 qualities of an effective leader (10 points) Discuss the role of a leader in relation to the procurement and supply chain function of an organisation (15 points)

Answer:

(A) Five Qualities of an Effective Leader (10 Points)

Effective leadership is crucial for the success of any organization, particularly in strategic procurement and supply chain management. Below are five key qualities that define an effective leader:

Vision and Strategic Thinking (2 Points)

A successful leader has a clear vision for the future and can develop strategic plans to achieve organizational goals.

In procurement, this means aligning supply chain strategies with overall business objectives, such as cost reduction, sustainability, and supplier relationship management.

Integrity and Ethical Leadership (2 Points)

Ethical leaders act with honesty, transparency, and fairness, setting high ethical standards for their teams.

In procurement, integrity ensures fair supplier selection, compliance with procurement laws, and avoiding corruption or conflicts of interest.

Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Skills (2 Points)

Leaders must analyze complex situations, consider different perspectives, and make informed decisions.

In supply chain management, this involves risk assessment, supplier negotiation, and resolving disruptions (e.g., supply shortages, logistics issues, or geopolitical risks).

Communication and Influence (2 Points)

An effective leader clearly communicates the organization's goals and expectations to internal and external stakeholders.

In procurement, this involves negotiating contracts, managing supplier relationships, and ensuring cross-functional collaboration within the organization.

Emotional Intelligence and People Management (2 Points)

Emotional intelligence (EQ) includes self-awareness, empathy, motivation, and social skills, which are essential for managing teams.

In procurement, this helps leaders build trust, motivate employees, and handle conflicts with suppliers or internal teams effectively.

(B) Role of a Leader in Procurement and Supply Chain Functions (15 Points)

Leaders in procurement and supply chain management play a crucial strategic role in ensuring the efficiency, sustainability, and ethical integrity of the organization's supply chain. Below are five key roles a leader plays:

Setting Strategic Direction in Procurement (3 Points)

A leader defines procurement objectives in line with corporate strategy, such as cost reduction, supplier diversity, risk management, and sustainability.

Example: A Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) may implement a strategy to reduce reliance on a single supplier and diversify sourcing to minimize risks.

Ensuring Ethical and Sustainable Procurement (3 Points)

Leaders must establish and enforce ethical procurement policies to avoid fraud, bribery, or unethical supplier practices.

Example: Ensuring compliance with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as sourcing

from ethical suppliers who follow fair labor practices.

Supplier Relationship and Risk Management (3 Points)

A leader is responsible for building strong supplier relationships that foster trust, reliability, and long-term partnerships.

They also identify and mitigate risks in the supply chain, such as supply disruptions, geopolitical risks, and financial instability of suppliers.

Driving Innovation and Continuous Improvement (3 Points)

Leaders encourage teams to adopt innovative technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, and data analytics in procurement.

Example: Implementing e-procurement systems to enhance efficiency and transparency in supplier transactions.

Developing and Empowering the Procurement Team (3 Points)

A leader must focus on talent development, upskilling procurement professionals, and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Example: Providing training on contract management, negotiation skills, and supplier evaluation techniques to enhance team capabilities.

2.SIMULATION

Evaluate the following approaches to leadership: autocratic and affiliative (25 points)

Answer:

Evaluation of Autocratic and Affiliative Leadership Approaches (25 Points)

Leadership approaches vary based on organizational needs, culture, and objectives. Below is an in-depth evaluation of Autocratic Leadership and Affiliative Leadership, focusing on their characteristics, advantages, disadvantages, and suitability in procurement and supply chain management.

1. Autocratic Leadership (12.5 Points) Definition and Characteristics

Autocratic leadership is a command-and-control approach where decision-making is centralized, and the leader exerts full authority over subordinates. Employees have little to no input in decisions.

Key Features:

The leader makes all critical decisions without consulting the team.

Strict top-down communication is followed.

Highly structured and rule-based management.

Focus on efficiency, discipline, and control.

Suitable for crisis management, military organizations, and high-risk industries.

Advantages of Autocratic Leadership

✔ Quick Decision-Making:

Since decisions are made by one leader, the process is fast and efficient, especially in time-sensitive situations such as supply chain disruptions.

