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Leadership Styles and Skills for Effective Organisational Performance:

Introduction:

Leadership is one of the hardest yet one of the most important things in an organisation as it's a key to the organisation's success. Leadership has become multifaceted in contemporary workplaces dealing with technological change (AI), global competition, hybrid working and increasing ethics while working around ethics and well being. This essay takes a deeper look into leadership specifically through Daniels Goleman's emotional intelligence based frame, Goleman defines six leadership styles established in emotional intelligence: Visionary, Coaching, Affiliative, Democratic, Pacesetting and Commanding. This essay focuses on 3 key factors; visionary, coaching and affiliative. This style was chosen as it gives a good idea of leadership required in modern organisations.

Defining Leadership:

Leadership is a word that is recognised by universities and in the dictionary but many literature scholars have debated the meaning. One describes leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2021). His point describing that leadership is process based and purpose driven goes against the idea that leadership is just a static trait or position. Another Scholar believes leadership is 'the process of enabling collective direction and facilitating organisational movement toward that direction' (Yuki et al., 2019) He emphasises that behavioural aspects play a key part in leadership which form 3 key components; influence, vision and people, suggesting that leadership isn't just to do with authority but guiding and empowering.

Recent studies believe that adaptability is a key requirement for good leadership. Modern leaders need to be able to operate with ambiguity, diversity and digital transformation (Bolden, 2020), meaning that leadership styles may change depending on the situation. A good leader changes their behaviour according to their teams needs and organisational

priorities (Goleman's, 2000). Overall leadership is a concept better understood as a

goal oriented process where leaders allow others to achieve shared outcomes.

Visionary (Authoritative) Leadership:

The visionary style of leadership leads people towards a long term goal. Goleman says visionary leaders are those who produce a compelling vision and link the vision to certain roles while inspiring commitment through clarity and purpose. This is a good style of leadership especially in certain times of change or organisational repositioning.

A huge advantage of visionary leadership is that it creates alignment across an organisation. When employees understand the reasoning and goal behind their work they are most likely to be motivated, engaged and resilient (Northouse, 2021). Visionary leaders lessen doubt during change and provide direction. Another advantage of visionary leadership is that it supports innovation and forward thinking. When focusing on a bigger goal instead of micromanaging, giving time to find solutions which promotes creativity and ownership. Acting in accordance helps improve job satisfaction, problem solving and productivity (Yuki, 2019). Visionary leadership also strengthens organisational structure. A shared goal or objective strengthens collective identity and shows consistent values which is good in a larger or more dispersed organisation.

However there are a few disadvantages that come with visionary leadership, one being its not universally effective. In highly technical or operational environments with more complicated jobs staff may require procedural guidance rather than inspirational direction. With future focused rhetoric some employees may feel disconnected from present tasks especially in crises and busier periods. Another disadvantage of visionary leadership is when a leader doesn't have credibility or emotional intelligence. If employees don't trust their leader these visions can be seen as unrealistic or easily dismissed. These ideas can be dismissed without getting advice or seeking input from employees which can cause disengagement.

Business Example:

Satya Nadella's leadership at Microsoft is a clear example of visionary leadership. By presenting a cultural and strategic direction that focuses on collaboration, cloud innovation and learning. Nadella used organisational culture and repositioned Microsoft as a leader in digital transformation. His success shows how visionary leadership can reshape organisational identity and performance when used appropriately.

Coaching Leadership:

The coaching leadership style is more focused on long term development by helping employees and individuals find their strengths, set goals and build capabilities. This leadership style is one of the most effective for building a sustainable performance as it centres on growth rather than short term goals (Goleman et al., 2000). This type of leadership is used more in sectors with fast technological disruption. There are many advantages to coaching leadership, one being it better employee development,

engagement, confidence and morale. By supporting and investing time into employees

leaders adapt a sense of value and belonging which is proven to improve retention and motivation (Garvey et al., 2018). Coaching also improves successful planning by developing internal talent which reduces cost and increases stability. Coaching also helps strengthen team adaptability. Employees under this leadership are more prone to pick up new skills and willingly respond to organisational challenges.

