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ABSTRACT

In today's fast-growing business world, the role of leadership in managing groups and teams in an organization has been growing steadily in importance. Due to the increased need of engagement inside firms, leaders nowadays acquire different leadership skills, methods and characteristics to successfully path a business. This paper analyzes how a leaders' communication can enhance a teams' and group performance and subsequently entrepreneurial atmosphere. Another emphasis of this research is to evaluate the role of leadership in managing groups and teams (i.e., building teams and groups, managing teams and groups, communication and motivating teams and groups). In order to explore these topics, a desktop review of the previous studies was conducted to demonstrate the views leaders have on the management of the teams and groups. The research recognizes the role of leadership in managing groups and teams in an organization. Furthermore, the study indicates that effective leadership contributes to a well-functioning teams and groups in an organization as well as creating a better work environment.

Keywords: Leadership, Management, Groups and Teams

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INTRODUCTION

While a team is defined as a group of individuals who work together (team, 2014), researchers have expanded its definition as it relates to the organizational environment. Chen, et.al. (2011) writes that a team is “a distinguishable set of two or more people who interact, dynamically, interdependently, and adaptively toward a common and valued goal/objective/mission” (p. 541). The most notable difference in this expanded definition is that a team does not simply work together, but works together toward a common goal. Other researchers note that teams are individuals who can collectively trust one another, share knowledge, make choices together, and communicate to achieve goals (Wu, Wang & Tsai, 2010). Daspit, et. al. (2013) states that teams have a common purpose, a community that is supportive and a voice in an organization. This perspective is unique in that it offers the single perspective that teams have an opinion that should influence leaders. Along with Kimble’s (2011) description that teams not only have a common goal, but its members also have a sense of mutual responsibility toward achieving that goal. The current literature validates that teams share a mutual purpose to reach a valued objective

A group is an assemblage of persons who work, interact and cooperate with one another in achieving a common goal in a specified time. The identity of the group members is taken individually. The members share information and resources with other group members. In an organization, the groups are made on the basis of common interests, beliefs, experience in common fields and principles, so that they can easily coordinate with each other

Building Teams and Groups

One of the most significant components to building Teams and Groups is the team leader. “Managing an effective team is the most challenging task since it involves complex processes” (Othman, Abdullah, & Ahmad, 2009). Individuals look to the leader for guidance, vision, goals and feedback on performance. Wu, Wang & Tsai (2010) reveal that not only team leaders but also the style of leadership leaders employ is central to improving the effectiveness of a team.

Teams and Groups do not simply occur. Strategies developed by researchers have helped countless leaders build Teams and Groups. One of the most recognized strategies was created by Tuckman & Jensen (Warrick, 2014). In their strategy for team development, they outlined that teams and groups go through five recognizable stages: forming, storming, norming performing and adjourning (Warrick, 2014). In the forming stage, individuals on the team become acquainted. Storming is the second stage of team development where the members of the team fight for normalcy. In this stage, team roles and goals may also be established. The norming stage occurs when goals, roles and norms have been determined. The fourth stage, called performing, occurs when teams are effective, have built trust and operate at a high level by achieving goals. Lastly, the team enters the adjourning stage. In this stage, which does not always occur, the team focuses on solidifying relationships as the team disbands. Most teams are temporary allowing for a stage five. Other teams stay intact for years, thus never reach the fifth stage (Warrick, 2014). Warrick (2014) goes on to share that even with this widely recognized strategy, he identified five essentials to build effective teams. He proposed that leaders should “provide compelling reasons to focus on teamwork and

building high performance teams,” “develop a systems view of teamwork,” “develop a model of the characteristics of high performance teams,” “Create a model describing the essentials for developing high performance teams,” and “provide tools for building high performance teams” (p. 70, 72). Along with this researcher’s perspective, Chen, et. al, (2011) shares that a concept called psychological empowerment is also effective in building teams. Psychological empowerment is the degree to which individual team members think they have the independence and skill to complete important and impactful tasks. Finally, Othman, Abdullah, & Ahmad (2009) present a compelling argument that emotional intelligence (EI) has a significant impact on team development. Not only does emotional intelligence improve the outcomes of an individual’s agreeableness on tasks, but it also indicates that emotionally intelligent individuals are predisposed to get along with others, be team players, which often produces greater effectiveness on teams (Othman, Abdullah, & Ahmad, 2009). Therefore, implementing a strategy that seeks emotionally intelligent individuals as members on a team may be beneficial to its overall effectiveness. All of these strategies reveal that researchers agree that effectiveness must be planned, strategic and executed in order to effectively build teams.

Managing Teams and Groups

According to Wheelan (2013) a team or a group pass through four different stages. The greatest purpose for developing a team or a group is to create a unit that is capable of working efficiently and productively together to achieve specific goals. Therefore, leaders need to identify in which stage their team or group is, to be able to manage and develop it and adjust their leadership accordingly. The four stages are as follows;

Belonging and Security: The goals for the first stage are to create a sense of belonging to the group or a team and develop the members’ loyalty towards the group or a team. When the group or a team has achieved these goals as well as created an environment where the members feel secure in proposing ideas and suggestions, the group or a team has passed the criteria for the first stage. It is normal that the members feel very dependent of the leader in this stage.