✔ Clear Chain of Command:

Employees have a clear understanding of who is in charge, reducing confusion and ensuring a structured workflow.

✔ Improved Accountability:

With strict supervision, employees remain focused on their tasks, leading to higher productivity.

✔ Effective in Crisis Situations:

In procurement, during a supply chain disruption (e.g., a supplier bankruptcy), a leader must make

immediate decisions to secure alternative suppliers.

Disadvantages of Autocratic Leadership

✗ Lack of Employee Engagement & Motivation:

Since employees have no voice in decision-making, they may feel undervalued, leading to low morale and high turnover.

✗ Reduced Innovation & Creativity:

Employees are not encouraged to share new ideas or problem-solving approaches, which can limit procurement process improvements.

✗ Potential for Micromanagement:

Autocratic leaders tend to oversee every detail, leading to inefficiency and lack of trust in the team.

Suitability in Procurement & Supply Chain

✓ Best suited for highly regulated industries (e.g., government procurement, defense supply chains).

✓ Effective in emergency situations (e.g., supplier failure, legal compliance issues).

✗ Not ideal for collaborative procurement environments where supplier relationships and teamwork are crucial.

2. Affiliative Leadership (12.5 Points) Definition and Characteristics

Affiliative leadership is a people-first leadership style that prioritizes employee well-being, relationships, and harmony within teams.

Key Features:

Focus on empathy and emotional intelligence.

The leader builds strong team bonds and fosters a positive workplace culture.

Employees are encouraged to collaborate and voice their opinions.

Suitable for organizations undergoing change, stress, or morale issues.

Advantages of Affiliative Leadership

✓ Boosts Employee Morale and Motivation:

Employees feel valued and supported, leading to higher job satisfaction and retention.

✓ Encourages Collaboration and Innovation:

Unlike autocratic leadership, an affiliative leader welcomes team input, encouraging creative solutions in procurement strategies.

✓ Strengthens Supplier Relationships:

In procurement, affiliative leadership improves negotiations and long-term supplier partnerships through trust and open communication.

✓ Effective During Organizational Change:

This approach helps teams adapt to new procurement strategies, digital transformations, or policy changes smoothly.

Disadvantages of Affiliative Leadership

✗ Lack of Firm Decision-Making:

Leaders may avoid conflict or tough decisions to maintain team harmony, leading to slow decision-making.

✗ Risk of Lower Performance Expectations:

Overemphasizing relationships may reduce accountability, leading to underperformance in procurement teams.

✗ Not Suitable for Crisis Management:

In urgent procurement situations (e.g., contract disputes, legal violations), an affiliative leader may

struggle to enforce discipline.

Suitability in Procurement & Supply Chain

✓ Best for relationship-driven roles (e.g., supplier relationship management, collaborative procurement).

✓ Effective in team-building and change management (e.g., transitioning to digital procurement systems).

✗ Not ideal for high-risk decision-making environments (e.g., crisis procurement, compliance enforcement).

Final Evaluation & Conclusion

Criteria	Autocratic Leadership	Affiliative Leadership
Decision-Making	Fast, leader-controlled	Slow, consensus-driven
Employee Engagement	Low	High
Innovation & Creativity	Limited	Encouraged
Crisis Management	Highly effective	Weak
Supplier Relationship Management	Weak	Strong
Team Collaboration	Minimal	Strong
Performance & Accountability	High but stressful	Moderate, risk of underperformance

Which Leadership Style is Best for Procurement?

For short-term crises, regulatory compliance, or high-risk procurement → Autocratic Leadership is better.
For long-term supplier management, teamwork, and innovation → Affiliative Leadership is more effective.
A balanced approach (situational leadership) that combines elements of both styles is often the most effective strategy in procurement.

This evaluation provides a structured, detailed comparison that aligns with CIPS L6M1 exam expectations.

