

Significance of Leadership in Productivity Management

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Abstract— Definition of leader, responsibilities of a leader, the influence of leaders in the productivity improvement. Criteria to be satisfied in order to become a successful leader. Managers and leaders are distinguished. Leadership styles and approaches to leadership are briefed. Suitable examples of great leaders and their leadership styles are mentioned. Effectiveness of task oriented or people satisfaction oriented styles of leadership are compared. This paper explains how productivity is influenced by the leadership.

Index Terms—Contingency, effectiveness, leader, leadership, productivity.

I. INTRODUCTION

A leader is one who heads an organization or a department or a group of people to carryout certain tasks assigned to them or accepted by them as a single entity to the satisfaction of one and all. A leader should have the ability to manage or lead the group of people effectively to carryout the task. Leader should be responsible.

II. DESCRIPTION

Leaders should ensure the creation of strategies systems and methods for achieving excellence, stimulating innovation and building knowledge and capabilities. The value and strategies should help, guide all activities and decisions of the organization. A leader should inspire and motivate entire work force, encourage all employees to improve the productivity and should always be supportive to the creative and innovative ideas of his subordinates. Senior leaders should be role models to their followers through their ethical behavior and personal involvement in planning communications, coaching and development of future leaders, review of organizational performance and employee recognition. As a role model they should be the examples in the organization. A person who follows the methods as explained above will be a successful leader. A leader has many roles to be played in an organization [1].

A leader should be easily accessible to both internal and external customers. The leader should place himself in the position of customer and should understand the customer needs. A good leader should exercise good customer contact and care. The leader should empower subordinates rather than controlling them. Leader should exhibit faith and confidence on the subordinates' performance. Leaders must be coaches rather than bosses. Leader should always try to improvise the existing technology. Because in the world of changing trends anything done new today will be old tomorrow. If a problem

has encountered in an organization, then obviously the Organization will come up with a solution. But care should be taken that the problem should not repeat. The problems existing should be solved quickly. Collaboration leads to sharing of information and thus it should be encouraged. Internal competition should be prevented as it may result in working against each other and with holding information. Leaders should have good communication skill, so that they can continually communicate information on TQM effort [1]. In this world of changing technology language is power. So one should be able to communicate effectively with everyone. Leaders exhibit their commitment to quality not through words but by actions. Nowadays people are more particular about the quality. Because of the competitiveness in the market only the quality products can flourish. So it becomes a duty for a good leader to improve the quality of the products or services delivered. There is always confusion between leader and manager. But definitely difference exists.

Managers think incrementally, while leaders think radically. "Managers do thing right, leaders do the right thing". This means that Managers do think by book and company policies. They are more of mediators between the top management and the work force of the organization. But leaders follow their own intuition, which may in turn be more beneficial to the company. A leader always tries to help others rather than controlling others. Leaders are movers and shakers, original, inventive, unpredictable, imaginative and full of surprises that discomfit the enemy in war and the main office in peace. For the managers are safe, conservative, predictable, conforming organization men and team players, dedicated to establishment. With this context many of the past details have been evaluated and studied under the head of leadership styles. There are mainly three types of leadership styles namely autocratic, democratic, free rein leadership. The leadership styles are classified separately and can be studied under various approaches.

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The Managerial grid model shows the importance of a manager having concern both for production and for people. The leadership continuum concept recognizes that which style of leadership is appropriate depends on the leader, the followers and the situation. In leadership one cannot decide the strategy prior to any activity, because the approach of leadership requirement may change based on situations. Situational or contingency approach concentrates the study of situation and the belief that leaders are the product of given situations. Path goal approach suggests that main function of

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leader is to clarify the set goals with subordinates, help them find the best path for achieving the goals and remove obstacles. Transactional leadership is all about identifying what subordinates need to achieve, clarify organizational roles, tasks and reward performance. These leaders work hard and try to run organization effectively and efficiently. Transformational leaders articulate a vision and inspire followers. They also have the capacity to motivate, and create a favorable climate for the organizational change [2]. Here we can take the example of Mother Theresa, who had the vision to serve poor and needy. Thus she served the needy and inspired millions.

This kind of approach became more common with a basis that leaders are the products of given situations. A large number of studies were carried out to show that leadership is strongly affected by the situation from which the leader emerges and operates. The examples of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the Great Depression of the 1930s in the US and the rise of Mao Tse Tung in China in the period after World War II. According to this approach to leadership, there exists an interaction between group and leader. The leader is then a person who recognizes these desires and does those things, or undertakes those programs, designed to meet them. Contingency or situational approach obviously has much meaning in management practice because it is very important for a leader to consider the situation when they design an environment for performance [2].

