

UNIVERSITY OF WALES

Module: LCBB4008

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Essay: Introduction to Leadership and Management

Introduction

Leadership is the ability to direct and inspire individuals or a group of people toward the accomplishment of set objectives. Leadership entails providing direction, ensuring people feel encouraged to change and cooperate, and ensuring a healthy working climate. In addition, leadership is defined as a process of engaging individuals in achieving a common purpose (Bass, 2019). Leadership is important because it is the key to organisational success and promotes change, decision-making, and conflict-solving. It defines the culture of the business and cultivates both the stability and flexibility that organisations need to function successfully in today's world. Leadership helps improve the efficiency of a group and also contributes to the growth and success of the subordinates (Setiawan, 2021).

Main Body

Transformational leadership is a type of leadership where the leaders encourage the subordinates and the team to work harder and strive to achieve more than what is expected of them (Magasi, 2021). Managers who employ this style of leadership aim to foster a climate of innovation and teaming, delegating responsibilities, and empowering employees to self-organise and be innovative. Transformational leaders are inspiring, always ready to help their subordinates, encourage others, and help develop the best talents in a short period (Asbari, 2020).

Applying transformational leadership increases the level of employees' motivation and their satisfaction with the work they do. If the employees are motivated, they are more likely to go the extra mile in their productivity at work. This leadership style also fosters flexibility as well as creativity since the employees are inspired to ask questions and look for new ways of dealing with things (Ribeiro, Yucel and Gomes, 2018). Furthermore, it is important to note that there are several possible drawbacks associated with such change. Transformational leaders focus on the large picture and future prospects, they sometimes neglect the day-to-day functioning of the organisation. The constant focus on innovation and change can lead to neglect of properly established processes hence the difficulties in implementation. Furthermore, their focus on encouraging and stimulating set high expectations for the employees, and this leads to frustration and dissatisfaction if targets are not achieved. Transformational leaders also experience challenges when delegating responsibilities, leading to dependence on their vision and direction (Sivarat, Thamma and Kenaphoom, 2021).

At Facebook, there is a great applicability of transformational leadership. Facebook is fundamentally based on constant innovation and a highly effective organisational culture that engages its employees (Khan and Khan, 2019). Many of the transformational principles of leadership are well demonstrated by Mark Zuckerberg. He has cultivated top management that supports creativity and innovation and encourages all employees to set high targets (Singh and Useem, 2021). In addition, it allowed Facebook to stay ahead of competitors and constantly roll out new offerings that are popular with users. With the help of creating a shared vision with his employees and giving them more power, Zuckerberg has developed a strong and sustainable organisational culture (Haupt, 2021).

The use of transformational leadership at Facebook can be modified depending on the situation. During challenges like data privacy scandals or public backlash, transformational leaders must regain and re-establish trust with the employees. This could include the need to assess and possibly increase the level of openness, using straight talk, and implementing timely measures to deal with these issues (Schuller, 2020). On the other hand, when there is stability and prosperity, the attention can embrace the plans and experiments that help the workers come up with innovations and risks. In competitive environments, leaders have to use transformational leadership, coupled with analysis and strategic planning, to ensure the vision corresponds with the organisation's needs and opportunities (Xie, 2020).

Situational leadership is a process where the leader applies different strategies depending on the context and environment (Sivarat, Thamma and Kenaphoom, 2021). The strengths of situational leadership include its flexibility and specificity to the people who are being led. Managers can give a necessary level of guidance and encouragement depending on the individual maturity of the employee and the work's requirements. This flexibility builds motivation and efficiency within a team since each participant in the team gets the support and independence needed to effect change (Schulze, and Pinkow 2020). In contrast, it should also be noted that several disadvantages come with situational leadership. The main disadvantage is the requirement for the leader to act versatile and know their subordinates well. These demands cause certain inconsistencies in the leadership if not controlled properly. Situational leadership is contingent upon assessment of the context and it can be very complex and often subjective. Therefore, this leadership approach depends on the ability of the leader to perceive and make decisions, which can lead to disparities and differences in leadership (Benmira and Agboola, 2021).

