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Dina Shubair

Organization X

Leadership Strategy Report
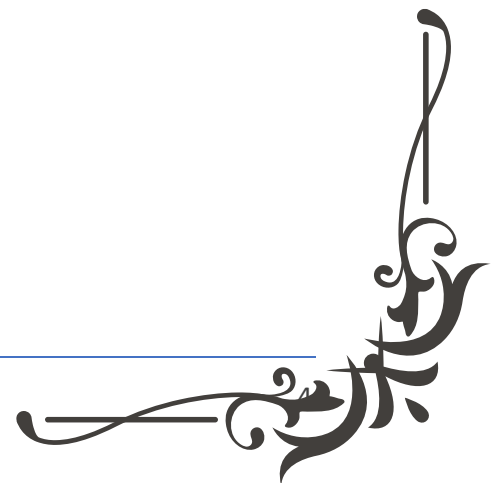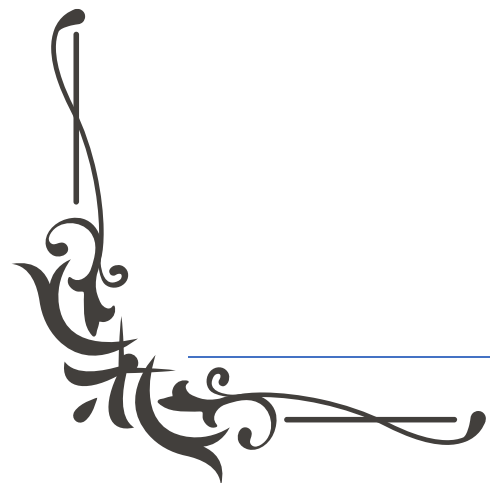
Introduction

John Adams once said, "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.". We can simply define leadership as the foundation where everything else is built on. It can be found everywhere whether in the workplace or among our families. There is always this one person who has the ability to influence and motivate others to achieve new and better things. The main impotence of having leadership practices in any kind of organization is to lead and direct their resources towards the desired achievements. That is why we find leaders positions in every organization so the team will stay efficient and productive which will serve the organization's goals.

Common leadership practices

In the organization, leadership practices are known as all the efforts and strategies that are applied to direct the employees towards growth. These practices value three aspects including processes, spaces and technologies. There is a lot of different leadership practices out there and as all roads lead to Rome, all of these different kinds if implemented properly they will definitely lead to success. In the following we will go through some of the most common leadership practices that can be applied in the organizations:

First, is providing mentor relationships where leaders go beyond the company's growth culture by offering their teams the support they need to improve and grow. This support will include providing training programs and offering wide range opportunities to the employees who show strong potential. This kind is considered to be one of the excellent examples of a good relationship practices. This relationship will be built on honesty, mutual respect on differencing views and commitment to confidentiality. The mentor will schedule meetings with the employees individually to identify initial development and a discussion will be made concerning short- and long-term career goals including both obstacles and successes.

Second, is promoting relationships far away from competitiveness. Having friendly competition in the organization has its own benefits for sure but it cannot be considered as a standard for employees' evolution. Putting conscious efforts in building good work relationships among the team members will boost both employees' morale and their job satisfaction.

Third, is encouraging employees to go to the next level. A good leader will always feel happy and proud of his team members whenever they get advanced, face new challenges or get new jobs. The goal is to improve the company's talent pool and the progression of its employees.

Fourth, is taking reasonable chances on people. Leaders think in a different way they are not attached to limitations, and they take risks but in a sensible way. When leaders give their employees chances to face new challenges, they make them braver, stronger and more confident. They build faith in their employees to show them that they can do it.

Fifth, is keeping their eyes always open for new talents and opportunities. Networking is one of the main skills or practices that a leader must have. Meeting new people, having connections and building strong relationships is very important because we never know when we are going to need these connections. Searching for new talents all the time even when the organization is not in need is a very smart move. Bu having a backup plan, which will help the success of the company in the long run.