Although the approach to leadership theory is primarily one of analyzing leadership style, Fred E. Fiedler and his associates at the University of Illinois have suggested a contingency theory of leadership. The theory reveals that the people become leaders not only because of their personalities but also because of various situational factors and the interactions between leaders and group members. Position power, task structure, leader member relations are the critical dimensions of the leadership situation.

In order to approach his study of leadership styles Fiedler set forth two major styles of leadership. One of them is task oriented and the other is people satisfaction oriented style. In the task oriented style, a leader gains satisfaction from seeing tasks being performed. Favorableness of situation was defined by Fiedler to explain the influence exerted by a task oriented leader based on the situation. Fiedler used an unusual testing technique known as Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale – these ratings are made by people in a group as to those with whom they would least like to work and the other technique is the scores on the assumed similarity between opposites (ASO) scale – ratings based on degree to which leaders see group members as being like themselves.

On the basis of his studies with the method of LPC, Fiedler found that people who rated their coworkers high were those who derived major satisfaction from interpersonal relationships. People who rated their LPC low were seen as deriving their major satisfaction from task performance.

Fiedler’s contingency model of leadership is presented as a graph. The Fig.1 is a summary of Fiedler’s research in which he found that when leaders’ position power is weak, the task structure is unclear and leader – member relations are

Fiedler’s Contingency Model of Leadership

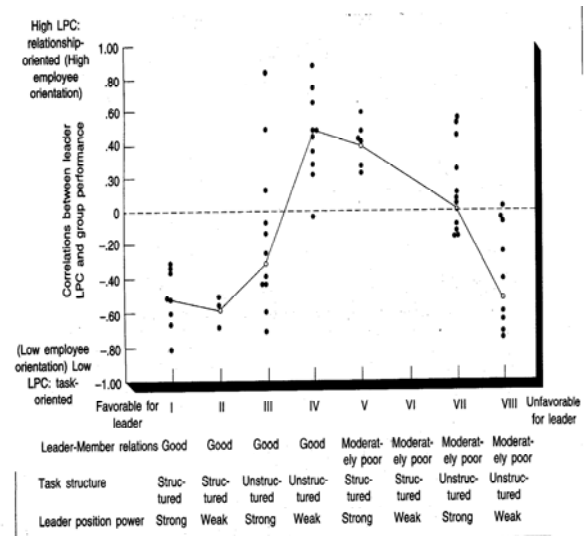


Fig 1

moderately poor, the situation is unfavorable for a leader. But the most effective leader will be one who is task oriented. At the other extreme, in which the position power is strong, the task structure is clear and the leader member relations are good, a favorable situation for the leader. Fiedler found that the task oriented leader will also be most effective. However, if the situation is only moderately unfavorable or favorable the human relations oriented leader will be most effective.

In a highly structured situation, such as in the military during a war, where the leader has strong position power and good relations with members, there is favorable situation where task orientation is most appropriate. The other extreme, an unfavorable situation with moderately poor relations, an unstructured task, and weak position power, also suggest task orientation by the leader, who may reduce anxiety or ambiguity. That could be created by the loosely structured situation. Between the extremes the suggested approach emphasizes cooperation and good relations with people.

III. CASE STUDY

As we know that there is a tremendous growth for the firms which render services in the field of software engineering and information technology in India, this is because of availability of human intelligence and man power at a competitive price in India. But some years ago this was not the story, there was enormous talent pool who were trying to join software companies of Silicon Valley, USA. In this situation Mr. A explored the talent in India and established a software company XYZ with few friends. Then Mr. A tried to bring the projects from abroad and started to offer the services at a very competitive price. The company grew and

the revenue increased exponentially. Mr. A made good decisions at right time by hiring skilled workers. Much number of people got recruited and has prospered well, the company also reached the major stock and shares dealing institutions. With this the company XYZ earned the name for the country as well. Many started recognizing India because of company XYZ. Meanwhile many other firms were established in India and are doing the business well and has yielded fascinating jobs and exuberant lifestyles. It was all because of Mr. A, the IT era started in India and Bangalore known as IT capital of India has become the hub for software engineering. It is also called as Silicon Valley of India. Not only in Bangalore but in many parts of the country the companies have come up and have flourished boosting up the economy of the nation. It was all because of the vision of Mr. A that India has been globally recognized in the field of IT.

All these events occurred because of task orientedness of Mr. A, who set an example of how a leader should be and his responsibilities. Mr. A recognized that his roll was to be the visionary of the company and that he needed professional managers to run XYZ. Mr. A combined his unyielding determination and passion with a well structured management team to make XYZ a giant today.

IV. CONCLUSION

By all the above studies we can find that there is nothing automatic or good in either task oriented or people satisfaction oriented style. But, leadership effectiveness depends on the various elements in group environment. Leadership is totally doing right work at right time along with the assistance of a team.

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