

BA (HONS) Leadership and Management Skills for the Workplace

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Individual Report

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Executive summary

This report provides an overview of key leadership theories and their effectiveness in uncertain situations. A thorough exploration of several approaches, such as Situational, Trait, Behavioral, Transformational, as well as the Servant Leadership styles is made. A critical analysis of each style is made with a highlight of their contextual suitability.

The report highlights the importance of emergent leadership skills in navigating uncertainty. In addition, guides managers on how to foster these skills within their teams. JustinTime agency's current leadership strategies are analysed and practical recommendations for leaders are made. Ultimately, these leaders are equipped with the tools and knowledge tools to navigate uncertainty effectively. Once leaders are able to understand the various leadership styles, foster emergent leadership within teams, and adapt their approach to specific situations, regardless of challenging times, they are more likely to push their teams towards success.

1. Introduction

Just In Time Agency is a care agency specialising in providing supported living and domiciliary care services to adults with Autism, learning disabilities, challenging behaviour mental health as well as other complex needs. The company is driven by the compliance to the has been striving to provide high quality speciality support with the goal of meeting the unique needs of individual service users in their care.

Their supported Living services have been tailored and structured around the needs of their service users since inception with the intention of optimising choices, preferences with in their service users' person-centred plan.

I am currently working under with the administration as the oncall administrator. My role has been largely to provide on call support to the carers while on duty and coordinating the shifts. Managing the rota has been quite challenging recently due to the limited number of shifts available to staff. As a result, I have to deal with the dilemma of staff shortages since most carers will turn down short day shifts and prefer a block of shifts in a week, which the company is un able to provide. The company currently has 30 carers providing services in the Greater London area a number that drastically dropped down from 92 cares due to the recent financial difficulties as result of losing some of the big contracts they had in the past.

Because of the staff shortages and the loss of contracts by the JustinTime Agency, due to financial problems, this report seeks to investigate how the recent changes in the number of contracts the company has have affected the staff and how to manage the change, to ensure that the company can positively mover forward and make profits.

2. Key Leadership Theories/Models/Approaches/Styles

Leadership by nature is a complex concept made up of many approaches that can guide managers in depending on the situations (Benmira and Agboola, 2021). Below is a brief overview of the key leadership theories in this report.

2.1 Trait Theories:

This type theories focuses mainly on the individual's inherent qualities as well as characteristics that would make a good leader according to Tett et al (2021). Some of these traits include decisiveness, intelligence, charisma, and also integrity which are often considered as very important parts of the leadership success.

2.2 Behavioural Theories:

Such theories mainly focus on particular behaviours or actions that leaders exhibit (Porter, 2020). Two of the most common leadership models are:

- **Autocratic Leadership:** Here leaders make unilateral decisions on their own without consulting any one and ensure maximum control over all members of their team.
- **Democratic Leadership:** In this leadership model, the leader encourages active participation of their team members when making decision.

2.3 Situational Theories

These theories emphasize the recognition of the most effective leadership style as one that effectively manages that particular situation. In this case, consideration is based on factors such as the task at hand, the team members' level of maturity, as well as the external environment at that moment (Thompson and Vecchio, 2009).

- **Situational Leadership Model:** In this model the leader would adapt their style (supportive or directive) on the basis of their follower's level of commitment and competence.

2.4 Transformational Leadership

This type of theory put more emphasis on the leader's ability to motivate and inspire their team members in order to attain their full potential. Transformational leaders challenge the status quo, create a shared vision, and empower their teams (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005).

2.5 Servant Leadership

The servant leadership theory tends to focus on a leader who chooses to prioritize the well-being and needs of the members of their team. Such leaders are often collaborative, empathetic, and tend to focus on the creation of a supportive work environment (Benmira and Agboola, 2021).

However, the best leadership style or approach is not a one-size-fits-all. An effective leader adapts their style on the basis of the situation at hand, the team, and their goals. By clearly understanding the different leadership theories and approaches, a leader is able to develop their own leadership skills as well as become an effective leader.

3. Emergent Leadership Skills for Decision-Making Amid Uncertainty

Emergent leadership is the style in which leadership qualities are allowed to organically arise within the team, instead of being appointed by means of a formal hierarchy. Although it may not be directly forced, the managers have many ways of creating an environment which encourages as well as empower emergent leaders to rise within the team. For purposes of

effective emergent leadership, leaders need to possess particular skills or better still cultivate these skills (Sun et al., 2018).