However coaching leadership also has its disadvantages as it can require a lot of time and emotional invest. In a setting that is more fast paced or is an environment that is constricted to resources coaching can be seen as unrealistic or inefficient. Staff who lack motivation can resist coaching leadership which reduces its effectiveness. Coaching leadership is also at a huge disadvantage when immediate decisions need to be made as its more of a long term development plan rather than focusing on problems right then and there. Another disadvantage is that leaders that lack interpersonal skills will maybe have trouble delivering feedback constructively which can reduce trust and undermine development goals, emphasising that coaching leadership is only beneficial if its supported by strong emotional intelligence competencies.

Business Example:

An example of coaching leadership is seen in Tesco's internal development programmes which shows coaching and mentoring to help progression from store staff to managerial positions. This focus on development has improved internal mobility and reduced turnover as it offers clear career pathways. This example gives a clear idea of how coaching leadership builds long-term organisational capability and staff retention.

Pacesetting Leadership:

Pacesetting leadership is when leaders set high standards and expect others to meet them quickly and accurately. Pacesetting leaders lead with example and push teams to deliver high quality results (Goleman et al.,2000). A strength of pacesetting leadership is getting immediate results and performance improvements especially in teams that are skilled. This leadership style influences precision and good work ethic as employees will see the leader showing high standards and feel the need to match the pace. Clear expectations and fast decision making improves productivity in competitive and fast paced environments (Yuki et al.,2019). IT can also increase organisational agility as teams work quickly and meet targets.

However there are disadvantages: it can become counterproductive if used too much. The constant pressure for speed and perfection can lead to stress, burnout and low morale. Pacesetting leaders can unintentionally create a hostile environment where employees don't task risks out of fear. This style also lacks guidance over time, this weakens trust and causes problems long term.

Business Example

A common example of pacesetting leadership can be found in fast-paced technology start-ups. In early stages, founders often adopt a pacesetting leadership by setting development cycles, tight deadlines and modelling intense work ethics. While this can

increase product innovation , companies that rely on this style for too long face high turnover, employee exhaustion and cultural instability. This shows that even though pacesetter leadership is good for achieving short-term results, it needs to be balanced with supportive and developmental behaviours to make sure there is sustainable performance.

Modern organisations have leaders who have a wide variety of skills. Key skills include:

- Emotional intelligence is a key part of Goleman's leadership styles. Leaders with high emotional intelligence recognise their own emotions, understand employees feelings and manage interpersonal relationships effectively. This can enhance communication, avoid conflict and decision-making.
- Fast-paced change demands leaders who can adapt quickly, and make timely decisions. Adaptability is key for leading digital transformation, responding to market disruption and managing hybrid teams.
- Leaders must keep up with environmental trends, predict challenges and set clear, directions. Strategic thinking supports long-term organisational sustainability. ● Leaders must communicate across digital and face-to-face channels. Clear communication supports engagement, trust-building and purpose.
- Globalised organisations need leaders who act ethically, manage diversity sensitively and make fair decisions.
- The ability to nurture talent is key for creating high-performing teams. Coaching skills support learning cultures and succession planning.
- Leaders need to understand technological trends, data analytics and digital tools. With this leaders can make informed decisions and drive innovation.

These skills allow leaders to choose leadership styles and apply them when

needed. **Conclusion:**

This essay has looked at leadership from Goleman's emotional intelligence based styles; visionary, coaching and pacesetter. Each style of leadership has its advantages and disadvantages. Visionary gives clarity and direction whereas coaching focuses on long term goals and capability all while strengthening employee growth and pacesetter is more focused on short term goals and immediate results. Effective leadership in contemporary organisations needs to have behavioural flexibility. Leaders need to know which approach is better suited for certain scenarios. Potentially telling leaders to apply multiple approaches to manage productivity and engagement. In rapid changing environments the leader should be able to combine strategic direction and support to ensure long term success.

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