

OpsPilot

Skill vs Willingness Matrix — User Manual

Tailored Leadership of Each Team Member · AI Engineering Co-Pilot



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What this guide covers — what the skill/will matrix is, how the OpsPilot module applies it, what to have ready, and the output you receive.

1. What is the skill/will matrix?

The skill/will matrix is a leadership tool for recognising that the same management approach doesn't work for everyone — how you should lead a person depends on their skill (can they do the task?) and their will (are they motivated to?). Treating a demotivated expert the same as an eager novice gets both wrong. The matrix sorts people into four quadrants, each needing a different style:

Quadrant	Skill / Will	Leadership response
Star	High / High	Delegate — give them autonomy and stretch.
Bored	High / Low	Excite — re-engage; find what motivates them.
Enthusiastic Beginner	Low / High	Guide — build skill while the will is there.
Problem	Low / Low	Direct — close supervision; address both.

OpsPilot applies the *Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership model* and the *Landsberg Skill-Will matrix*, with attention to procedural fairness and psychological safety.

2. What the OpsPilot module does

Role	Responsibility
AI Coach — People Leader (OpsPilot)	Guides a defensible assessment of each team member's skill and will, places them in the right quadrant, and recommends the tailored leadership response — Delegate / Excite / Guide / Direct.
Team Leader / Line Manager (you)	Provide honest observations of each person's performance and engagement — and apply the approach with fairness and care.

3. What you will be asked — have this ready

- The team member (or members) being assessed.
- Honest observations of their skill — can they do the task to standard?

- Honest observations of their will — motivation, engagement, attitude.
- The context (new to role, recent change, workload) that may explain either.

4. What you receive — the output

A Skill vs Willingness assessment (Word): each team member placed in their quadrant with the reasoning, and the tailored leadership approach (Delegate / Excite / Guide / Direct) with practical actions — framed with procedural fairness in mind.

5. Worked example (illustrative)

A manager has two technicians. One is highly skilled but has gone flat — turning up, doing the minimum (High skill, Low will: “Bored”). The instinct to supervise them more closely is exactly wrong; that’s how you lose a good person. The matrix says Excite — find what re-engages them: a stretch project, ownership of an improvement, recognition. The other is new and keen but not yet skilled (Low skill, High will: “Enthusiastic Beginner”) — here the response is Guide: invest in building the skill while the motivation is high, before frustration erodes it. Same manager, two completely different approaches, each matched to the person rather than applied uniformly.

6. Getting the best result

- **Assess skill and will separately.** They’re different axes — a skilled person can be unwilling and vice versa.
- **Don’t over-supervise the Bored.** A capable, disengaged person needs re-engaging, not micromanaging.
- **Guide the eager beginner.** Invest in skill while the will is high, before frustration sets in.
- **Be fair and private.** This is a leadership aid, handled with care — not a label to broadcast.

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