3.1 Effective Emergent Leadership Skills include the following.

a) **Problem-Solving and Initiative:**

An emergent leader should be able to identify problems at the same time propose solutions, as well as take initiative to drive the team to produce the desired results. The leader sees the need and they take action, in the process they inspire others to follow.

b) **Communication and Collaboration:**

The emergent leader excels the skill of clear communication, active listening and accepting of the diversity in team members' perspectives, as well as in building team members' trust by encouraging collaboration. With this skill they are able to effectively rally their team with one goal.

c) **Expertise and Credibility**

An emergent leader is able to gain the respect of their team members using the ability to demonstrate strength in their area of expertise. Such knowledge and skills can inspire the team's trust and confidence.

d) **Adaptability and Innovation**

The emergent leader is able to think on their feet, by adjusting to the changing situations, and introducing creative solutions to overcome the existing challenges.

e) **Motivation and Inspiration**

An emergent leader should have an enthusiastic and positive attitude which motivates their team members. This can be a source of inspiration for the team to attain great things.

The skills above are very crucial in the development and identification of an emergent leader. They inspire both the individual and the team to be better in all they do (Yoo, and Alavi, 2004).

3.2 How Managers Can Encourage Emergent Leadership

There are several ways in which managers can encourage emergent leadership among team members, these include the following ways (Hanna et al., 2021).

a) **Empowerment and Autonomy**

By giving team members ownership of their work and allowing them to participate in the decision-making process. Managers can foster a sense of responsibility which in the end encourages personal initiative.

b) **Open Communication and Recognition**

Through the creation of an environment in which they encourage communication and valuing of new ideas are valued. By recognizing and celebrating the team members' contributions, specifically highlighting instances in which the individuals have taken initiative or perhaps been able to solve the existing and emergent problems effectively.

c) **Mentorship and Development**

Providing opportunities for skills development as well as developing mentorship programs. This way the team members are equipped with the confidence from the knowledge acquired and can take on more challenging leadership roles.

d) **Challenge and Stretch Assignments**

Provision of more challenging tasks as well as opportunities which can encourage skills growth among their team members as well as showcase their leadership potential.

e) **Diverse Teams and Collaboration**

Building teams with more diversity in terms of perspectives as well as encouraging collaboration. This encourages the development of a diverse pool of ideas, allowing individuals of different strengths to stand out.

Nurturing and developing these qualities and creates an environment which empowers initiatives, managers' cultivation of a flourishing emergent leadership team becomes the end goal. This leads to an engaged workforce, with a wider range of solutions, ideas, and ultimately, sustainable project success (Hanna et al., 2021).

4. Critique of Leadership Approaches and Styles

Although several leadership approaches and styles act as valuable frameworks, on the other hand, they all have several limitations (Brocato et al., 2011). Below is a critical evaluation of some of the common leadership styles.

4.1 Trait Theories

Advantages of the Traits theories include the following.

- **Simplicity and Intuitiveness**
The trait theories are easily understandable. They possess a set of characteristics which align with effective leadership, making them a viable starting point of discussions in terms of qualities of a good leader.
- **Provides a Common Language**
The trait theories provide a common language for scholars to discuss leadership. This is helpful when one wants to evaluate the potential leaders or sometimes when they want to develop a series of leadership training programs.

Disadvantages of the Traits theories

- **Overly Simplistic**
The models from the trait theory have a limited set of traits which makes them insufficient in a way in defining a good leader, as they tend to neglect the situation's influence as well as their experience.
- **Difficulty in Identifying Traits**
It is difficult to measure and evaluate these leadership traits due to their subjectiveness and the absence of concrete assessment methods.

4.2 Behavioral Theories

The advantages of behavioural theories

- **Increased Efficiency and Productivity**
A good understanding of the leadership behaviors leading to better performance in organizations, encourages the promotion of styles that are essential in contributing to increased efficiency as well as productivity of the team members.
- **Universality of Certain Behaviors**
Although the ideal leadership style tends vary depending on the situation, specific behaviors, such as providing clear instructions as well as being able to offer positive reinforcement, can be beneficial within several contexts.

4.3 Situational Theories

Advantages of situational theories

- **Focus on Adaptability**
By nature, situational theories acknowledge that an effective leadership style entirely depends on the type of situation at hand. If a leader can adapt their style on the basis of the team's maturity, complexity of the task, as well as external factors tend to increase their successful rate.
- **Improved Decision-Making**
After proper analysis of the situation, leaders make data driven decisions about the most applicable style of leadership use. This leads to team dynamics that are more effective.