3.SIMULATION

Discuss the difference between mentoring and coaching. As well as mentoring and coaching, what other activities are completed by a manager? What skills does this require? (25 points)

Answer:

(A) Difference Between Mentoring and Coaching (10 Points)

Both mentoring and coaching are essential for employee development, but they serve different purposes. Below is a structured comparison:

Aspect	Mentoring	Coaching
Definition	A long-term professional relationship where a senior or experienced person (mentor) guides a junior or less experienced individual (mentee) .	A short-term, structured process where a coach provides specific guidance and training to improve skills or performance.
Objective	Focuses on career development, personal growth, and knowledge sharing .	Focuses on enhancing specific skills, improving performance, and achieving short-term goals .
Duration	Long-term and informal	Short-term and structured
Approach	Relationship-based; mentor provides advice, shares experiences, and guides career progression .	Performance-based; coach focuses on immediate skill development through structured feedback .
Who Initiates?	Usually mentee-driven (mentee seeks guidance from an experienced mentor).	Coach-driven (coach provides training to help the individual improve).
Example in Procurement	A Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) mentors a junior procurement officer on leadership and strategic decision-making.	A procurement manager coaches an employee on improving supplier negotiation techniques .

Key Takeaways:

Mentoring is long-term, relationship-driven, and focused on personal/career development.

Coaching is short-term, performance-driven, and focused on specific skill enhancement.

(B) Other Activities Completed by a Manager (10 Points)

Apart from mentoring and coaching, managers in procurement and supply chain roles perform several key functions, including:

Strategic Planning and Decision-Making (2 Points)

Managers align procurement strategies with business goals, ensuring cost savings, risk management, and supplier selection.

Example: Deciding whether to source locally or internationally based on cost, lead time, and risk factors.

Performance Management & Employee Development (2 Points)

Managers conduct performance reviews, set KPIs, and ensure employees meet procurement objectives.

Example: Monitoring contract compliance and assessing supplier delivery performance.

Supplier and Stakeholder Relationship Management (2 Points)

Managers negotiate contracts, build relationships with suppliers, and collaborate with internal stakeholders.

Example: Engaging in supplier development programs to improve quality and efficiency.

Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution (2 Points)

Managers handle supplier disputes, contract issues, and logistical challenges in procurement operations.

Example: Managing disputes with suppliers over late deliveries or non-compliance.

Compliance and Ethical Procurement Practices (2 Points)

Managers ensure adherence to procurement regulations, ethical sourcing policies, and sustainability goals.

Example: Implementing an anti-bribery and corruption policy in procurement operations.

(C) Skills Required for These Activities (5 Points)

To successfully carry out these responsibilities, a manager needs the following key skills:

Leadership & People Management (1 Point)

Ability to motivate, mentor, and coach employees while fostering a productive work environment.

Negotiation & Communication (1 Point)

Strong skills to negotiate contracts, resolve supplier disputes, and manage stakeholder expectations.

Strategic Thinking & Decision-Making (1 Point)

Capability to analyze procurement data and make informed strategic decisions to reduce costs and risks.

Problem-Solving & Conflict Resolution (1 Point)

Skill in addressing supply chain disruptions, supplier conflicts, and operational inefficiencies.

Ethical and Compliance Knowledge (1 Point)

Understanding of procurement laws, ethical sourcing, and corporate governance.

4.SIMULATION

Assess the suitability of the Visionary leadership style in relation to the procurement function of an organisation (25 points)

Answer:

Introduction

Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the procurement function within an organization, influencing strategic decisions, supplier relationships, and overall operational efficiency. One of the most impactful leadership styles is Visionary Leadership, characterized by the ability to inspire, motivate, and guide an organization toward a long-term strategic vision. In the context of procurement, where efficiency, cost management, ethical sourcing, and supplier collaboration are critical, the suitability of a visionary leader can significantly impact the success of procurement strategies.

This essay assesses the suitability of the Visionary Leadership Style in procurement by exploring its characteristics, advantages, challenges, and its impact on various aspects of procurement functions.

Understanding Visionary Leadership

A visionary leader is someone who has a clear and compelling vision of the future and possesses the ability to motivate teams and stakeholders to work towards achieving that vision. This leadership style is associated with strategic foresight, innovation, adaptability, and strong communication skills. Visionary leaders focus on long-term goals rather than short-term fixes and inspire procurement teams to align their objectives with the broader mission of the organization.

Key Characteristics of Visionary Leadership

Strategic Foresight – The ability to anticipate future trends, risks, and opportunities in procurement and supply chain management.