Opposition and Conflict: The goal for the second stage is to develop common goals, values and processes. Normally a lot of conflicts occur during this stage, when the members try to disengage from the dependence of the leader and develop consentaneous goals. It is of importance that the conflicts do not become personal but are related to the tasks they are to perform. To be able to reach stage three and better collaboration the group or a team first needs to solve the conflicts and develop and agree upon their purposes.

Trust and Structure: The goals for the third stage are to consolidate positive relations between the members as well as perform more mature negotiations regarding roles and processes. In this stage the group or team members are striving to enhance the communication within the group or team and focus changes toward performing the tasks instead of spending time regarding questions related to status, power and influence.

Work and Productivity: There are four goals presented regarding what to accomplish at stage four. These are; to execute the work well, to make informed and well-grounded decisions, to maintain unity while encouraging work-related conflicts and to continue being high-performing in the long run. In this stage the focus lies on efficiency and productivity, and it is in this stage

that the group or team becomes high-performing. There are thirty-four aspects that identify a group or a team in stage four, according to Wheelan (2013). Some examples of these are: that the members are well aware of the team's goals, the members are well aware of their roles, the communication structure matches the assignment's requirements, the team is characterized by strong unity and that the team spends enough time discussing problems and decisions.

Communication

The lifeline of any organization and the success of a business enterprise to a great extent depends upon the efficient and effective communication (Bisen & Priya, 2008).

One of the most important tools for an organization to exchange information is communication, build a network and guarantee a smooth running work flow within a firm. Communication has been practiced since Antiquity where it has been one of the fundamental activities performed between people and societies (Ors, 2015).

Zugaro and Zugaro (2017 p.56) describe the purpose of communication as follows: "Communication is one of the four important milestones that lead to effective action and change. If you want to change things you need to communicate. Communication helps you to understand your stakeholders. If you listen to them, you will be able to constantly adapt your working efforts and needs of the stakeholders you are serving. And you may bring these stakeholders along your way, Whether it's your boss, your internal customer in a company or the external consumer and client or colleague. Communication allows us to both inform and to learn. And successful communication only occurs

when both partners change after that process - either because they have learned something and can better understand the other person's viewpoint or because what you learned will make you change the things you do and how you do them. So, there has to be the will to change, the openness to accept and to listen."

Communication is one of the most important tools for an organization our days to exchange information, build a network and guarantee a smooth running work flow within a firm. Communication has been practiced since Antiquity where it has been one of the fundamental activities performed between people and societies (Ors, 2015).

Today, new technologies have emerged due to Globalization and the 21st Century has made it possible for information to be produced, distributed and shared (Ors, 2015). According to Ors (2015), "Organizations demand quickly obtained and accurate information to compete. Therefore, technologies like computer networks, data banks, portable personal computers, wireless communication, satellite communication, e-mail, and the Internet have acquired strategic importance."

The ability to communicate allows leaders to motivate, direct and train employees towards a certain set of goals. Having a set of self-knowledge and organizational knowledge are key characteristics of good leaders. Furthermore, Tuhovsky (2015) adds that the ability to effectively communicate consists of:

- Understanding of others (and showing it)
- Clear expression of oneself
- Imposing an influence on others
- Active listening
- Asking open and detailed questions

- Taking care of our own needs and goals during a conversation
- Exchanging opinions in a non-conflicting way

Motivating Teams and Groups

“The term motivation refers to factors that activate, direct, and sustain goal directed behavior ... Motives are the ‘whys’ of behavior – the needs or wants that drive behavior and explain what we do. We don’t actually observe a motive; rather, we infer that one exists based on the behavior we observe.” (Nevid 2013). In an organizational aspect, motivation has been defined as “the sum of the processes that influence the arousal, direction, and maintenance of behaviors relevant to work settings”. Employee motivation at work is considered as an essential drive as it generates effort and action towards work-related activities, for example, employee’s willingness to spend the energy to achieve a common goal or reward. When an employee is motivated, he or she shows enthusiasm and eagerness towards the work and a strong determination to implement and accomplish the work tasks (Moran 2013).

There are many ways to motivate employees in today’s working environment. Companies globally have been using different strategies and approach in order to improve employees’ motivation. However, it seems that the best motivator for employees is something that is indeed important in their lives. Furthermore, different people might have different values and approaches and, therefore, being able to understand employees’ needs and using appropriate motivating methods can help increase the level of motivation (Gleeson 2016)

According to Jan Ketil Arnulf’s article “Money as a Motivator” on Fudan University School of Management (2014), money is deemed to be the

best motivator to any individual. Looking back to the historical time, it is money that caused huge differences between employees working in inhuman conditions in the early industrial revolution and the ones working in slave-conditions in the countryside. For those who take part in the “paid employee” system, the money means more than just itself; it also means freedom and prosperity. That is why many people trying to move to industrial regions with the hope to improving their lives and working conditions. With that prospect of salary, today many young people are still striving from poorer to better living conditions, from low to high education since they think it is the only way to ensure a prosperous future (Arnulf 2014).

