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Leadership Critique and Strategic Plan: Fostering Communication and Network Dynamics in an Organization

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Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Context The purpose of this report is to research and evaluate the leadership practices within an organization and provide recommendations for improvement. The report aims to address the organization's concern regarding the need for a more 21st-century approach to leadership, specifically focusing on enhancing communication and leveraging network dynamics within the organization. By examining the existing leadership style and proposing a new leadership strategy, this report seeks to guide the organization towards effective leadership practices that align with the demands of the modern business environment.

1.2 Case Scenario For the purpose of this report, we will consider XYZ Corporation as the organization under review. XYZ Corporation is a multinational company operating in the technology sector, with a diverse workforce spread across various departments and geographical locations. The organization has expressed a desire to improve its leadership practices, particularly in terms of fostering faster communication between departments and effectively utilizing the network dynamics present within the organization. By addressing these challenges, XYZ Corporation aims to enhance collaboration, innovation, and overall organizational performance.

Leadership Practices in the Organization

XYZ Corporation has exhibited a leadership style characterized by a traditional hierarchical approach. The organization has predominantly relied on top-down decision-making, where authority and control are concentrated at the upper levels of management. This leadership style has been effective in maintaining stability and ensuring compliance with established procedures. However, it has also led to certain limitations and challenges within the organization.

The communication channels within XYZ Corporation have primarily been vertical, with information flowing from senior management down to lower-level employees. This approach has created a disconnect between different departments and hindered effective cross-functional collaboration. Moreover, the reliance on formal communication channels has often resulted in delayed decision-making and reduced responsiveness to rapidly changing market conditions.

Analysis of the leadership practices within XYZ Corporation reveals both strengths and weaknesses. The hierarchical leadership style has provided a clear chain of command, facilitating efficient decision-making in certain circumstances. Additionally, the organization has maintained a strong focus on achieving operational efficiency and meeting predefined targets.

However, this leadership style has also limited employee empowerment and stifled creativity and innovation. The lack of open communication channels has hindered the exchange of ideas, resulting in missed opportunities for process improvements and organizational growth. The rigid structure and limited autonomy have impeded employee engagement and satisfaction, ultimately impacting overall performance.

In the next sections, we will critically evaluate the existing leadership practice within XYZ Corporation, propose a new leadership style strategy plan, and outline recommendations for improving communication and leveraging network dynamics within the organization.

Leadership Practices in the Organization

2.1 Overview of XYZ Corporation XYZ Corporation is a multinational technology company operating in the highly competitive industry. With a diverse workforce and a wide range of products and services, the organization faces numerous challenges in terms of leadership and management. The company's leadership practices play a crucial role in shaping its culture, driving innovation, and achieving its strategic objectives.

2.2 Current Leadership Style The current leadership style within XYZ Corporation can be characterized as traditional and hierarchical. Decision-making authority is concentrated at the top levels of management, with limited empowerment and autonomy given to lower-level employees. The leadership primarily focuses on directing and controlling employees' actions, ensuring compliance with established processes and procedures.

2.3 Communication Channels and Collaboration Communication within XYZ Corporation predominantly follows a top-down approach, where information flows from senior management to lower-level employees. While this approach ensures clear instructions and alignment with organizational goals, it limits the exchange of ideas and collaboration between different departments and levels of the organization. The lack of effective communication channels hinders timely decision-making, slows down information sharing, and stifles innovation and creativity.

2.4 Analysis of Leadership Strengths and Weaknesses The current leadership style within XYZ Corporation exhibits both strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths:

1. **Clear Chain of Command:** The hierarchical leadership structure provides a clear chain of command, enabling efficient decision-making and effective implementation of strategic initiatives.
2. **Operational Efficiency:** The organization's focus on operational efficiency has led to streamlined processes and high productivity levels.

3. Compliance and Control: The hierarchical leadership style ensures adherence to established policies and procedures, promoting consistency and minimizing deviations.

Weaknesses:

1. Lack of Empowerment: Lower-level employees have limited decision-making authority, resulting in missed opportunities for innovative ideas and solutions.
2. Limited Collaboration: The top-down communication approach restricts collaboration and knowledge sharing between departments, impeding cross-functional initiatives and hindering creativity.
3. Slow Response to Change: The hierarchical structure slows down decision-making processes, making it challenging for the organization to adapt quickly to market changes and emerging opportunities.
4. Employee Engagement: The lack of employee empowerment and limited involvement in decision-making can lead to reduced motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement levels.