Inspirational Communication – The ability to effectively convey a vision, ensuring team members and stakeholders are aligned with procurement strategies.

Adaptability and Innovation – Encouraging new technologies, digital procurement solutions, and sustainable sourcing practices.

People-Centric Approach – Focusing on team empowerment, supplier collaboration, and ethical procurement practices.

Long-Term Focus – Prioritizing sustainability, strategic supplier partnerships, and risk mitigation over short-term cost-cutting measures.

The Suitability of Visionary Leadership in Procurement

1. Enhancing Strategic Procurement Planning

Procurement is not just about purchasing goods and services; it is a strategic function that directly impacts an organization's cost efficiency, risk management, and competitive advantage. A visionary leader ensures that procurement aligns with the organization's long-term business goals, such as: Sustainable sourcing to meet corporate social responsibility (CSR) objectives.

Digital transformation in procurement (e.g., AI-driven supplier selection, blockchain for transparency).

Supplier diversification to mitigate geopolitical and supply chain risks.

By setting a clear strategic direction, a visionary leader ensures procurement teams focus on innovation, risk mitigation, and value creation rather than just cost-cutting.

2. Driving Supplier Relationship Management (SRM)

One of the most critical functions of procurement is managing supplier relationships effectively. Visionary leaders recognize that strong long-term partnerships with suppliers are more beneficial than short-term cost reductions. They emphasize:

Collaboration over transactional relationships – Developing mutually beneficial relationships with key suppliers.

Ethical and sustainable procurement – Ensuring suppliers adhere to fair labor practices, environmental sustainability, and legal compliance.

Innovation through supplier partnerships – Encouraging suppliers to introduce new technologies, automation, and process improvements.

A visionary leader in procurement fosters trust and cooperation with suppliers, ensuring that procurement decisions align with both business goals and ethical standards.

3. Encouraging Innovation and Technology Adoption in Procurement

The procurement function is evolving rapidly due to technological advancements. Visionary leaders drive the adoption of:

E-procurement systems to enhance efficiency and transparency.

Data analytics and AI for supplier evaluation and risk management.

Blockchain technology for improving supply chain traceability and contract enforcement.

Sustainability-focused procurement models, such as circular supply chains to reduce waste.

By embracing digital transformation, visionary leaders modernize procurement operations, making them more agile, cost-effective, and resilient.

4. Building an Agile and Motivated Procurement Team

A key responsibility of procurement leaders is to develop talent and foster a high-performance culture.

Visionary leaders:

Empower procurement teams by promoting continuous learning and professional development.

Encourage innovation in procurement strategies.

Foster an inclusive and collaborative work culture, which increases motivation and efficiency.

For instance, a visionary procurement leader may encourage procurement professionals to develop negotiation skills, data analysis competencies, and sustainability knowledge, ensuring that the team is well-equipped for future challenges.

5. Managing Risks and Uncertainties in Procurement

Procurement leaders must deal with global supply chain disruptions, price fluctuations, and geopolitical risks. A visionary leader is proactive in identifying and mitigating risks by:

Developing a diversified supplier base to reduce dependency on a single source.

Implementing contingency planning and supply chain resilience strategies.

Using predictive analytics to anticipate market shifts and adjust procurement strategies accordingly. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, visionary procurement leaders ensured supply chain continuity by quickly pivoting to alternative suppliers and leveraging digital procurement solutions.

Challenges of Visionary Leadership in Procurement

Despite its many advantages, visionary leadership also presents challenges in a procurement environment, including:

Slow Decision-Making in Urgent Situations

While visionary leaders focus on the long-term, procurement often requires quick decision-making during supply chain disruptions or urgent purchasing needs.

A balance between strategic foresight and operational efficiency is necessary.

Resistance to Change from Stakeholders

Employees and suppliers may resist new procurement technologies, sustainability policies, or process changes introduced by visionary leaders.

Effective change management and communication strategies are needed to overcome resistance. High Implementation Costs

Digital transformation, supplier development programs, and sustainability initiatives require significant investment.

Organizations must evaluate the cost-benefit balance when adopting long-term procurement strategies.

Alignment with Organizational Priorities

Procurement is often seen as a cost-saving function, whereas visionary leadership focuses on long-term value creation.