Sixth, is announcing your goals and make them public. A wise man once said, "If you do not set a direction, all time will be useless.". A great leader will always be a direct person who sets clear goals and makes sure that every team member is aware of them. If they do not know, where are they going, they will reach nowhere. It is a must for them to be aware of the leader's goals to allow them to reference it when it's time for decision making.

Seventh, is giving feedback whether it was positive or negative especially in the moment. Annual evaluations are important for sure, but a great leader will know the perfect timing to praise or criticize. In case of accomplishment, praise in the moment will increase the desire to accomplish more. On the other hand, noticing mistakes early will help solve the problem and prevent future difficulties.

Eighth, is called compliment sandwich. Simply it makes accepting criticism much easier by starting with a complement or a praise followed by a criticism and finally, bookended by praise again. This way is very effective whenever there is an evaluation of the employee's performance.

Ninth, is one-on-ones it is very helpful in many different situations such as coaching, giving feedback or just chatting for the sake of getting to know the employees and how are they getting along. One-on-ones conversations bring missed insights and concerns that individuals might not feel comfortable to bring up in public settings.

Tenth, is having short and regular meetings. Sometimes in work we face problems that cannot wait till the yearly or quarterly meetings and reviews. Accordingly, having a short check-ins meetings depending on the need is one of the great leadership practices which will allow us to solve any issue that the company is currently facing.

Eleventh, is one of the most important leadership practices which is to trust your team. As leaders have the ability to distribute and assign tasks to the right people hence, they should trust that employees will have the ability to accomplish the tasks that they were given.

Organization X overview

Organization X is an educational organization that is committed to provide a simulating learning experience that empowers learners through technology-based education. It fosters a positive and safe environment that encourages, inspires and nourishes students to become creative, life-long learners and productive leaders of their future community. Organization X cultivates a secure and supportive climate, that celebrates individuality, enabling each student to reach their unique potential and achieve personal excellence. The organization's vision is nurturing a generation of well-rounded innovative and creative thinkers, who are the leading ambassadors of their culture.

Leadership practices in Organization X

In order to deliver the organization's mission and vision as mentioned above it is essential to implement a very strong leadership practice. Luckily in organization X they built a plan called Mentoring Action Plan (MAP) where they provide a mentor relationship program. The organization's leaders prepared a mentoring meeting schedule with different duration depending on each mentoring relationship. At minimum they meet for at least one hour per month to discuss different aspects including but not limited to the following:

- The desired skills that need developments and how to do that.
- What are the different types of organizational knowledge do we have? And which ones need to be developed?
- What are the criteria for successfully improving skills?
- The use of brainstorming activities and other kinds of developmental activities if needed.
- Most importantly, how will the employees apply their learning on-the-job.

Unfortunately, in organization X they focus mainly on competitiveness between workers which definitely have its own pros and cons. Some research studies suggested that competition motivates the company's employees, and it pushes them to achieve their goals by putting more effort. On the other hand, we cannot depend on competition all of the time because then the workplace and the employees will elicit fear and anxiety and too much of anything is good for

nothing. The employees will be under the threat of losing their income or being humiliated in public. This is exactly how the employees feel in organization X, they feel pressured almost most of the time even though there are other less pressuring methods that will allow the employees to select creative behaviors to solve problems.

In organization X some of the leaders empower the team by showing them trust and they enable them to contribute. Whenever there is a new project in the organization, they plan a meeting to listen to all kinds of suggestions and feedbacks. After that they take them into consideration which will take the employees to the next level, and it will surely motivate them. But shockingly after getting the employees hopes and expectation up high to this level, it is shut down by higher authority (other leaders in the organization) who take the responsibility of taking the decisions that suits their desires no matter what the circumstances are. Which shows a very low communication level between the leaders themselves that leads to demotivation among the employees plus the feeling of being unvalued or unappreciated. In the organization some of the leaders know how to reach to the highest engagement levels by using the habit of praising and complementing their employees but as mentioned above it is not always enough especially when the employee's concerns are being ignored.