Disadvantages of situational theories

- **Complexity in Application**
Situational leadership theory models are quit complex in application especially in the real-world situations and requires accuracy in assessing the various factors.
- **Overreliance on Diagnosis**
These models' success heavily depends on the manager's ability to accurately make the correct diagnosis in the situation as wells the dynamics of the team.

4.4 Transformational Leadership

Advantages of transformational leadership

- **Increased Motivation and Engagement**
Such leaders tend to inspire a common vision as well as purpose going beyond normal daily tasks. This style encourages commitment and ignites passion within members of the team, which leads to increased motivation and engagement.

- **Enhanced Creativity and Innovation**

The style fosters a culture of intellectual stimulation whilst challenging the status quo. Therefore, transformational leaders are good at encouraging the practice of innovative thinking creative and problem-solving amongst their team members.

Disadvantages of Transformational leadership

- **Difficult to Measure**

The leadership tends to have subjective impact as well as effectiveness which makes it more challenging to quantify.

- **Potential for Abuse**

The leadership style emphasises charisma and inspiration which are often misused in cases where the leaders are manipulative or self-serving in nature.

However, it is important to make note the following.

I. Leadership is not a monologue.

This means that effective leadership is a has to be a two-way street involving interactions, influence, as well as inspiration which flows from the leadership to the team, and vice versa.

II. Followers also matter.

Any leadership style's effectiveness heavily depends on the followers' expectations and characteristics. So, one style working well with a particular team does not make it work well with another.

Therefore, leadership is concept that can be viewed from multiple perspectives. The fact that several approaches and styles can offer valuable frameworks, it is important to understand the magnitude of their limitations and acknowledge the role of adjusting the leadership style in relation to the context (Alvesson and Spicer, 2014).

5. Analysis of Current Leadership Strategies

For leadership to be effective one must go beyond the simple adaptation to a single approach or style. There has to be a strategic combination of approaches, adopted to the team, situation as well as the desired outcomes. The frameworks below are essential in analysing leadership strategies (Fischer and Sitkin, 2023).

In the past, the Just In Time Agency leadership did not have a clear leadership strategy in place, as they were juggling small parts of different strategies to match their autocratic leadership style. There was top to bottom irrefutable; communication of decisions made by the leaders. The constantly eruptive changes of leaders become a major hinderance since each leader had their own style and strategy. Some leaders used communication as a strategy others resorted to inspiration as a strategy.

However, in light of the hard financial times that had hit the economy with the company facing a huge number of contract cancellations and heavy staff shortages it has become more apparent for the Justin time agency leadership to streamline their leadership strategies to include the following below as suggested by (Yuin et al., 2021).

5.1. Situational Analysis

Context:

A dramatic change in context of economic situation in the company has led the management to make serious considerations to both the internal and external environment in which they operate. Major factors like industry trends, organizational culture, project goals, as well team dynamics.

Team Characteristics

Evaluation of the skill level, leadership experience as well team members' motivation. The company is now focusing hiring high-performing team members who require minimal supervision, rather than the old one which heavily depended on constant directing as suggested by Belbin and Brown (2022).

Challenges and Opportunities

Identification of the key challenges as well as opportunities faced by the team. This influenced the leadership type that was needed by the company to navigate the difficult times.

5. 2. Leadership Style Selection

The situational analysis provided a basis for consideration appropriate leadership style. It was necessary to give serious consideration to the following styles.

- a) **Directive Leadership:** This would be most suitable for situations that require quick decisions, clear direction, or when working with a team with limited experienced.
- b) **Participative Leadership:** This leadership is effective when one wants to foster collaboration, creative problem-solving as well as buy-in, when it comes to experienced teams like the one for JustinTime Agency.
- c) **Coaching Leadership:** It was necessary for the company to focus on the development of team members' skills and empower with ability to own their work.
- d) **Delegative Leadership:** This leadership is capable of empowering high-performing teams to deliver results by simply delegating tasks and trusting them to deliver.

5.3. Communication Strategies

- a) **Tailoring Communication:** as per Justin Time agency, the company adapted their communication style to their teams. Clear and concise language with direct reports is being used which encourages open discussion as well as feedback now that they are focusing on hiring mainly experienced team members.
- b) **Transparency and Trust:** The company has become more transparent about their challenges, goals, as well as decision-making process. This has encouraged trust as well as team members' engagement.
- c) **Active Listening:** The agency is now paying close attention to communication from their team members.

