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Introduction

Through a personal leadership experience, this essay analyses leadership in Tesco, one of the biggest stores in the UK. This further examines numerous leadership and management ideas and models, as well as how they relate to the retail sector. The examination then turns to the impact of Tesco's leadership, with an emphasis on the style, performance, and decision-making of the leader.

The essay elaborates on individual leadership experiences within the framework of Tesco, showing the difficulties and possibilities presented by a leader in a retail setting. With an emphasis on the improvement of leadership abilities, the experience will be examined using pertinent theories and concepts of management and leadership.

Finally, the essay suggests a leadership development strategy that details the actions that must be followed in order to develop the indicated talents and characteristics. The purpose of this essay is to offer insight into a notable UK retailer's leadership style and practises and to recommend areas for personal growth to become a more effective leader in the retail sector.

An Overview of Tesco

Tesco, a global retailer with headquarters in the UK, runs a variety of supermarkets, hypermarkets, and convenience stores (Tesco, 2022b). Jack Cohen launched it in 1919, and since then it has expanded to rank among the biggest stores worldwide (Tesco, 2022a). Tesco has operations in a number of nations, including the UK, Ireland, Europe, and Asia. In each of these areas, Tesco holds a sizable market share.

Tesco's main line of business is the retail sale of goods, both food-related and otherwise, through its physical stores and online store (Tesco, 2022b). It offers a variety of goods, such as food, apparel, electronics, and home goods. Tesco also provides banking and insurance services through its subsidiary Tesco Bank.

With more than 400,000 workers worldwide, Tesco has a diversified workforce (Tesco, 2022a). The business has received recognition for its efforts in encouraging diversity and inclusion in the workplace. It also places a high priority on sustainability, and it has taken a number of steps to lessen its carbon impact and encourage the sourcing of goods in a responsible manner.

Tesco has experienced a number of difficulties throughout the years, including competition from other retailers and a reduction in sales as a result of shifting consumer behaviour (Tesco, 2022b). To fulfil the requirements of its clients, the business has continually evolved and changed, launching new goods and services and enhancing its online presence.

Tesco has been emphasising digital transformation in recent years and has made large technology investments to improve the shopping experience for customers (Tesco, 2022a). The business has also been looking at potential new business ventures in the healthcare and wellness industries.

Overall, Tesco is one of the top retailers in the UK and the entire world thanks to its strong market position, wide product offering, dedication to sustainability and social responsibility, and constant efforts to innovate and adjust to shifting consumer needs.

Leadership and Management Theories/Models

Numerous theories and models pertaining to leadership and management have been formulated throughout the years. The following five factors are frequently referenced in academic literature and hold significance for the retail sector:

Transformational Leadership

The transformational model places significant emphasis on the significance of inspiring and motivating employees towards the attainment of a common vision (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders are frequently characterised by their charismatic qualities and their emphasis on enabling their followers to achieve their maximum capabilities. The individuals in question foster inventiveness and originality, and possess proficiency in cultivating a constructive professional atmosphere. Transformational leadership has been observed to be an effective approach in the retail sector, as it can inspire and motivate employees to deliver exceptional customer service and generate innovative ideas for enhancing store operations (Covey, 1992).

Situational Leadership

The proposed model posits that the efficacy of leadership is contingent upon the ability to adjust one's approach to align with the unique circumstances at hand (Burns, 1978). Effective

leadership requires the capacity to evaluate the requirements of subordinates and adapt one's leadership approach accordingly. Situational leadership theory posits that leaders must exhibit varying degrees of directive and supportive behaviours, contingent upon the employees' level of competence and commitment. The aforementioned methodology can prove to be advantageous in the domain of retail, wherein the workforce may exhibit heterogeneous levels of proficiency and expertise.

Contingency Leadership

The theoretical framework suggests that the optimal style of leadership cannot be universally determined, as the efficacy of a leader is contingent upon the specific circumstances (Yukl, 2013). Effective leadership requires the capacity to evaluate the context and determine the optimal course of action based on the particular conditions. According to contingency theory, the efficacy of a leader is contingent upon various factors, including the nature of the task, the attributes of the followers, and the contextual milieu of the organisation (Tuckman, 1965). Contingency theory can be implemented in various store environments within the retail industry, including high-end boutiques and discount stores.

Transactional Leadership

The aforementioned model places significant emphasis on the practise of incentivizing and penalising employees in accordance with their job performance. Transactional leadership is characterised by the establishment of unambiguous expectations and objectives, and the provision of incentives for achieving or surpassing these objectives, as well as penalties for failing to do so (Kotter, 1990). The aforementioned approach has the potential to yield positive outcomes in terms of incentivizing personnel to achieve sales objectives or other performance indicators within the retail sector.

Servant Leadership

The aforementioned model prioritises the significance of catering to the requirements of followers and giving precedence to their interests. Servant leadership is a leadership approach that emphasises the importance of fostering positive relationships and creating a conducive work environment (Bass, 1985). The primary objective of this approach is to empower employees to achieve their maximum potential. Servant leadership has been identified as an effective approach in fostering a culture of customer service excellence and employee engagement within the retail industry.

In general, the retail industry can benefit from the application of various leadership and management theories and models. It is imperative to discern the most appropriate approach that aligns with the particular circumstances, and to exhibit adaptability in modifying one's leadership methodology accordingly.