One of the good leaderships polices followed in the organization is that they are not bound to certain limitation. For example, when it comes to hiring, they have the ability to see beyond a resume, they are not limiting their chances into just an education. During interviews, if possible, candidates prove themselves and show great potential of being capable of accomplishing the required tasks, the organization hires them.

Organization X give their best at maintain their current relationships and gaining new ones by hosting different kinds of events to meet certain people and look for talents. They are always networking in case of vacancy availability they would know where to go and whom to contact.

One of the leadership practices that this organization lacks is making their goals public and clear. Even though it was mentioned above that whenever they have a project, they schedule meetings to take employees suggestions and ideas into consideration. But sadly, some meetings are held too late, or the goals of the required tasks are not clear which usually causes the employees to be misled. Most of the time the team does not understand what they are working on and why.

In the organization X, they follow a real-time feedback system. Which shows great results upon the team members it is very encouraging, and it helps to motivate the employees to achieve more and more. Also, it lowers the errors percentage by limiting getting too deep or far into a problem. In this method timing is everything, a great leader knows when to praise and when to criticize to prevent future damages. By using the compliment sandwich leaders always start with a compliment on the employees work and achievements. In the middle, they discuss the issues they are facing and finally, they complement another accomplishment which will make the criticism sound less harsh. The organizations system focuses on continuous improvements rather than yearly evaluation which usually happens once a year.

The organization meetings could use some improvements due to some issues such as last-minute meetings when there is no time left for the employees to give their best. There are also one-on-ones meetings that they provide to discuss variety of situations such as mentoring or coaching, getting feedback, looking for consultancy or just for the sake of bonding with their employees and to catch up with them. Accordingly, good leadership practices make a big difference in the organization. Organization X practices are good to some level even though it has variety of methods but still there is always a room for enhancements and improvement to implement them successfully in order to serve the organization's goals.

<u>An evaluation of the current leadership style and leadership police in the organization</u>

Leaders can be found everywhere, but the term leader does not necessarily mean that they are all exactly the same each one of them has their own style. Leadership style means their special characteristics and behaviors that they use to direct, motivate, guide and manage the team. Different styles are effective when it comes to promote teamwork, to provide purpose and to improve their relationship with their team. They are a lot of leadership styles for example, coach, visionary, servant, autocratic and democratic etc. Each style has different characteristics and procedures to be followed to lead the team successfully.

There are some kinds of assessments that can be found in libraries and online websites that contains tests that are designed to help determine our personal leadership style. In order to determine the best leadership style to be followed there are specific criteria of evaluation that we can go through including but not limited to the following integrative model:

- Determine the nature of the performed tasks. Whether it was challenging, overwhelming or meaningful.
- Evaluate the abilities of the workers. Their motivation, responsibility and control levels.
- Evaluate the leader's characteristics. Their confidence, personal power, experience, communication skills and relations.
- Determine which leadership background has the biggest influence in the organization.
- Determine the position power and who dictates the leadership style. ("Leadership Styles and Methods: Assessing and Improving Your Skills - FMLink", 2022)

In organization X most of the leaders have a directive leadership style base on the required evaluation. First of all, a directive leadership style is known as one of the most common leadership styles in fact it is one of four leadership behaviors that provides clear goals and sets of rules for the workers, mainly managers guide the employees to the right path to achieve their goals. In organization X they follow directive leadership style where leaders are more comfortable to work with clear guidelines whenever they face challenges. They are eager to take charge during meetings and focusing on the business is their main concern. Distributing duties, arranging schedules and observing the performance is the system that leaders follow in the organization. Also, finishing the job is top propriety in organization X it comes before

interpersonal needs. When they are in total control of everything they tend to relax, and they become more considerate.

Each leadership style has its own advantages and disadvantages. In case of organization X superficially the directive leadership style, the advantages are:

- **Provide clear structures.** Leaders job in this case is to guide their followers to the right path when there's lack of direction by showing them how things need to be done effectively.
- **Provide the right solutions.** When unexpected problems arise in the organization it is the leader's responsibility to come up with urgent solutions and to guide their workers towards the right actions to be done without negotiation.
- **Provide stability.** By committing strictly to deadlines to achieve the required goals and by keeping a clear overview to make sure that the whole team is on the right track.

