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Leadership and Management, Theory and Practice

LCBB6003

Assignment 1

LECTURER

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Introduction

The objective of this evaluative essay is to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of leadership theories and models. In order to achieve this objective, this research essay focuses on my past leadership experience at Savoy Hotel as a room service attendant on a part-time basis. The focus of the leadership experience in this study is leadership in action from the manager's perspective. An evaluation of the leadership experience will entail analysing the application of leadership theories and models to Savoy's manager. Through this evaluative essay, the researcher seeks to evaluate knowledge and understanding of the leadership theories and models by evaluating their applications from the leadership experience. The evaluation will also have a reflection and development plan aimed at improving the learner's leadership skills.

The Savoy Hotel

As one of the earliest deluxe purpose hotels in London, The Savoy Hotel is one of the most luxurious hotels known for its unrivalled comfort and service according to a survey by Mango (2018). Due to its distinguished popularity for unmatched service, The Savoy Hotel provides numerous services ranging from accommodation, dining, leisure and recreation, beauty and fitness, conference services and luxurious chauffeur driving among others. Due to its location, services scope and international reputation, Savoy attends to customers with divergent needs on a daily basis. In order to meet the various customer needs in a manner that is both effective and efficient, each function at Savoy operates autonomously. The result of this is the restaurant, beauty spa, fitness centre, hotel room operating as individual units. While at Savoy, I worked under the room service subunit whose business was attending to various customer requests and

needs. Room service was a subunit under accommodation subsystem and was headed by the accommodation Manager.

Management Theories and Leadership Models

There are four popular management theories namely the scientific management, systems management, contingency management and theories X and Y. The four popular leadership models are transformational leadership, transactional leadership, charismatic leadership, Fiedler's contingency theory (Mango, 2018).

Management Theories

Scientific Management Theory

The scientific management theory by Fredreick Taylor evaluates and synthesises workflow with the objective of improving economic efficiency through improved labour efficiency. This is through the application of work process systematisation, tools standardisation, harmony between team members, financial incentive and placement and training (Mango, 2018).

Systems Management Theory

The systems theory of management states that businesses are composed of multiple components which harmoniously work together to facilitate optimal system performance. Firms are comprised of various subsystems namely marketing, production, accounting and research and design among others whose functionality is interrelated in attaining organisational goals through synergy (Mango, 2018).

Contingency Management Theory

The major argument behind the contingency theory of management is that every organisation is different since numerous external and internal factors affect the selected management approach. Three variables namely organisational size, technology used and leadership style are

likely to influence organisational structure. As a result, a leader should be swift in identifying a management style that aligns with the organisation's needs (Nawaz & Khan, 2016).

X and Y Management Theories

Theories X and Y by McGregor propose different management approach for different employees. Theory X holds a pessimist view of employees and postulates that employees lack the drive to work unsupervised since they view work as a form of burden thus only do it for monetary purposes. Theory X thus advocates for an authoritarian approach in managing employees. Theory Y on the other contrary holds an optimistic view of employees and postulates that employees derive satisfaction from the work they do hence are enthusiastic and committed in their work. Theory Y advocates for participative management approach in dealing with employees (Rosenberg, Hansen & Ferlie, 2016).

Leadership Models

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership approach is leadership model that seeks to create change that both positive and valuable in followers with the objective of transforming followers into leaders through participation (Mcgrath and Bates, 2017).

Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is a leadership style in which leaders are able to enforce compliance in followers using rewards as tool. The use of reward as an incentive in motivating followers may either be positive or negative. The realisation of this is supported through strict adherence to order and structure within the organisation (Mcgrath and Bates, 2017).

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership is a leadership style that combines interpersonal connection, charm, persuasion and interpersonal connection in motivating others. Due to the charismatic leader's unique capabilities such as vision, communication, confidence and creativity, they are able to evoke strong interpersonal connections with their followers and working teams (Mcgrath and Bates, 2017).

Fiedler's Contingency Leadership

Fiedler's contingency theory states that there exists no best leadership style to be applied in all situations. However, leadership styles tend to be aligned with specific situations. The effectiveness of a leadership style is thus pegged on how well the manager executes it. The implication of this is that an individual may be an effective leader in one situation and less effective in another situation (Mcgrath and Bates, 2017).

Application of Leadership Models at Savoy Hotel

Leadership Model

The leadership model applied at the accommodation subsystem of Savoy Hotel in addressing operational and strategic needs is Fiedler's contingency leadership model. This is because the leadership approach in the subsystem changed before, during and after strict COVID19 guidelines. Before the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic, the leadership model used at Savoy Hotel's accommodation subsystem was transactional and entailed employees being rewarded for outstanding performances as well as being punished for undesired behaviour. During strict COVID19 guidelines, the leadership approach embraced in the accommodation subsystem changed to transformational leadership. Through transformational leadership, leaders encouraged employees to play an active role in mitigating COVID19 by taking constructive

initiatives. When COVID19 spread and infections eased as a result of massive vaccinations, Savoy Hotel sought to recover from the consequences of COVID19 and as a result switched back to charismatic leadership. This was pegged on the view that a satisfied employee resulted in a satisfied customer. The manager in charge of the accommodation subsystem in the organisation was more passionate, confident and good communicator about turning around the effects of COVID19. In addition, she also took part in physical chores such as cleaning, laundry and room service. Due to her charismatic appeal, most of the employees supported her vision and put in more effort which subsequently translated to overall improvements within the organisation in terms of performance (Maylor et al., 2018).