The analysis of leadership strengths and weaknesses within XYZ Corporation highlights the need for a shift towards a more inclusive and collaborative leadership style. In the following sections, we will propose a new leadership strategy plan that emphasizes effective communication, harnesses network dynamics, and promotes a culture of empowerment and innovation.

Critique of the Current Leadership Practice

3.1 Limitations of Hierarchical Leadership The hierarchical leadership style within XYZ Corporation has several limitations that hinder the organization's growth and adaptability. Firstly, the top-down decision-making process restricts the flow of ideas and innovation from lower-level employees. This lack of empowerment leads to missed opportunities for creative problem-solving and limits the organization's ability to capitalize on the diverse perspectives and expertise of its workforce.

Additionally, the hierarchical structure creates a rigid and inflexible organizational culture. The emphasis on following established procedures and protocols discourages risk-taking and experimentation. Employees may feel hesitant to propose new ideas or challenge existing practices, leading to a lack of innovation and agility within the organization. Furthermore, the concentration of decision-making authority at the top can result in a bottleneck, slowing down the decision-making process and hindering timely responses to market changes and customer needs.

3.2 Impact on Organizational Culture The current leadership practice heavily influences the organizational culture within XYZ Corporation. The hierarchical structure promotes a culture of compliance and control, where employees are expected to follow instructions without question. This can lead to a lack of employee

engagement and motivation, as individuals may feel like their contributions are undervalued and their voices are not heard.

Moreover, the hierarchical leadership style can create a culture of silos, with limited cross-departmental collaboration. Communication primarily occurs vertically, from top to bottom, limiting information sharing and impeding collaboration between different teams and departments. This siloed culture hampers innovation, as opportunities for cross-pollination of ideas and knowledge are missed. Employees may become isolated within their own departments, leading to a lack of a shared sense of purpose and hindering the development of a cohesive organizational identity.

3.3 Communication Challenges and Bottlenecks One of the major challenges associated with the current leadership practice is communication. The top-down communication approach limits the exchange of information and ideas between different levels of the organization. Important insights and perspectives from employees on the front lines may not reach upper management, resulting in missed opportunities and suboptimal decision-making.

Furthermore, the hierarchical structure can lead to a slow and cumbersome communication process. Decisions and information must flow through multiple levels of management, causing delays and hindering the organization's ability to respond quickly to changes in the market. This can lead to missed business opportunities, decreased customer satisfaction, and reduced overall organizational performance.

3.4 Lack of Collaboration and Innovation The hierarchical leadership style within XYZ Corporation hampers collaboration and stifles innovation. The emphasis on authority and control discourages open dialogue and the sharing of ideas across different teams and departments. As a result, employees may be reluctant to collaborate with colleagues from other areas of the organization, limiting opportunities for knowledge sharing and cross-functional problem-solving.

Moreover, the lack of empowerment and decision-making authority at lower levels can lead to a culture of dependency on top management. Employees may become passive recipients of instructions rather than active contributors to the organization's success. This limits their ability to take ownership of their work and hinders their motivation to innovate and seek continuous improvement.

Additionally, the hierarchical structure may discourage risk-taking and experimentation. Employees may fear the consequences of failure or going against established protocols, leading to a reluctance to propose new ideas or challenge existing practices. This stifles creativity and hampers the organization's ability to adapt to changing market dynamics and seize new opportunities.

In order to overcome these limitations and foster a more collaborative and innovative culture, XYZ Corporation needs to embrace a new leadership style that promotes effective communication, encourages collaboration, and empowers employees at all levels of the organization.

Proposed Leadership Style Strategy Plan

4.1 Evaluation and Revision of Current Leadership Style To initiate a positive transformation within XYZ Corporation, it is crucial to evaluate and revise the current leadership style. This evaluation will involve a comprehensive analysis of the organization's structure, culture, and leadership practices. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the existing leadership style, necessary adjustments can be made to ensure a smooth transition towards a more effective and inclusive approach.

4.2 Transitioning to a Transformational Leadership Approach The proposed leadership style for XYZ Corporation is a transformational leadership approach. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their employees by setting a compelling vision, fostering innovation, and promoting personal growth and development. This leadership style encourages individuals to go beyond their self-interests and work collaboratively towards achieving organizational goals.