On the other hand, the disadvantages are:

- **Lack of creativity.** Since the main purpose of this style is maintain high level of control and setting up restrictions. On the other side this will lower the level innovation, adaptability and autonomy.
- **Lack of adaptability.** This style will lower the workers abilities to adjust to new conditions or unexpected challenges which will make it harder for them to survive.
- **Lack of ownership.** Having a leader who manages everything, and everyone is great, but this will decrease the sense of responsibility and productivity of the team members because everyone is depending on one person if he is not there everything will fall apart.

The leadership policy consists of all kinds of activities done in the organization to ensure that both internal and external environments are on track to deliver the company's purposes despite changes. Organization X leadership policy is to model the way for the employees, inspire shared vision and challenge the process. It can be evaluated as in the following:

- **Model the way for employees.** By having a clear vision and values and setting multiple of examples for them to follow. It is good for the employees to know where they are going but it might cause lack or creativity and autonomy if they always kept following without being involved in the process.
- **Inspire shared vision.** By enlisting others to create a team that have a clear vision of the company's future.
- **Challenge the process.** By taking risks, defining the core processes in the organization and always searching for new opportunities.

Logically, having leadership policies inside the company must enrich all aspects and help it to grow, but reality speaking it has both pros and cons. The pros are that leadership polices improve employee's morale, establish an employee-centric culture in the workplace, boost productivity, solve problems, increase employee's loyalty, provide flexibility, make the team more interactive, strengthen communication and achieve the organizations goals. The cons of strictly following the leadership polices that sometimes having too much control will pressure the employees and providing too many restrictions will make it hard for the employees to achieve the target. It will lower the levels of responsibility, creativity and innovation.

In order to reduce the effect of these disadvantages adding few more policies are suggested in the case of organization X. Such as enable others to act which will be very helpful to solve unexpected problem without the need of having micromanagement. Also, encourage the heart which is mainly there to support and encourage the team members by recognizing contributions and celebrating victors, values and accomplishments.

A new suggested leadership style and how it affects the organization's culture

    In the case of organization X and based on the previous evaluations and other deep processes it is recommended to either switch to a new style or combine the two styles together to be more beneficial. The recommended style is called consultive leadership style where the core goal is improving the interpersonal relations even though it might affect the organization's goal. It provides more sensitivity towards the employee's feelings. During meetings participation of various members are highly encouraged and they take them into consideration for real. Being in a moderate control will be very helpful to function and to manage both difficult situations and members. It is highly recommended to combine both styles so the company can overcome the difficulties they are facing at the moment.

Currently organization X culture is facing challenges due to the mis-implementation of the required leadership styles. Leadership influences the organization culture heavily and that will lead to good or bad consequences. One the worst consequences that organization X is currently facing is the level of employees turnover due to all the mentioned reasons previously in addition to other reasons of course. Adapting new styles will solve at least half of the issues they are currently facing. The consultive leadership style mixed with the old style by taking only the practices will serve the company's objectives and will positively influence the company's culture. It will ensure higher quality, smarter decisions and employees will pay more attention to details in their thoughtfulness work. All of these actions will maintain a safety workplace hence safe culture. Organization X needs to have a better balance between life and work by encouraging their employees to work smarter not harder which will give more space for motivation and efficiency. It will increase loyalty and decrease absenteeism. Adjusting the company's practices and styles will ensure high retention rates because of all the provided benefits employees will simply have no reason to leave when they are working in a place where they are appreciated, heard and are encouraged to improve.

Comparison of Leadership Styles

Area of Concern	Directive (Control Orientated)	Consultative (Team Approach)
Who does the planning?	Leader	Leader plus group
Who does the Problem Solving?	Leader	Leader plus group
Who makes decisions?	Leader	Leader plus group
What is the direction of communication?	Down	Down, up and across
Where is the responsibility for achievement felt?	Leader	Leader plus group
Where does the responsibility actually lie?	Leader	Leader
Leader's confidence level in subordinates	Little to none	High
Leader's rapport with subordinates	Low	High
Amount of delegation of authority by leader	None	Lots
Crisis Management	Good	Poor
Change Management	Poor	Good

A table that shows the difference between directive style and consultative style.