Visionary leaders must align their strategies with C-suite expectations to gain executive support.

Conclusion

Visionary leadership is highly suitable for the procurement function of an organization, particularly in driving strategic planning, supplier collaboration, innovation, talent development, and risk management. By fostering a long-term, value-driven approach, visionary leaders transform procurement from a cost-centric function into a strategic asset.

However, visionary leadership must be balanced with operational agility, ensuring that procurement remains responsive to market conditions and business needs. While long-term strategic foresight is essential, procurement teams must also be equipped to handle immediate challenges efficiently.

Ultimately, the most effective procurement leaders integrate visionary thinking with pragmatic decision-making, ensuring that procurement delivers both short-term operational efficiency and long-term strategic value.

Final Answer Structure for Maximum Marks (25 Points)

Introduction (3 Points) – Importance of leadership in procurement, introduction to visionary leadership.

Key Characteristics of Visionary Leadership (4 Points) – Strategic foresight, innovation, adaptability, communication, and long-term focus.

Suitability in Procurement (12 Points) –

Enhancing strategic planning.

Strengthening supplier relationships.

Driving innovation and technology.

Developing a skilled procurement team.

Managing procurement risks.

Challenges of Visionary Leadership (4 Points) – Decision-making speed, stakeholder resistance, cost implications, organizational alignment.

Conclusion (2 Points) – Summary of benefits, need for a balanced approach.

5.SIMULATION

Michael is the new CEO of XYZ Ltd. He has recently joined the organisation which has been struggling financially and has issues with stakeholder communication. He is considering using the Democratic leadership approach.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach? Is this an appropriate style for Michael to adopt? (25 points)

Answer:

Introduction

Leadership plays a crucial role in the success of an organization, especially when it is facing financial difficulties and stakeholder communication issues. The choice of leadership style significantly impacts employee morale, decision-making efficiency, and overall business performance. Michael, the new CEO of XYZ Ltd., is considering adopting the Democratic Leadership Approach to address these challenges. This essay will examine the advantages and disadvantages of the Democratic Leadership Style and assess whether it is an appropriate leadership approach for Michael given the company's current challenges.

Understanding Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, also known as participative leadership, is a leadership style in which decision-making is shared between the leader and their team members. It encourages collaboration, open communication, and employee engagement, ensuring that various perspectives are considered before making strategic decisions.

Key Characteristics of Democratic Leadership

Inclusive Decision-Making – Employees and stakeholders are actively involved in decision-making.

Encourages Open Communication – The leader fosters a transparent and open communication culture.

Focus on Teamwork and Collaboration – Employees work together towards shared goals.

Emphasis on Employee Empowerment – Employees feel valued and are encouraged to contribute ideas.

Long-Term Strategic Thinking – Decisions are made collectively, considering long-term benefits.

Advantages of Democratic Leadership (10 Points)

1. Improved Employee Engagement and Morale

Employees feel valued and respected because they are included in decision-making processes.

This leads to higher motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity.

Example: In procurement, involving team members in supplier selection ensures better buy-in and accountability.

2. Better Decision-Making Through Diverse Perspectives

Employees at different levels of the organization contribute unique insights.

Encouraging open discussions can lead to better problem-solving and innovation.

Example: Engaging employees in financial turnaround strategies might lead to cost-saving ideas from the procurement or finance teams.

3. Strengthens Stakeholder Relationships and Communication

Democratic leadership improves communication with both internal stakeholders (employees, managers) and external stakeholders (investors, suppliers, customers).

By involving stakeholders in discussions, trust and cooperation are enhanced.

Example: Regular stakeholder meetings and open discussions on financial recovery plans can reduce uncertainty and resistance.

4. Encourages Creativity and Innovation

Employees are given the freedom to propose new ideas, leading to continuous improvement.

Example: In procurement, an inclusive approach might encourage supply chain digitalization or sustainable procurement strategies.

5. Builds a Positive Organizational Culture

A democratic leader promotes transparency, fairness, and ethical leadership.

This leads to a more positive work environment, reducing employee turnover.

Disadvantages of Democratic Leadership (10 Points)

1. Slow Decision-Making Process

Since multiple people are involved in decision-making, it takes longer to reach a consensus.