5.4. Motivation and Inspiration

- a) **Shared Vision:** The company now articulates a clearer as well as compelling vision which is motivating and uniting the team members towards a common goal.

- b) **Recognition and Appreciation:** The company recognizes and celebrates individual and team achievements. This reinforces positive behaviour and motivates continued effort.
- c) **Empowerment and Growth:** the company started providing opportunities for team members to grow, as well as taking on new challenges after learning.

5.5. Adaptability and Continuous Improvement

- a) **Monitoring Progress:** By regularly assessing the effectiveness of their leadership strategy just in time agency was able to adapt to the correct strategy.
- b) **Open to Feedback:** the company has made the strategy to be open to feedback as it comes from the team members and there after adjusting their approach on the basis of the received insights.
- c) **Continuous Learning:** Leaders in the company strive to learn as well as ensure the development of new skills so that they remain effective in a changing their environment.

After analysing their leadership strategies using the above framework, the JustInTime agency will be able to move beyond the perspective of a one-size-fits-all kind of approaches. They would be able to develop flexible as well as adaptable leadership styles which motivates, inspires, as well as empower their team to attain the desired success (Yuin et al., 2021).

However, it is important to take note of the fact that effective leadership is a continuous process. When more thought is given to analysing the prevailing situation or circumstance, the company becomes more equipped to select the most appropriate strategies, as well as to continuously adapt their approach (Conger, 1998). This way Justintime Agency leaders could become a more effective leaders regardless of any situation.

6. Recommendations for Leaders

6.1 JustInTime Agency Leadership recommendations

Although several recommendations exist for leaders, some of the key recommendations that leaders need to put into consideration whilst incorporating some relevant insights from the many leadership approaches include the following as according to Hughes, et al (2018).

6.1.1 Self-Awareness and Development

It is inevitable for any leader to know their strengths and weaknesses this is helpful in individuals understanding their own leadership style, areas for improvement and values, this can be done by seeking regular feedback from mentor and trusted colleagues. Moreover, embracing continuous learning especially since the leadership are constantly evolving. The leaders have to stay up to date with, industry trends, best practices as well as new leadership models.

6.1.2 Leading and Motivating Teams

Articulate a clear vision as a leader by painting for the team members a more compelling picture of the future that is exciting and motivating for justinTime agency staff. Moreover, empowering and delegating which also requires trusting their team members which gives them ownership

of their projects or work. The company should also foster collaboration and communication by creating a space where collaboration and open communication are encouraged.

6.1.3 Strategic Thinking and Decision-Making

The company leadership should engage in the practice of think critically and analytically by considering all information available and potential consequences prior any decision making. Moreover, the leaders need to be adaptable and flexible wielding the ability to adapt their approach on the basis of the changing circumstances which is critical in today's dynamic business world.

6.1.4 Building Trust and Ethical Leadership

Lastly the leaders of Justintime agency will be required to act with integrity by always placing transparency, honesty, and fair treatment of their team members. By doing this, they are able to lead by example. They should live by the same values they expect their team members to live by. As leaders they need to be accountable for their actions by taking responsibility for their decisions as well as mistakes.

6.2 Plan for Emergent Leadership Skills in Uncertain Decision-Making: A COVID-19 and Economic Uncertainty Focus

Because of The COVID-19 pandemic and its post economic uncertainty there have been multiple complexities in the economic landscape, increasing the demand for effective leadership, particularly in the development of emergent leadership skills (Minor, 2013). Below is a plan to cultivate emergent leadership skills to facilitate better decision-making within in the Justin time agency.

Emergent leadership skills development plan for Justintime Agency

1. Building Situational Awareness

The company will start with data collection and analysis. The prospecting emergent leaders should be able to gather as well as analyse important data on the pandemic's impact, industry changes, economic trends, and competitor actions. They should also stay informed on emerging trends by encouraging team members in the practice of actively seeking out any new information as well as sharing their insights.

2. Collaborative Decision-Making

Justintime Agency should empower diverse teams by creating a safe space to accommodate the team's diverse perspectives. By encouraging team members to get into the practice of challenging assumptions, proposing innovative solutions, and actively participating in decision-making. Leveraging technology by using collaboration tools such as video conferencing platforms to encourage communication and engagement.