Critical Evaluation of Leadership and Management

From an evaluation of leadership and performance at Savoy Hotel, it is evident that both leadership and management play critical roles towards the realisation of operational and strategic goals. Management plays a significant role in mobilising and aligning resources in an organisation while leadership plays a significant role in mobilising followers. The combined effect of both management and leadership is operational synergy which translates to organisational effectiveness and efficiency. At Savoy Hotel, effective management and leadership strategies were critical in ensuring the firm's continued survival. From the Savoy Hotel case study, leadership and management should be flexible enough to address emergent needs (Parker, Parsons & Isharyanto, 2015).

Review of Own Leadership Experience and Areas of Own Development

Gibbs Reflective Cycle

Gibbs reflective cycle is a cyclical reflection model that uses six steps in exploring an experience namely description, feelings, evaluations, analyses, conclusions and subsequent action plans (Sekarwinahyu et al., 2019).

Description

The accommodation manager was responsible for ensuring smooth running of the accommodation function by coordinating with various employees. In order to achieve this coordination and run the accommodation function seamlessly, the manager combined leadership and management skills with the goal of getting the best. These leadership skills were effective communication, decision making, resource allocation, problem solving, motivating others and strategic thinking. On a daily basis, the accommodation manager allocated tasks and made follow-ups to ensure operational effectiveness. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID19 pandemic, the accommodation subsystem was orderly and adhered to a mechanistic organisational structure. The mechanistic organisational structure played a facilitative role in enforcing transactional leadership within the organisation. Through the mechanistic structure, each employee reported to a supervisor who reported to the accommodation manager. As a result, monitoring and issuance of both positive and negative rewards was made possible through the organisational structure. At the peak of the COVID19 pandemic, the mechanistic organisational structure was revamped into an organic organisational structure. The result of the organic organisational structure was the elimination of supervisors in the organisation with every employee being considered as equals. The organic organisational structure enabled the accommodation manager to have direct communication with employees and motivate change. Post strict COVID19 measures and economic recoveries, the accommodation manager used

her leadership skills in making her followers develop an interest in her plans. Passion, communication, confidence and empathy played a significant role in motivating her followers.

Feelings and Thoughts about the Experience

From a personal perspective, I strongly feel that the experience was not only an eye opener but empowering. This is because through the experience I noted that there is a significant leadership gap in terms of skills. Gaps in terms of communication, resilience, vision, interpersonal skills among others were realised from this experience.

Evaluation of the Experience

The general leadership experience can be summed up as positive since I was able to learn several new concepts and ideas. I learned that communication involved both speaking and listening. I also realised that resilience and confidence are critical leadership skills needed for one to become a successful leader. This is because resilience and confidence enables a leader to remain optimistic even in the face of adversity. I also learned that emotional intelligence was an important trait in successful leaders.

Analysis

From the leadership experience at Savoy Hotel, communication is one of the key leadership skills a leader must possess. This is because through communication, a leader is able to share his ideas while listening to the views of the followers. Communication is important in deciding how effective the message is. Due to the fact that a leader works with his followers, interpersonal skills in the form of negotiation, problem solving, decision making, patience and assertiveness make a successful leader. This is because these skills play a key role in resolving conflicts and aligning with organisational needs. Resilience and confidence are critical leadership skills needed for one to become a successful leader. This is because resilience and confidence enables a leader to remain optimistic even in the face of adversity. Vision is an important leadership trait for one to be successful as a leader. A visionary leader is able to see far and the vision enables the leader to inspire an organisation into progression. Through vision, a leader is able to update the organisation's processes in line with changing environmental requirements. Emotional intelligence was also an important trait in successful leaders. Through emotional intelligence, a leader is able to identify, manage and evaluate the emotions of the self and people around them.

Conclusion

From an evaluation of the leadership experience at Savoy Hotel from the accommodation manager, I have realised a significant skill gap in terms of leadership. As a result, need to put in more effort in bridging this gap.

Action Plan

I seek to develop my communication skills through continuous exercising and conducting further reading on the same concept. I am aware that my problem solving, patience and negotiation skills are poor. In order to improve my problem solving, patience and negotiation skills, I will undertake numerous exercises to improve my interpersonal skills through experience. In addition, I will also undertake additional reading to understand focus areas in order to improve my interpersonal skills. While I am resilient, my confidence levels are very low. However, I intend to learn about various leadership challenge case studies and how they were addressed as a way of building my confidence. This is because the success of other case studies will enable me to avoid unnecessary doubts and fears. Resilience and confidence will also be developed by interacting with peers in the industry to share their views on how they overcame the various challenges they were faced with. In order to be visionary, I intend to embrace a proactive view of life. Through regular practice of pro-activism I should be able to develop and hone my proactive skills. While my emotional intelligence skills are not well developed, I seek to continuously exercising it should improve it.

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Appendix

Development Plan

What are my Leadership Development Objectives	What Leadership Activities Do I Need to Undertake to Achieve my Objectives?	Where will I develop my Leadership to Achieve my Leadership Objectives?	Target Date For achieving my Objectives
To improve my leadership communication skills	Undertake more spoken and listening communication	1. From my course learning 2. From my practical working experience	31 st May 2022
To improve my interpersonal skills	1. To exercise my interpersonal skills 2. To undertake more learning about interpersonal skills	1. From my course 2. From my practical working experience 3. Interaction with others	31 st Aug 2022
To improve my resilience and confidence skills	1. Study more case studies 2. Read more literature 3. Learn and master the skills physically	1. From my course 2. From my practical working experience 3. Interaction with others	31 st Dec 2022

To improve my visionary Skills	1. Study more case studies 2. Read more literature 3. Learn and master the skills physically	1. Course teachings 2. Practical working experiences 3. Interaction with others	31 st Dec 2022
To acquire emotional intelligence skills	1. Study more case studies 2. Read more literature 3. Learn and master the skills physically	1. Course teachings 2. Practical working experiences 3. Interaction with others	31 st Dec 2022