This can be problematic when quick decisions are required, especially in financial crisis situations.

Example: If XYZ Ltd. needs to immediately cut costs, too much discussion may delay urgent cost-saving measures.

2. Risk of Conflict and Disagreements

Open discussions may lead to conflicting opinions, making it difficult to find a common ground.

This can create delays and inefficiencies in procurement and financial strategies.

Example: If procurement and finance teams disagree on cost-cutting strategies, decision-making could be stalled.

3. Requires Skilled and Experienced Employees

Democratic leadership works best when employees are experienced, knowledgeable, and capable of making informed decisions.

If employees lack expertise, their contributions may lead to poor strategic choices.

Example: A procurement team without risk management experience might suggest suppliers without considering geopolitical risks.

4. Ineffective in Crisis Situations

In urgent situations where immediate action is required, democratic leadership may not be effective.

Leaders might need to make quick, authoritative decisions to stabilize the business.

Example: If XYZ Ltd. is on the verge of bankruptcy, Michael may need to quickly implement cost-cutting measures without waiting for employee consensus.

5. Potential for a Lack of Accountability

When decisions are made collectively, it may be unclear who is responsible for failures.

Employees may avoid taking responsibility, assuming others will handle problems.

Example: If a supplier selection decision fails, no single person may be held accountable.

Is Democratic Leadership Appropriate for Michael at XYZ Ltd.? (5 Points)

Given the challenges at XYZ Ltd. (financial struggles and stakeholder communication issues), democratic leadership has both advantages and risks. Below is an assessment of whether this style is suitable for Michael:

Reasons Why Democratic Leadership is Suitable:

✓ Improves stakeholder communication – Since XYZ Ltd. struggles with stakeholder relations, a democratic approach can help build trust and collaboration.

✓ Boosts employee morale – Employees in a struggling company may feel demotivated. Involving them

in decision-making increases engagement and motivation.

✓ Encourages innovative solutions – XYZ Ltd. may need creative financial recovery strategies, and a democratic approach could generate new cost-saving ideas.

Reasons Why Democratic Leadership May Not Be Ideal:

✗ Slow decision-making – XYZ Ltd. needs quick financial recovery decisions, which democratic leadership may delay.

✗ May cause internal conflicts – If stakeholders have conflicting ideas on financial strategies, it may slow down progress.

✗ Not effective in crisis management – Michael may need to make tough cost-cutting decisions quickly, which requires a more authoritative approach.

Recommended Approach for Michael:

Instead of adopting a purely democratic leadership style, Michael should consider a balanced approach: Use democratic leadership for long-term strategic planning – Engage employees and stakeholders when designing long-term recovery strategies.

Adopt an authoritative approach for urgent financial decisions – If immediate cost-cutting or restructuring is needed, Michael should make firm, quick decisions.

Communicate decisions transparently – Even when making executive decisions, Michael should keep employees and stakeholders informed to maintain trust.

This blended leadership style (situational leadership) allows Michael to benefit from democratic leadership's advantages while ensuring quick decision-making when necessary.

Conclusion

Democratic leadership has several advantages, including improving communication, employee morale, and stakeholder relationships, all of which are beneficial for XYZ Ltd. However, it also slows decision-making and may cause conflicts, which can be problematic given the company's financial struggles.

Michael should adopt a situational leadership approach, combining democratic leadership for long-term strategic planning with authoritative leadership for urgent financial decisions. This will ensure that XYZ Ltd. recovers financially while maintaining transparency and employee engagement.

By balancing these approaches, Michael can lead XYZ Ltd. out of financial struggles while fostering a positive organizational culture.

Final Answer Structure for Maximum Marks (25 Points)

Introduction (3 Points) – Overview of the problem and introduction to democratic leadership.

Key Characteristics of Democratic Leadership (4 Points) – Explanation of democratic leadership style.

Advantages of Democratic Leadership (10 Points) – Five advantages with explanations and examples.

Disadvantages of Democratic Leadership (10 Points) – Five disadvantages with explanations and examples.

Suitability for Michael (5 Points) – Balanced evaluation of whether this leadership style is appropriate.

Conclusion (3 Points) – Summary and recommendation of situational leadership approach.