In the context of Amazon, situational leadership is highly applicable. Amazon works in a very dynamic environment that involves implementing numerous and diverse projects and tasks, which need different amounts of support and guidance (Vom et al., 2018). For example, a leader could become more prescriptive during the development of a new product on Amazon that needs to be released quickly and contains many tricky features. Moreover, if a leader working in Amazon is leading a rather experienced team that has to solve repetitive tasks, the situational leader can take a more delegative position, allowing the team members more freedom to make decisions and come up with innovations. It is clear that depending on the circumstances, the situational leader adopts a certain attitude.

While studying at the university, I was assigned to be a group project leader for an intricate software development class. There were 5 people in our team, and everyone had different strengths and weaknesses in the teamwork. My responsibilities as a group leader entailed managing the members of my group to achieve the deadlines and final results of the project. The first problem we encountered was the lack of specific protocols (such as standardised formats for internal memos) guiding the communication process. I scheduled meetings with my team to check on the progress we were making, any problems that could be encountered, and everyone's understanding of the project. I pressed on the communication aspect and largely embraced suggestions from all members of the team, thus promoting equality.

Another key component of managing my team was delegation. Understanding that everyone has strong and weak sides, I distributed the tasks according to their qualities. For example, one team member was good at coding; therefore, they were attributed with handling the technicalities of the project. While another was good at arranging things and was charged with the responsibility of ensuring that documentation of the project's progress and the project's timeline was well recorded. To enhance team communication, I stressed the need for teamwork throughout the project. During the course, we frequently teamed up and solved complex issues together, by using the help of each other and dividing responsibilities. It did not only enhanced our efficiency but also helped in developing teamwork and confidence.

Another challenge that we faced was a technical problem such as frequent system crashes which posed a major challenge to the progress that we have made. To deal with this I decided to convene a meeting where we could discuss some possible strategies for handling the situation. Our mission was to show how teamwork and people's cooperation can be productive, and how we managed it to define and eliminate the problem. We scored highly on

the technical aspects of the project and effectively and efficiently the project was completed as a team. From this, I learnt about effective communication, delegation of tasks and creating harmony through teamwork in practices of leadership.

The most related theory in my situation was the transformational leadership theory.

Transformational leaders exert influence over their followers and aim to bring out more than self-serving behaviour for the benefit of the team (Freund, 2019). In the work process, I tried to motivate the teammates by kindly reminding them of the common objectives and mission. I encouraged the team to work hard and stated that our project was important and everyone's efforts were needed, which fulfilled the motivational constituent of transformational leadership.

Situational leadership was the other theory related to my experience at the workplace. This theory developed by Hersey and Blanchard stated that leadership behaviour ought to be based on the extent of the task procedure, the capability maturity of the group and the environment (Jie and Cheah, 2021). I learned to be more adaptive in my leadership and change the management approach depending on the situation and team. For example, when the team faced a technical issue, I became more democratic and got involved in encouraging group members to share their ideas using their talents. It is essential to note that in the critical areas related to the deadlines, I became more authoritative in controlling the teamwork processes and achieving the set objectives.

Another leadership style that was apparent in my leadership was the servant leadership style. It aims at ensuring that the needs of the members of the team are met by the leader (Pawar et al., 2020). I also took care of my colleagues' needs by ensuring they had what they needed, motivating them, and making myself available when they encountered a problem. Apart from that, this approach not only improved the togetherness of the teams but also helped members to assimilate responsibility and promote individualism. Applying all aforementioned theories in my leadership practices has assisted me in establishing proper balancing and adaptation.

Conclusion

In this report I reviewed leadership types with emphasis on transformational and situational leadership theories. I described these theories and discussed how they would benefit and possibly harm companies such as Facebook and Amazon. This course and my working experience as a project leader helped me to realise how useful these theories were practically and how crucial it is to be as flexible and vocal as possible. While transformational leadership

promoted commitment and cooperation, situational leadership brought adaptability to the strategy that was used. From these findings, I recommend future leadership strategies that focus on flexibility, decentralisation, and communication channels in the organisation's development.

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