3. Adaptability and Innovation

This last part of the plan requires scenario planning in order to develop several contingency plans as a means of addressing the different possible scenarios related to their recovery. With this the team is encouraged to think critically. The culture of promoting experimentation and calculated risk-taking will enable the team to test new approaches and ideas that can help them navigate uncertainty. The company should embrace continuous learning which also encourages a growth mindset within the team members.

With the implementing this plan, the company will be able to cultivate a culture which empowers emergent leadership skills among their team members (Minor, 2013). Such skills are critical for effective decision making in light of the complexities of the economic uncertainty brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic uncertainty.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, having a multi-dimensional perspective and being open to the possibility apply more than one leadership style or model remains a concept that needs further exploration. The dynamic nature of the business environment requires organisations to constantly adjust and adapt as new leadership styles also come up every day to challenge the traditional approaches. Existing limitations in leadership styles can be so dangerous that if someone is not careful about, they may not be able to attain their desired value from them. The most effective leaders are those who can leverage their strengths, consider the situation, and inspire and motivate their teams to achieve success. Leadership remains a concept with multiple faces. Therefore, having a plan on place for emergent leadership skills development is critical to the sustainability of the organization. Justintime Agency can brave the difficult times post Covid 19 Pandemic economic crisis through fostering of an environment where innovation, collaboration, and open communication are central in navigating the challenges of uncertainty and will emerge stronger than before.

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Individual Reflective Essay

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Executive summary

The report explores the why emergent leadership skills in the workplace are important. The key characteristics of emergent leaders are defined and an outline strategies that managers can use to nurture emergent leadership qualities within their teams is made.

In addition, it highlights the benefits in developing emergent leadership, as well as enhanced innovation, a more engaged workforce, and improved problem-solving. Besides providing an analysis, this report uses Gibbs Reflective Cycle to present my personal reflection on emergent leadership. The self-reflection in this report serves as a real-life example of how an individual can make an analysis of their own leadership style, identifying the necessary areas for improvement. Ultimately, the report places more emphasis on the value of emergent leadership as well offering practical guidance for both individuals and managers seeking to develop such essential skills.

1.Introduction

Emergent leadership remains such a unique phenomenon in which the leadership qualities are seen to grow organically within a team, instead of being assigned using a formal hierarchy. It calls for individuals to stepping up, and take initiative, as well as inspire others to achieve a shared goal (Minor, 2013). Although it can't be directly forced, still some managers are in the practice of creating an environment which fosters and imparts such skills among their team members.

1.1 Why emergent leadership skills in the work place are Important.

Emergent leadership skills are important in a work place because of the following reasons.

a) Diversity in perspectives

The diversity in terms of perspectives when it comes to emergent skill in the work place empowers members of the team to bring on board a broader range of ideas as well as intervention to the table that improve efficiency in a work place (Carte et al., 2006).

b) Increases employee engagement.

The Individuals in a work place who feel they are being valued for their contributions on the team tend to become more engaged as well as motivated (Yoo and Alavi, 2004).

c) Leads to improved problem-solving.

The collective intelligence and collaboration as a result of emergent leadership leads to increased creativity and effectiveness in problem solving (Sun et al., 2018).

d) Agility and Adaptability

Emergent leaders are capable of helping their teams to make timely reactions to the changing circumstances (Sun et al., 2018).

a) Succession Planning

It assists in identifying and developing potential future leaders within the team (Carte et al., 2006).

1.2 An Emergent Leader's Key Skills

Researchers such as Pescosolido (2002) and Plowman, et al (2007) that I have come across in this module have made me understand that an emergent leaders should have the following skills in order to identify as one and effectively execute their duties within their teams.

- 1) Problem-Solving and Initiative
- 2) Expertise and Credibility in their area of expertise.
- 3) Adaptability and Innovation
- 4) Motivation and Inspiration.

1.3 How can managers nature emergent leadership?

Just like other skills in the work place, managers can nature emergent leaders to become the more effect leaders. Empowerment and Autonomy for example, giving team members a sense of ownership of their work as well as decision-making processes. This fosters a sense of responsibility and encourages initiative. Moreover, creating an environment that also encourages open communication whilst valuing new ideas by celebrating the team members' contributions makes a huge difference.

Managers need to provide opportunities to develop and mentor emergent leaders and thus equipping them with knowledge and confidence that can enable them to take on leadership roles. In addition, emergent leaders should be given challenging tasks as well as stretch opportunities to enable them to showcase their leadership potential.