Application of These Theories/Models to the Leader of Tesco

The assessment of Tesco's present Chief Executive Officer, Ken Murphy, can be analysed using diverse leadership theories and models. Transformational leadership is a model that underscores the significance of inspiring and motivating employees towards accomplishing a common vision (Covey, 1992). Murphy has exhibited a form of leadership characterised by the establishment of challenging objectives for Tesco's future (Antonakis & House, 2014). These objectives include the attainment of a zero-carbon business status by the year 2050 and the enhancement of customer health by facilitating access to healthier food alternatives.

Contingency theory is a pertinent model that pertains to Murphy's leadership style, positing that the efficacy of a leader is contingent upon the circumstances. Murphy's prior tenure as the Chief Executive Officer of a health and beauty retail establishment has bestowed upon him exceptional discernments into the requisites and predilections of Tesco's clientele (Tuckman, 1965). The individual in question has applied their acquired knowledge to formulate strategic determinations regarding product inventory and enhancing the customer experience within Tesco's retail establishments (Yukl, 2013).

Murphy's leadership style can be analysed from the perspective of servant leadership, a philosophy that prioritises the act of serving the needs of followers and placing their interests as the foremost priority. Murphy has exhibited a form of leadership characterised by prioritising the welfare of Tesco's personnel amidst the COVID-19 outbreak (Mintzberg, 2004). The individual in question has taken steps to bolster the well-being of frontline workers, including the implementation of hazard pay and an expansion of sick leave. Additionally, there has been a focus on ensuring the safety of these workers through the provision of personal protective equipment and the introduction of social distancing protocols within store locations.

Murphy's leadership style can be analysed through the lens of transactional leadership, which prioritises the use of rewards and punishments to motivate employees based on their performance (Kotter, 1990). Tesco has established a robust performance management culture

that incorporates precise metrics and objectives for sales and profitability. Murphy has consistently underscored the significance of achieving these objectives, while concurrently promoting ingenuity and trial-and-error as catalysts for expansion (Lussier & Achua, 2013).

In general, Murphy's leadership style at Tesco can be assessed favourably using various leadership theories and models. The individual in question has exhibited proficiency in modifying his leadership approach to suit the circumstances at hand, all the while placing emphasis on the welfare of Tesco's staff and clientele (Goleman, 2000). Murphy's strategic approach of establishing challenging objectives and prioritising performance management has positioned Tesco for sustained success in the fiercely competitive retail sector.

Reflective Review

Throughout my tenure at a retail establishment, I was afforded the privilege of assuming a leadership role in guiding a select group of staff members towards the attainment of our sales objectives. An experience that is particularly noteworthy is the occasion where I was required to manage an interpersonal dispute between two members of a team who were experiencing difficulties in their working relationship. The author came to the realisation that, in their capacity as the team leader, they bore the responsibility of addressing the issue at hand and devising a solution that would enable the team to collaborate in a productive manner.

The author opted to implement a transformational leadership strategy by establishing a collective vision for the team, which encompassed unambiguous standards for collaboration and effective communication. I facilitated a constructive dialogue between the two team members, emphasising the importance of mutual perspective-sharing and active listening. Through prioritising collaboration and mutual respect, I successfully facilitated a constructive dialogue that culminated in the resolution of the conflict.

This experience has highlighted the significance of possessing proficient communication and conflict resolution abilities in the realm of leadership. The significance of taking initiative in resolving conflicts and upholding a constructive team environment was duly acknowledged by me. Subsequently, I have actively pursued prospects to enhance these competencies via instructional programmes and introspection.

Regarding the demonstration of leadership authority, it has been realised that a balance between assertiveness and empathy, along with understanding, is crucial. The author acquired the skill

of establishing unambiguous guidelines for their team, while simultaneously demonstrating openness to their team members' suggestions and apprehensions. Through fostering a nurturing atmosphere that prioritises active listening and recognition of individual contributions, I successfully incentivized my team to attain our sales objectives and collaborate harmoniously.

Conclusion

In conclusion, thinking about our own leadership experiences and judging them in light of leadership theories and models might help us figure out where we need to improve. By applying these ideas to our own way of leading, we can increase our ability to get people on our teams excited and help them do their best work. By taking a critical look at how Tesco leads and manages, we can observe how good leadership affects the performance of an organisation. We can use the things we've learned from this reflection to construct a plan for leadership development that will help us improve as leaders.

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Appendix

Leadership Development Plan

Development Objectives	Current Rating	Activities for Improvement	Goal Rating	Location and Span of Completion
Developing communication skills with co-workers/	3 – Meets Expectations	Attend communication skills training	5 – Outstanding	Workplace 1 year

subordinates				
Build stronger relationships with the team	2 – Needs Improvement	Schedule one-on-one meetings	4 – Exceeds Expectations	Workplace 6 months
Develop problem-solving skills	2 – Needs Improvement	Seek mentorship from leaders	5 – Outstanding	Workplace 2 years
Improve decision-making abilities	1 – Unacceptable	Practice active listening techniques	5 – Outstanding	Workplace 3 years
Increase adaptability to change	4 – Exceeds Expectations	Take courses on problem-solving	5 – Outstanding	Workplace 6 months
Foster a culture of innovation	3 – Meets Expectations	Attend decision-making workshops	4 – Exceeds Expectations	Workplace 6 months
Develop a growth mind-set	4 – Exceeds Expectations	Encourage creative thinking exercises	5 – Outstanding	Workplace 6 months