Departmental communication plan that utilizes 21st century technologies

The world we live in today is totally different than the world we were born into. Technology changed the world and today we can interact with everything around us no matter how far it is. Using technology in organization X will have huge positive effects on the organization's communication. They used to say that the internet turned the world into a small village hence, using technology will enable faster, wider and even more efficient communications in the business. Technology will ensure a better interaction between the employer and the employees by using video conferencing technologies to schedule the organizations meetings by using Skype, Zoom and Microsoft teams. The company will have meetings across the geographical boarders. Also, an applications like Slack or Asana are used to track projects, details on duties and deadlines etc. which will simplify communication within the company's teams and individuals. Having the best internal communication tools will ensure better performance and high communication levels each tool has a different purpose to serve as in the following:

- **Internal newsletters.** For example: MailChimp and Campaign Monitor.
- **Instant messaging.** For example: WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger.
- **Intranet.** For example: Blink and eXo Platform.
- **Team collaboration tools.** For example: Basecamp and Trello.
- **Blogs.** For example: WordPress and Drupal.
- **Corporate social media.** For example: Facebook and Yammer.
- **Video chat.** For example: Skype and Zoom.
- **Video broadcasts.** For example: GoToWebinar and Webex.
- **Alerting software for important communications.** For example: DeskAlerts.
- **Team bonding tools.** For example: Donut and Slack.
- **Surveys.** For example: Survey Monkey.
- **Forums.** For example: vBulletin and Zendesk.
- **Planning tools.** For example: Excel and Google Drive.
- **Employee experience tools.** For example: Officevibe and Kudos.

Organization X is highly recommended to start applying better department communication plan that utilizes 21st technologies as mentioned above in order to enhance their communication levels in the organization. Whether the team is working under the same roof or remotely, Email, newsletters, social media and other platforms have become and essential resource in businesses for better communications.

<u>Networks in the organization and how they maybe better utilized by the leadership in the future</u>

Networking is about interacting and engaging with people for mutual benefit. If you're facing challenges in your business, your network may be able to provide you with advice. Equally, you'll be able to share your knowledge and skills to help contacts, which will strengthen your relationships. ("Networking in business | Business Queensland", 2022). Networking with others is about building relationships that benefits in both ways. In organization X networking might include but not limited to customers, employees, investors, suppliers, mentors and related agencies which will provide a wide range of opportunities in the future with all these connections.

Great leaders will use their network to identify career opportunities by getting their foot in the door. This will only happen in case of building professional relationships with people who work in different organizations. Professional leaders do not just use their networks to shift their careers they also use it for other reasons. Being included in a well-developed professional network that is full of highly skilled individuals is like a talent pool that can used as a source talent to improve their current positions and their teams by learning from the surrounding networks by sharing new ideas. Usually, when people think about networking the first thing that comes to their mind the external networks while they forget how important it is to establish a very strong relationships within the internal networks. Mainly, having a good relationship with the stakeholders or the decisions makers in the company will ease a lot of processes such as projects approvements. In organization X they leaders need to improve their relationship with higher authorities in order to establish open lines of communication. It is very important to build strong networks that will enable you to stay up to date with the latest trends and developments in the industry. This can happen by attending or even hosting business networking events even if they were in your off-hours. Setting the goals of networking and knowing your worth and value will attract others to you. Nowadays, online networking is essential by establishing a profile on suitable networking sites, following and connecting with people of interest such as in LinkedIn.

An outstanding leaders understand the importance of networking by building and interacting with professional networks inside and outside their organization. Networking is considered to be the key component in the organization's leadership development plan.

Conclusion

Finally, organization X is on the right track since they are looking for improvements, they are a few adjustments far to achieve their goals. The best leaders are capable of getting the most out their teams, they have the courage and confidence to apply the required strategies to succeed.

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