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Introduction to Leadership and Management

Introduction

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others or a group to accomplish objectives. It is precious for influencing the organisational culture, promoting change, and guaranteeing employee commitment. As Northouse (2022) pointed out, leadership entails formulating a vision, an execution plan, and decisions that support the organisational goals and ambitions. This article discusses the contingency leadership approach in organisations, including Facebook and Amazon, and how leadership styles change in different circumstances. Furthermore, personal experiences in a supervisory role at Eastbourne train station will be analysed to illustrate the practical application of these leadership theories.

Leadership Styles at Facebook and Amazon

Facebook (Meta Platforms Inc.):

Facebook, now recognised as Meta Platforms Inc., has been in the social media business for a very long time, and the leadership style used by the company has been one of the most critical factors that have contributed to its success. The leadership style in the Facebook organisation can be best described as transformational, based on the focus on innovation, collaboration, and employee motivation. Being transformational means leading people to do more than they ever

expected or would choose to do themselves for the sake of the organisation's vision.

This leadership style is especially suitable for organisations like Facebook, as it operates in a constantly changing environment.

Transformational Leadership at Facebook

At Facebook, transformational leadership is evident in how managers and leaders help their subordinates achieve the organisation's vision and mission. At Facebook, top management also ensures that the organisation maintains a culture that embraces creativity and innovation since employees are encouraged to develop new ways of doing things. This approach is consistent with Bass and Avolio's (1994) view of transformational leadership that underscores vision, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation.

The openness of communication is another critical aspect of leadership within Facebook's organisational structure. Facebook's leaders ensure that they create an open culture where the employees can freely express themselves and speak out on issues concerning them or any ideas they may have. This kind of communication pattern is critical in fostering a culture of innovation since it promotes the unrestricted sharing of information and knowledge between employees or organisational units (Rajhans, 2012). Another factor that fosters collaboration in the organisation is using a combination of functional, product, and geographical structures that Facebook adopted as a social network to increase flexibility and adapt to new conditions (Okafor & Obiefuna, 2014).

Advantages of Transformational Leadership at Facebook

The use of the transformational leadership style at Facebook has the following benefits. First, it engulfs a high level of employee involvement and motivation. When employees feel that they and their inputs are valued within the organisation and

belong to a greater cause, they are likely to have a workplace commitment to their work and the organisation's goals (Northouse, 2022). This is especially the case at Facebook, as the company needs to ensure that it gets and retains the best talent in an industry where competition is high.

Secondly, transformational leadership at Facebook encourages the provision of adequate knowledge. Managers at Facebook insist that their subordinates work on the edge and test new solutions – this is critical for generating innovations. This approach is consistent with the intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership, which seeks to stimulate employees' creativity (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Therefore, Facebook has continued dominating the social media industry market through new inventions and flexibility in the marketing situation.

Challenges of Transformational Leadership at Facebook

However, like any other organisational management strategy, transformational leadership also has some risks, as observed in the case of Facebook. The first of these risks is the high probability of employee burnout. The pressure to deliver and search for opportunities constantly puts the workers under stress and thus results in high turnover (Walker et al., 2017). Also, the focus on novelty and venture sometimes results in failures, which can be unexpected for the company.

Another challenge is that it is sometimes hard to have consistent leadership at various managerial levels. Still, as with many leadership styles, transformational leadership is most effective at the higher tiers of the company: at the lower tiers, the employees might need more direct control and instructions (Bass, 2008). It may lead to a situation where the workers in the organisation are not in harmony with the vision that top leadership has for the organisation.

Amazon:

Amazon is one of the global e-commerce giants, and it is reported to have a very intense and fast-paced work culture. The leadership style adopted at Amazon can be described as autocratic due to the high level of control, emphasis on productivity, strict standards, and performance demands. This is a leadership style where decisions are made at the top level, and the leaders have most of the power over how the organisation is run. This leadership style has been applied in Amazon because the firm's success is pegged on its efficiency and the capacity to meet rigorous customer demand.

