

SKILL VS. WILL MATRIX.

Whether you are asked to perform a task or assign it to someone else, the leadership style that is needed during the course of the assignment depends on a combination of how equipped the person is for the task (**Skill**) and how willing they are to perform the task (**Will**).

Adopting a style of interaction that matches the person's ability and willingness to perform the task ensures that the leadership style will help, not hinder, the task being performed.

The Skill vs. Will Matrix is a guide that allows you to make an initial diagnosis, which can be used when you are:

- Planning to coach a team member
- Delegating a task
- Assigning a task.

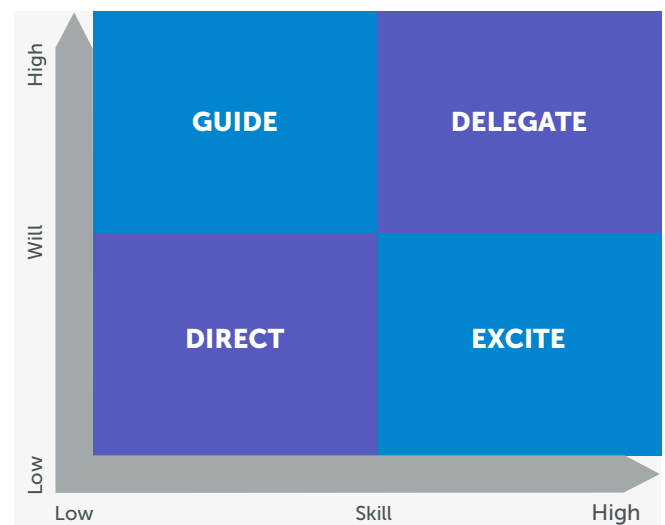
Performance diagnosis

The performance diagnosis process is guided by four questions. The questions can be used either as a personal internal dialogue tool or to share with a team member as a starting point for a coaching or performance conversation:

1. Does the person have a clear picture of the goal of the task or the project? Is it **SMART**?
2. Has this team member done this kind of work successfully before? (high skill/low skill)
3. Does the team member feel excited about doing this task or project? What concerns might they have? (high will/low will)
4. How much input will they need from you in terms of:
 - a. Direction: telling them what and how to do things
 - b. Support: listening and helping them problem-solve for themselves.

The Skill vs. Will Matrix

The Skill vs. Will Matrix can be used to guide your responses to questions 2 and 3 of the performance diagnosis process, which in turn helps to shape your thinking for question 4. It will help you to choose the style of interaction most suited to the needs of the other person.



Skill is a measure of whether someone can perform a particular task and, more importantly, that they can repeat that performance unsupervised and to the standard required. It depends on the person's training, understanding and experience.

Will is a relative measure of the motivation, energy and positivity of a person towards learning and performing a task. It depends on the person's desire to achieve, personal security and confidence.

Using the Skill vs. Will Matrix allows you to make an initial diagnosis of either current or perceived future performance.

SKILL VS. WILL MATRIX.



Coaching/management approach

<p>GUIDE HIGH WILL/LOW SKILL</p> <p>The enthusiastic beginner, new to a role, project or task:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coach and train• Answer questions, explain, encourage self-assessment• Create a risk free environment to allow early mistakes and learning• Relax control as progress is shown.	<p>DELEGATE HIGH WILL/HIGH SKILL</p> <p>The skilled worker who is looking for more opportunities to grow and develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide freedom to do the job• Set the objective not the methods<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Praise, don't ignore• Encourage them to take responsibility and involve them in decision making• Take appropriate risks, include stretching tasks.
<p>DIRECT LOW WILL/LOW SKILL</p> <p>The beginner to a role, project or task who may be nervous or have already tried and failed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First build the will by talking about what motivates and interests them<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide clear briefing• Develop a vision of success• Build the skill by structuring tasks for quick wins<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coach and train• Sustain the will by frequent praise and feedback• Supervise closely with tight control and clear deadlines.	<p>EXCITE LOW WILL/HIGH SKILL</p> <p>The skilled worker who is in need of attention – may be change or engagement related:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify reasons for low will• Develop intrinsic motivation, incentives, value alignment etc• Work on their confidence by developing a vision of how good they could be• Monitor with feedback and praise.

Hints & Tips

- i** The reason the Skill vs. Will distinction is important is because how you deal with a lack of skill/ability is very different than how you deal with a lack of will/desire
- i** The goal is to eventually move the person to the fourth quadrant because they have high skill in the specific task being asked of them, and high willingness/motivation
- i** An individual may be in a different position for different parts of their work
- i** The matrix can't be used as a general diagnosis; 'that person is always...'
- i** In considering tasks and individuals, the task needs to be quite specific e.g. 'presenting to the board' is quite different to 'presenting to the team'
- i** Be aware of your own personal bias in your thinking.

Links & References

1. Landsberg, M. (2003) *The Tao of Coaching: Boost your effectiveness at work by inspiring and developing those around you.* Profile Books.
2. Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. (1985) *Leadership and the One Minute Manager: Increasing Effectiveness through Situational Leadership.* New York. Morrow.