

## **Situational Leadership Scenario**

Joe is a manager who prefers to delegate and move on. He gives people space and opportunity to figure things out themselves, and trusts them, even to a fault, that they will figure it out and do what they are asked to do.

A large scale project comes along that is very visible and time sensitive for Joe's team. Joe sits down with his team; Susan, Mark and Lisa.

Mark is energetic, full of ideas and very creative. He has worked for Joe for almost a year but has shown that his decision making lacks experience and an understanding of the big picture and how this program fits into the larger university mission. He doesn't have a full grasp of budget considerations and what hasn't worked in the past. He brings plenty of ideas to the meeting and keeps reminding Joe of what else they could do.

Susan has only worked for Joe for two months. She is smart, she has the ability but she's new to the organization and how it works. She tends to only speak up when asked a direct question but she is highly motivated to do a good job.

Lisa has been part of the organization for quite some time. She is skilled and knowledgeable, but she doesn't share her knowledge unless asked. Lisa feels she should have Joe's job, and even sometimes feels she could do it better than him. She feels Joe doesn't respect her because he doesn't ask for her opinion often enough.

Joe brings the team together and outlines the impact of this visible, time sensitive project, spelling out the timelines on the agenda. He describes the results they are after and their impact on the department and the university. He briefly outlines what each person is to do and asks for their commitment to doing a great job, because so many people will be watching. Because he started this meeting late, he simply asks if anyone has any questions. A few questions are asked by Mark, and then Joe has to go to another meeting, telling them he will assist them later if they need him.

Joe is on vacation the week before the final results of the project are due. He returns two days before the due date, only to find things were not done, communicated or on time. The project fails to meet the timelines or expectations.

## WHAT WENT WRONG???

1. Why did the project fail?
2. What level is **Mark**? What are his needs?
3. What level is **Susan**? What are her needs?
4. What level is **Lisa**? What are her needs?
5. What could **Joe** have done in his meeting to address the needs of each of his staff? How could Joe make sure each team member individually stays connected and motivated to the final outcome?