By adopting a transformational leadership approach, XYZ Corporation can create a more engaged and empowered workforce. Leaders will focus on developing a shared vision that aligns with the company's values and goals, inspiring employees to embrace a sense of purpose and commitment. This will encourage employees to think creatively, take ownership of their work, and strive for excellence.

4.3 Empowering Employees and Delegating Decision-Making Empowering employees and delegating decision-making authority are essential aspects of the proposed leadership style. Leaders will trust and empower their teams to make decisions and take responsibility for their work. This shift in power dynamics will foster a sense of ownership and accountability among employees, increasing their motivation and commitment to the organization's success.

Leaders will also provide the necessary resources, support, and guidance to help employees develop their skills and capabilities. This will enable them to make informed decisions and contribute effectively to the organization's growth. By decentralizing decision-making, XYZ Corporation can tap into the diverse expertise and perspectives of its workforce, leading to better decision outcomes and increased innovation.

4.4 Promoting Open Communication and Trust Effective communication and trust-building will be prioritized within the proposed leadership style. Leaders will establish transparent communication channels that facilitate the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback throughout the organization. This will include regular team

meetings, town hall sessions, and the use of digital platforms for real-time collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Leaders will also foster a culture of trust by being open, honest, and approachable. They will actively listen to their employees, value their opinions, and provide constructive feedback. This open and trusting environment will encourage employees to freely express their thoughts, share innovative ideas, and engage in constructive dialogue. It will also strengthen relationships between team members, enhancing collaboration and cooperation.

4.5 Encouraging Collaboration and Cross-Functional Teams To foster a culture of collaboration, XYZ Corporation will promote the formation of cross-functional teams. These teams will bring together individuals from different departments and disciplines to work on specific projects or solve complex problems. By leveraging the diverse skills and perspectives of team members, innovative solutions can be developed, and organizational silos can be broken down.

Leaders will encourage collaboration by creating opportunities for cross-functional interaction, such as workshops, brainstorming sessions, and team-building activities. They will also provide the necessary support and resources to ensure effective collaboration, such as clear goals, well-defined roles and responsibilities, and mechanisms for sharing knowledge and best practices.

By embracing collaboration and cross-functional teams, XYZ Corporation can tap into the collective intelligence and creativity of its employees. This will lead to enhanced problem-solving capabilities, increased innovation, and improved organizational performance.

In conclusion, the proposed leadership style strategy plan for XYZ Corporation involves transitioning to a transformational leadership approach, empowering employees, promoting open communication and trust, and encouraging collaboration through cross-functional teams. By implementing these strategies, XYZ Corporation can create a more inclusive, innovative, and agile organization that is better equipped to thrive in the dynamic and fast-paced 21st-century business environment.

Influence of Chosen Leadership Style on Company Culture

5.1 Creating a Culture of Innovation and Adaptability The chosen transformational leadership style will have a significant impact on shaping the company culture at XYZ Corporation. By emphasizing innovation and adaptability, leaders will inspire employees to think creatively, explore new ideas, and challenge the status quo. This culture of innovation will encourage employees to proactively seek opportunities for improvement and embrace change, leading to a more agile and forward-thinking organization.

5.2 Building Trust and Empowering Employees Transformational leaders prioritize building trust among their teams. By demonstrating integrity, transparency, and consistency in their actions and communication, leaders will create a trusting environment where employees feel safe to express their opinions, take risks, and share

their ideas. This trust will foster stronger relationships between leaders and employees, as well as among team members, enhancing collaboration, engagement, and overall job satisfaction.

Empowering employees is another crucial aspect of the chosen leadership style. Leaders will delegate decision-making authority and provide employees with autonomy and ownership over their work. This empowerment will not only enhance individual motivation and job satisfaction but also foster a sense of responsibility and accountability. Employees will feel valued and empowered to contribute their unique skills and perspectives to the organization's success.

5.3 Fostering Continuous Learning and Development The transformational leadership style promotes a culture of continuous learning and development. Leaders will encourage employees to expand their knowledge, acquire new skills, and pursue professional growth opportunities. This can be achieved through training programs, mentoring initiatives, and providing resources for personal and professional development. By investing in their employees' growth, XYZ Corporation will foster a learning culture that supports innovation, adaptability, and high performance.