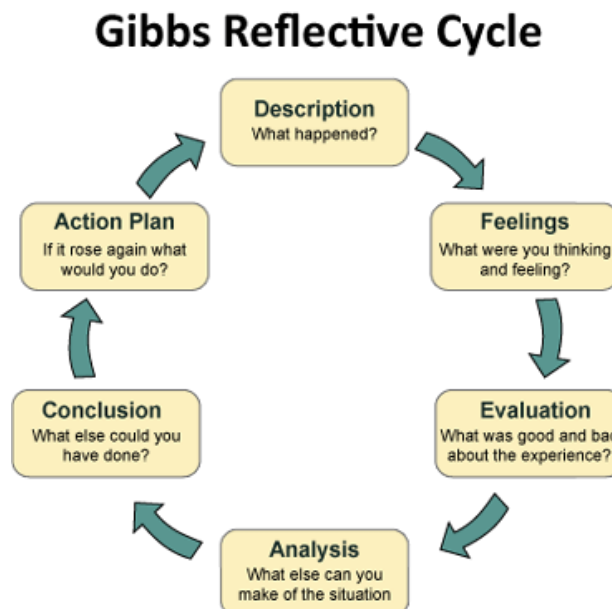
1.4 Benefits of emergent leadership for organizations

This module has made me understand that organisations can benefit a lot from emergent leadership. Such benefits include the following.

Benefits of emergent leadership for organizations		
No.	Benefit	Impact on organization
1.	More engaged workforce	Employees feel empowered and valued for their contributions.
2.	Enhanced innovation	A wider range of ideas and perspectives leads to more creative solutions.
3.	Improved problem-solving	Collective intelligence tackles challenges more effectively.
4.	Stronger team cohesion	Collaboration and shared goals foster a sense of unity.
5.	Developed Talent Pipeline	Emergent leaders become future formal leaders within the organization.

2. Individual reflection using Gibbs reflective cycle

Figure 1. Gibbs reflective cycle



Source: Gibbs (1977).

Using Gibbs reflective cycle, which is a structures framework, I am able to analyse my experience and acquire lessons from it. It has proved to be a valuable tool which can be applied

in both my personal and professional development, especially in leadership as suggested by Gibbs (1977). Below is an analysis of my experience as an emergent leader applying the six stages of Gibbs reflective cycle.

2.1 My Self-Reflection on emergent leadership using Gibbs Reflective Cycle.

Description

In my experience as a leader and student of emergent leadership skills in the workplace, having participated in a cross-functional members' team, I was tasked with the development of a new change management plan. While in attending the brainstorming sessions, I realised some team members were very reluctant to participate, especially the new team members. Then I consciously decided to adopt a more emergent leadership style and thus stepping out of my normal leadership role and style. This required my encouragement of the quieter team members to contribute their ideas, as I actively listened to get a proper understanding of their perspectives, as well as build upon them.

Feelings

In the beginning, I felt frustrated by the members' lack of engagement. But, as I changed my approach, the new members were still hesitant to participate, I felt empathetic towards them and my desire to create an environment which is more inclusive increased. When the team begun responding to my suggestions, I felt a sense of satisfaction as I had managed to encourage the emergent leader within the team members.

Evaluation

I got the positive results I wanted. The initially hesitant new team members started contributing valuable ideas, creating a rich pool of ideas essential for the change management plan. The team members were able to collaborate, and with everyone feeling a sense of ownership of the project. When I reflect on the theory, I acknowledge the importance of creating an environment which accommodates a range of diverse perspectives and empowers the team members' initiatives.

Analysis

After careful analysis I find that my experience is in alignment with the emergent leadership principles. When I encourage participation and active listening to all perspectives, I was fostering an environment allowing an organic emergence of leadership qualities.

Action Plan

Below is a list of the steps in my actions.

- Practicing active listening skills
- Asking open-ended questions
- Acknowledge and celebrate individual contributions.
- Providing opportunities for development
- Reflecting on the leadership style

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, this experience emphasized the importance of my ability to adapt to leadership styles to that particular situation as well as my team's dynamics. Although I normally adopt a more directive approach, the nature of the situation I was in required me to foster emergent

leadership. In the near future, I take the initiative to an environment to cultivate a sense empowerment among my team members to contribute, inspite of their level of experience or position.

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