Advancement as a motivator indicates the opportunities of being promoted to higher position, having higher salary and more benefits in the company. Not all employees share the same advancement motivation, therefore understanding each employee’s needs and assisting them to reach the satisfied drivers is also a way to motivating employees (Lipman 2014)

Growth motivation is quite similar to advancement motivation since it is one of the motivators that helps retain the employees. However, the definition is broader and it is not only just about career promotion or better salary and benefits. Good employees are enthusiastic, eager, determined, and above all, ambitious. They are always looking for better opportunities to grow, to acquire more knowledge, to learn new skills, to widen their network, and to challenge themselves with different positions. Providing and stimulating employees’ growth motivation is essential method of increasing the level of motivation (Lipman 2014)

The work itself is also a contributor to employee motivation. There is a fact that an employee might absolutely love his or her job, is satisfied with the pay, and has good relationships with his/her colleagues, but still finds the work itself completely boring and uninspiring. A happy employee may stay, but if you really want to motivate the employees, create interesting work and let them engage with it. This means forming strong work cultures, encouraging creative thinking and innovation, and especially, avoiding unhealthy, unequal and impotent working environments (Landrum 2015)

Finally, whatever the job is and no matter what your position is, it is very important to an employee that his/her efforts are recognized. If an employee has been spending a lot of time working on a task, or is even just willing to help out the other co-workers, give them applause and show them your gratitude. It can be understood that it is not merely about giving praise. If the efforts of an employee are recognized, he/she will feel achievement and fulfillment and continue to excel in the work. However, it is crucial to consider that the recognition as a motivator may differ among employees as one might increase the work productivity after being recognized while one is the opposite. By working closely with employees, you may know how they react to recognition, thus being able to offer a fitting way of appreciation (Health field 2017)

Motivation is an essential part of success and business prosperity in the existing dynamic and competitive market. It comprises of an individual's internal characteristics and the external factors that include job factors, individual differences and organizational practices (Gopal & Chowdhury, 2014). Motivation is the need for and expectation of work and the different factors in the workplace that facilitate

team motivation (Bahmanabadi, 2015). It is important for managers to emerge as leaders so that they understand team members' needs and expectations, which drive the organization's culture. Of all the functions that a leader performs, motivating employees is the most important and complex task (Almansour, 2012). A major reason for this is that team motivation attributes change constantly. The major factors that motivate employees are fulfilling of needs, workplace justice, labor expended, employee development programs and policies of reward and appreciation (Hamidifar, 2009).

Motivating teams is more challenging than motivating an individual. Very often, individuals in the team have different beliefs, values and different goals and expectations. A team can be defined as a collection of individuals who have different skill sets; work together to achieve goals and help team members to collaboratively apply different skills (Enbom et al., 2005). It is difficult for a leader to motivate every member of a team based on his or her unique motivating factor. A single motivation strategy has to be selected for the team so that it can be motivated effectively (Clark, 2013). Moreover, motivating a team is often challenging as both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation strategies have to be determined according to the values, beliefs and thinking of the entire team. There can be both positive and negative personalities in a team. Positive personalities help individuals to contribute their unique capabilities and potential effectively (Clark, 2013).

Many researches have shown that motivated employees perform work better than demotivated ones. Motivated employees are more innovative as they are always looking for better ways to complete a task. They are self-directed and goal-oriented. They can produce high-

quality work with more or maximized efficiency and productivity (Boundless 2017) which also leads to maximization of profits (Matthew, Grawich & Barber 2009). Employee motivation has a strong influence on the effectiveness of an organization (Paul 2017). “An effective organization will make sure that there is a spirit of cooperation and sense of commitment and satisfaction within the sphere of its influence” (Abbah 2014).

Motivation is important to both an individual and the organization. For an individual, motivation is an essential factor that encourages a person to achieve his/her personal goals. Within an organization, motivation is said to be a factor that leads to employee satisfaction. Also, motivation inspires a person to widen his/her knowledge, to

explore and unleash his/her full capabilities and potential. Correspondingly, from the organizational aspects, motivation leads to a positive attitude in the workplace, easy adaptation to changes and more creativity. The more motivated the employees are, the more contribution they bring, thus the more profitable and successful is the business (MSG Experts 2017).

CONCLUSION

A proven way to build a successful business team is to assemble a group with a stellar mix of knowledge and expertise. Get to know the strengths and personalities of existing team members to create an effective dynamic. If necessary, seek out new team members to strengthen your lineup.

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