Departmental Communication Plan for the 21st Century

6.1 Adopting 21st Century Technologies for Communication To facilitate efficient and effective communication, XYZ Corporation will embrace 21st-century technologies. This includes utilizing instant messaging platforms, video conferencing tools, and collaborative workspaces that enable real-time communication and virtual collaboration. By leveraging these technologies, teams can communicate seamlessly, regardless of their physical location, enabling faster decision-making and smoother information flow.

6.2 Utilizing Collaboration Tools and Project Management Software To enhance departmental communication and collaboration, XYZ Corporation will implement collaboration tools and project management software. These tools will enable teams to coordinate tasks, share documents, track progress, and collaborate on projects in a centralized and organized manner. This will streamline workflows, improve efficiency, and foster better collaboration between departments and team members.

6.3 Facilitating Real-Time Communication and Information Sharing Real-time communication will be prioritized within the departmental communication plan. Leaders will encourage employees to utilize instant messaging and video conferencing tools to engage in timely discussions, seek clarifications, and address urgent matters promptly. This will reduce delays, enhance productivity, and promote a sense of connectivity and responsiveness among team members.

Information sharing will be facilitated through shared digital platforms, where employees can access relevant documents, reports, and updates. This centralized information repository will ensure that everyone has access to the latest information, fostering transparency, alignment, and informed decision-making.

6.4 Promoting Regular Team Meetings and Open Dialogue Regular team meetings will be scheduled to promote open dialogue and foster a sense of community within departments. These meetings will provide an opportunity for team members to share updates, discuss challenges, and collaborate on solutions. Leaders will

encourage active participation, listen to employees' perspectives, and address any concerns or issues raised. This open and inclusive communication approach will strengthen relationships, build trust, and foster a sense of belonging within the department.

Utilizing Networks within the Organization

7.1 Leveraging Internal Networks for Collaboration XYZ Corporation recognizes the value of internal networks in fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing. Leaders will encourage employees to leverage internal networks to connect with colleagues across departments, share best practices, and collaborate on projects. This cross-functional collaboration will break down silos, promote a culture of learning, and drive innovation within the organization.

7.2 Encouraging Cross-Functional Teams and Communities of Practice To maximize the utilization of networks, XYZ Corporation will promote the formation of cross-functional teams and communities of practice. Cross-functional teams will bring together individuals from different departments with diverse expertise to work on specific projects or solve complex problems. This interdisciplinary collaboration will harness the collective intelligence of the organization, encourage diverse perspectives, and result in more holistic and innovative solutions.

Communities of practice will be established to facilitate knowledge sharing and professional development. These communities will provide a platform for employees with similar interests or skills to collaborate, share insights, and learn from one another. By nurturing these communities, XYZ Corporation will create a culture of continuous learning, expertise sharing, and collaboration.

7.3 Establishing Mentorship Programs for Knowledge Sharing To further leverage networks and promote knowledge sharing, XYZ Corporation will establish mentorship programs. Experienced employees will be paired with junior staff members to provide guidance, support, and share their expertise. This mentorship relationship will facilitate the transfer of knowledge, foster professional growth, and build strong interpersonal connections within the organization.

Conclusion

8.1 Summary of Findings and Recommendations In summary, the proposed leadership style at XYZ Corporation will have a profound influence on the company culture, promoting innovation, trust, and continuous learning. By transitioning to a transformational leadership approach, XYZ Corporation can create an environment that encourages employees to think creatively, take ownership of their work, and embrace change.

8.2 Importance of Transitioning to a Transformational Leadership Style The transition to a transformational leadership style is crucial for XYZ Corporation to thrive in the dynamic and fast-paced business landscape of the 21st century. This leadership style will empower employees, foster collaboration, and drive innovation, enabling the organization to adapt and seize opportunities in an ever-evolving marketplace.

8.3 Benefits of Enhancing Communication and Leveraging Networks By enhancing communication and leveraging networks, XYZ Corporation will benefit from improved collaboration, knowledge sharing, and

cross-functional synergy. Effective departmental communication plans, combined with the utilization of 21st-century technologies, will facilitate timely and transparent communication. Leveraging internal networks, such as cross-functional teams and communities of practice, will foster collaboration, break down silos, and drive innovation.

Overall, the proposed leadership style, along with the departmental communication plan and the utilization of networks, will position XYZ Corporation for success in the 21st century. It will create a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous learning, enabling the organization to thrive in a rapidly changing business landscape.

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