

LCCB4003- Group

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Introduction

The report highlights how Amazon, currently manages group effectiveness and employee well-being and recommends what the organisation should improve to promote group effectiveness and employee well-being. According to Schein (2020), Amazon is among the top American multinational tech companies with a significant focus on online retail, advertising, cloud computing and digital streaming. The company has experienced a rapid growth since its formation as an online bookstore in 1995 to become among the world's top tech companies. Qumer and Purkayastha (2015) attribute the company's rapid and successful growth to its extensive product portfolio, competitive pricing, convenience, outstanding customer service, and rapid technological development. Moreover, the company derives its success from effective management of groups and employee well-being because human resources are crucial assets to successful performance in the highly dynamic and competitive technology industry.

Theories and Concepts of Managing Groups

Most contemporary organisations depend on formal groups to promote innovation and productivity required to succeed in the current competitive business environment. Mullins (2016, p.271) defines as “one or more ⁸ people who interact with one another, are psychologically aware of one another and perceive themselves to be a group.” The definition bases on the psychological conceptualisation of a group, and indicates that groups in any organisation should exhibit various features. Buchanan and Huczynsky (2017) identify these features as face-to-face interaction, group consciousness, shared goals and interdependence as critical features of a group in any organisational context. Driskell et al. (2018) indicate that groups consist of individuals with different personalities and abilities that may negatively or positively impact group dynamics and performance. The success of any group largely depends on input from different members; therefore, group diversity is critical to a group's effectiveness. Belbin identifies nine roles that group members must perform to ensure successful outcomes. Mathieu et al. (2015, p. 5) identify ¹⁵ these roles as “shapers, implementers, completer-finisher, coordinators, team workers, resource investigators, plants, monitor-evaluator, and specialists.” Therefore, organisations must provide groups with adequate resources and autonomy and promote group values to ensure their effectiveness and members' well-being.

Due to their growing importance in the current business landscape, organisations apply different theories and concepts to manage group effectiveness. Mullins (2016) indicates that contemporary organisations depend largely on groups to promote innovation and productivity in the highly competitive business environment. Amazon depends on various groups to promote innovation and productivity, thus, helping it to stay ahead of its market rivals in the highly competitive retail and technology markets. The most common theories that Amazon and other contemporary organisations rely on to manage group effectiveness include behavioural and human relations theories. Mullins (2016) indicates that behavioural theories focus on human relations and employee well-being. Notably, this theory pays special attention to things that motivate employees. The works of Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor provide organisations with critical details on how they can boost employee motivation in an organisation to promote group effectiveness. Amazon largely depends on this theory to develop appropriate strategies to boost motivation in different groups within the organisation.

The Human Relations Theory is another critical approach through which organisations promote group effectiveness and employee well-being. Önday (2016) indicates that this management theory focuses on employee satisfaction, informal workplace organisation and how organisations can influence employee productivity. Notably, this

indicates that the human relations theory is mainly concerned with the moral and psychological aspects of the organisation. Therefore, organisations such as Amazon depend on this theory to improve employee motivation, strengthen groups, and promote employee productivity.

The critical concepts organisations require to manage group effectiveness include, Belbin's team roles and Tuckman's group formation model. Mathieu et al. (2015) indicate that Belbin's team roles allow organisations to ensure that groups consist of individuals with the right personalities and abilities to maximise group dynamics needed for group effectiveness. The nine roles outlined in Belbin's theory allow team members to participate effectively within their respective teams. On the other hand, Tuckman's concept of group formation allows organisations to promote the development of strong groups in the organisation to effectively deliver the desired outcomes. Shirey et al. (2019) indicate that this concept holds that groups must go through five critical stages to allow their members to form a dynamic relationship required for effective group performance. The five stages include forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Therefore, organisations like Amazon must ensure that groups responsible for different tasks successfully go through the five stages to promote their success.

How Amazon Manages Groups and Employees Well-being

Amazon operates in a highly dynamic and competitive business landscape that requires prompt and constant innovations. Qumer and Purkayastha (2015) also maintain that the company has a highly diversified product portfolio that requires it to rely on different groups across its departments to deliver various objectives. Therefore, the main forms of groups in the company include ¹⁸ advice teams, action teams, project teams, and production teams. Notably, these groups help the company's management acquire information needed for decision-making, execute brief performances, develop new products, and fulfil the organisation's production needs. Dans (2020) indicates that Amazon operates both as a retailer and a marketplace for third-party products and services, making continuous innovation through different groups critical to its continued success. In this regard, formal groups are critical for the company's rapid growth in the past three decades.