Autocratic Leadership at Amazon

Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, and the organisation's management embrace autocratic leadership in running the business. Bezos has been an autocratic leader in Amazon's organisational culture since he is an active decision-maker in most critical organisational decisions and exercises considerable control over the organisational operations. This approach corresponds to the autocratic leadership style, where the leaders make most of the decisions and concentrate on the task (Northouse, 2022). At Amazon, leaders are supposed to manage their subordinates closely and guarantee that everyone meets the company's performance standards. This is especially the case at Amazon, as the company's success rate relies on its capability to deliver customers' orders on time and effectively (Walker et al., 2017). Managers at Amazon also pay particular attention to the application of Numbers focus, KPIs, and data analysis as tools that help evaluate performance (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). This focus on speed and outcomes is characteristic of autocratic management, in which bosses do not value workers' opinions.

Advantages of Autocratic Leadership at Amazon

The autocratic leadership style adopted at Amazon has the following benefits: First, the changes can be made quickly, which is crucial when working in an environment as volatile as e-commerce. High centralisation of decision-making enables Amazon leaders to respond quickly to emerging challenges and make decisions that may be most suitable for the company (Bass, 2008). This is especially true at Amazon because the firm must be able to change its operations and strategies to meet the needs of its customers.

Second, autocratic leadership at Amazon guarantees that all the employees will have to work equally efficiently. Such consistency in performance is crucial in ensuring that the company remains relevant in terms of reliability and satisfaction among its customers (Northouse, 2022). From this perspective, leaders at Amazon can effectively manage the organisation and guarantee that all the workers are motivated and focused on achieving the company's objectives and meeting its expectations.

Challenges of Autocratic Leadership at Amazon

However, autocratic leadership at Amazon also comes with several issues, such as low employee morale because of the many risks inherent to the project and the organisation's operations. Lack of involvement in decision-making is likely to demoralise employees and reduce their job satisfaction, especially where the organisation operates in a very competitive environment like Amazon (Rajhans 2012, p 93). This can lead to high turnover rates and challenges retaining highly talented employees. A third issue is that the organisational structure might be overly bureaucratic or even rigid. The organisational culture that focuses on efficiency and performance may hinder change and innovation at Amazon, as the employees would not wish to take risks or suggest new ideas because of a fear of being fired if the

ideas fail (Walker et al., 2017). This can hinder the company from formulating new strategies and positioning itself better in the market segment.

Personal Experience: Leadership at Eastbourne Train Station

At Eastbourne train station, I work as a supervisor, and therefore, I exercise the democratic leadership style most of the time. As a manager, I engage in rostering, payroll, and staff training, but the best practice is done through consultation. I promote interaction through the sharing of ideas and the decision-making process by the team members. This has encouraged the work environment and promoted the involvement and satisfaction of the employees. Although this work style may hinder decision-making, it has been found to foster high morale amongst the employees and make all the employees be listened to in matters concerning the daily running of the station.

Integrating Personal Experiences with Theory

Observations at the Eastbourne train station align well with democratic leadership, where employees are involved in organisational decisions. This is in line with Facebook's transformational leadership style, which encourages everybody in the team to communicate and participate in the process of innovation. While both leadership styles involve engaging the employees, it is done in different settings – Facebook for innovation and my position for operational efficiency. Instead, at least in this area, Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon, is fully autocratic and concentrates on effectiveness and power. By this, essential leadership features are underlined – the necessity to fit them to organisational needs. These comparisons seek to show how leadership constructs play out in practice and improve organisational performance in different contexts.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that leadership styles play a significant role in determining the organisation's efficiency, as shown by the examples of Facebook and Amazon. Facebook uses the transformational approach in leadership that encourages creativity and cooperation, while Amazon uses an autocratic approach that enhances productivity and output. Therefore, The Eastbourne train station case can clearly explain why it is appropriate to apply democratic leadership to engage employees and effectively run the station. There is no one way to lead; it depends on the organisation and its objectives. It is, therefore, possible to attain higher levels of success and sustainability in various contexts of organisations that comprehend and use these styles.

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