The company applies different strategies to manage different groups' effectiveness and promote employee well-being. According to BBC News (2020), the company limits the formation of informal organisations to reduce conflicts, promoting successful results. Notably, the company does not hire union workers in its facilities to ensure that its employees focus on achieving organisational goals. Moreover, the company's CEO applies different leadership styles to motivate its employees to stretch their abilities to achieve greater goals, consequently allowing the company to meet customers' changing needs. For instance, the company's founder and CEO, Jeff Bezos, applies an autocratic leadership style to help employees respond promptly to market changes and various crises that could affect the company's performance. According to Peker et al. (2018), the autocratic leadership style allows leaders to set high goals and invite their followers to achieve them based on the provided instructions and procedures. Moreover, the company relies on intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to motivate its workers, ensuring the effective performance of various groups in the organisation. Mullins (2006) and Önday (2016) indicate that applying behavioural and human relations management approaches also promotes group effectiveness. Therefore, the company's significant focus on human relations, employee well-being and existing informal relations between the management and employees has enabled it to promote group effectiveness throughout different levels of the organisation.

Employee well-being is critical for successful performance in the highly dynamic and competitive technology and retail industries in which Amazon operates. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), promoting employee well-being enables organisations to reduce the negative impacts of stress in the workplace. Therefore, organisations depend on various approaches to promote their employees' well-being. Amazon depends on individual and organisational approaches to promote employee well-

being. Robbins and Judge (2017, pp.649-50) indicate that individual approaches to promoting employee well-being include "social support, time-management, and physical exercise." On the other hand, organisational approaches include training and development, rigorous employee selection and placement and wellness programs (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Notably, these approaches allow the organisation to ensure that their employees cope effectively with various roles in the organisation and overcome work-related stress leading to improved well-being.

Therefore, through these approaches, the company has built strong teams responsible for its continuous innovation and successful performance in different global situations.

Discussing The Effectiveness of Various Approaches or Theories

Teamwork and Collaboration

Amazon UK appreciates the value of collaboration and teamwork in attaining organizational effectiveness. They promote cross-functional teams, in which personnel from several departments collaborate to achieve similar goals. This approach is aligned with team effectiveness theory, which indicates that having varied talents and viewpoints can lead to improved decision-making and outcomes. Amazon UK encourages innovation and efficiency within its staff by encouraging collaboration.

Leadership and Communication

Highly efficient leadership and communication are essential for group effectiveness. Amazon UK places a premium on strong leadership at all levels of the organization. Their leaders are supposed to provide clear guidance, set performance standards, and motivate their staff. The transformational leadership theory is consistent with Amazon UK's strategy because it emphasizes motivating and encouraging individuals to reach their maximum potential (Boewe & Schulten, 2017). However, some opponents say that Amazon's rigorous work culture may lead to excessive strain and fatigue among employees, damaging group efficiency and employee well-being.

Performance Management and Feedback

Amazon UK manages performance using a data-driven strategy. They establish clear goals and benchmarks for employees, track their performance regularly, and give feedback for improvement. It is consistent with goal-setting theory, which holds that clear and challenging goals, combined with feedback, can boost motivation and performance. However, Amazon UK must ensure that the feedback is constructive and encouraging and centres on both strengths and areas for growth. A positive feedback culture can improve employee happiness and promote continual progress.

Amazon has a rigorous performance review procedure known as "stack ranking," in which employees are ranked against one another, and performance objectives are defined. While this method seeks to build a high-performance culture, it has been criticized for negatively influencing employee well-being and team chemistry. The feature of forced ranking might foster competition and inhibit collaboration. Employing performance management approaches that stress developmental feedback and ongoing development, such as goal-setting theory or input models like the "GROW" model, could help to foster a more positive and growth-oriented environment.

Work-Life Balance and Well-being

While Amazon UK places significant value on excellent performance, some concerns have been raised concerning work-life balance and employee well-being. Job demands, lengthy working hours, and high productivity targets can all lead to stress and burnout (Le, T.N, 2023). Employing staff well-being programs can improve group effectiveness. Work-life balance efforts, mental health support, and individualized work schedules can all help to boost employee happiness and decrease burnout. Amazon UK might invest in extensive wellness initiatives covering physical, mental, and emotional health, presenting employees with the required assistance and resources.

Employee Engagement

Committed employees are more inclined to be productive, contented, and dedicated. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) paradigm highlights the significance of balancing work obligations with available resources to improve employee well-being. Amazon UK might perform regular assessments to determine and deal with the specific job demands and resources needed for each role (Davies, 2020). They might offer prospects for training and growth, enough resources, and a favorable work atmosphere that encourages employee participation.

Organizational Culture and the Social Exchange Theory

Creating a positive and supportive organizational atmosphere is important for the group's success and its members' health. Amazon UK could work on creating a culture that promotes open communication, working together, and having a good mix between work and life. The company can create a place where employees feel valued and supported by promoting a culture of trust, openness, and respect. It can improve the way the group works together and make employees happier. Social trade theory shows how important it is to have good relationships at work. Amazon UK may concentrate on creating a positive work atmosphere which allows employees to communicate with one another, support one another, and feel like they belong. This strategy may help group members trust each other, collaborate, and share knowledge, which can increase the group's effectiveness and its members' health and happiness.

Recommendations For Improving Current Practices

Regularly Evaluate and Revise Policies

Amazon UK should regularly examine and adjust its rules and procedures concerning group effectiveness and employee well-being. This entails completing employee feedback surveys, focus groups, and performance reviews. Amazon UK could illustrate its commitment to continuous development and address any problems or complaints that might come up by studying this feedback and making appropriate modifications.

Foster a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Amazon may promote a more encouraging and inclusive work atmosphere to improve group effectiveness and employee well-being. Initiatives like mentoring initiatives, employee resource groups, and diversity and inclusion training can help accomplish this. These methods are consistent with social identity theory, which emphasizes the value of group identification and constructive interpersonal relationships.

Recognize and Reward Team Achievements

Amazon UK must recognize and reward team accomplishments to improve group effectiveness. A strong rewards and recognition program that recognizes and celebrates team accomplishments may establish a pleasant work environment, enhance employee morale, and encourage a sense of accomplishment. It might be accomplished through various methods, including performance-based bonuses, team trips, and public acknowledgement inside the organization.

Promote Work-Life Balance

Amazon is recognized for its demanding work environment, which can have a negative impact on employee well-being. The organization should prioritize work-life balance by instituting policies that encourage flexible scheduling, advocating time off, and offering wellness programs. It is consistent with the Job Demands-Resources hypothesis, which contends that balancing job demands and resources is critical for employee well-being and team efficiency.

Empowerment and Autonomy

Amazon UK should prioritize employee empowerment and give them a sense of autonomy in their work. According to research, empowering people increases motivation, job satisfaction, and general group effectiveness (Davies, 2020). Amazon UK may empower teams with decision-making authority, motivate people to take responsibility for their work and create possibilities for skill development and career growth. Amazon UK may build a sense of ownership and involvement within groups by empowering employees.

Enhance employee development and growth opportunities.

Providing chances for skill development, career promotion, and personal improvement can improve group performance and employee well-being. Amazon may implement training and development programs, career mentoring, and cross-functional rotation possibilities (Farmer, 2020). These methods are consistent with the learning organization idea, which promotes ongoing development and learning to adjust to changing circumstances.

Strengthen communication and collaboration.

Communication and teamwork are essential for group effectiveness. Amazon UK may improve these characteristics by investing in communication platforms and resources that enable team-wide information exchange, collaboration, and project management. Regular virtual and in-person team meetings can also be planned to encourage face-to-face interactions, brainstorming sessions, and information exchange, which might help with peak performance between staff and management.

Conclusion

Conclusively, Amazon UK has used a variety of ways and strategies to manage group performance and employee well-being. Their accomplishments in these areas are due to the employment of cross-functional teams, an emphasis on communication, and extensive benefits packages. However, there are areas for growth, like encouraging work-life balance, cultivating a sense of psychological safety, and expanding possibilities for staff development.

Amazon UK may improve group performance and employee well-being by applying the guidelines given above. Amazon UK can establish a vibrant work environment fostering individual and group achievement by continuously evaluating and adapting their methods.

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