

TEAM BUILDING EMPLOYING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP TRAITS

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Abstract

Human resource is an important part of the organization but even so the team members assigned to complete the project played pivotal role in its execution. Varied approaches can be formulated to achieve desired results but eventually the work done with the contribution from each team member makes it a truly remarkable experience. The engagement of the work force and imbibing the spirit of taking calculated risks without punishing them for unsuccessful outcome paves much more to the projects in long run. Team leader role is to dream big and build team confidence as well as to ensure team closely knitted together to make this reality. Team performance eventually leads to the organization performance and mostly dictated by the leadership traits. Further the organization culture is built over the years by the leaders and having major role in shaping the future of the organization.

Keywords:

Leadership Traits, Management, Team Building

1. INTRODUCTION

Team organization, their motivation, discussions with defined objective, keep throwing challenges, readiness for alternative plan in case any hindrance, providing stress free environment are the aspects to be possessed by the team leader [1]-[4]. The concept of taking along everyone and assigning the work as per individual capability is also key factor resulting in smooth execution without stretching one's limit. This also make working enjoyable and make individual feel to contribute his level best. Successful execution of the project depends on the team leader and it's very important that leader to be respected by every team member for which a leader should earn. Working in fear, intimidation, disrespect to be avoided for a healthy working environment. Another important aspect is to imbibe the value of perseverance in each team member and imbibe this habit in their daily activity. The flow of information to each member, taking constructive suggestions and making them feel part of system should always be encouraged by the leader which is very well exemplified in the case study of ISRO progress [5].

Also, the leader role is to ensure that each day activity is stress free as this impact hugely on the individual's health resulting in poor efficiency. Stress is segregated into three categories: Eustress, Stress and Distress. Encountering light stress enhances one's focus and thinking mechanism but excessive stress of any nature poses health hazards. So a leader role is to bring out clarity, motivation, personal experiences and be a good listener to earn team's faith. Innovative methodology, clarity, openness, discipline, no self-interest, defining purpose are the traits to be possessed by the leader. A leader should be inspirational and able to carry out the transformation with his ability to think differently by bringing new perspective. Creation of changes and management of the same either by influence or with authority distinguishes between leader and manager. Manager focuses more

on the process and not on the substance whereas leader focuses more on the people having open communication, define vision, take risk apart from bringing new perspective in dealing with the problems [6]-[7]. Douglas MacArthur cited 'A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent' [8]. Leader should possess cognitive skills, business skills, interpersonal skills and strategic skills so as to take organization to the next level [9].

In this article the various aspects related to effective leadership are brought out and the importance as well as significance on the overall performance is brought out.

1.1 CLARITY

The execution of project depends on the clarity of the problem and understanding it properly before assigning work to the team member knowing individual capabilities. The clear perfective paves way for easier and timely execution of the given task. Team lead to think beyond and put extra effort to find out the ways in case of blockage or hindrance. Also opening up various channel of discussions and taking suggestions even from juniors. The importance of documentation, clarity in providing instructions are also play a bigger role in keeping away the misinformation and confusion. It is well known fact that job properly planned is half done. The outcome of project mostly depends on the clarity and with proper role assignment to each one.

1.2 INVOLVEMENT

The involvement of the team leader at every stages is the prerequisite for the execution of the project. This stems out from the fact that if team lead doesn't involve and sub contracted the assignment will have detrimental bearing on the end result. This will also enable a backup redundancy in case of any bottleneck. Constant feedback, understanding problem of each individual, providing constant motivation, setting aside personal egos and keeping them focused on the present activities help to achieve the desired goal. Self-reliance is the key for any activity and without attaining the same the end results are real setback at the later stages [10].

2. MOTIVATION

Motivational comes out in form of tangible or intangible reward given to the employee. The study shows that intangible reward such as praise and recognition plays much important role. Praise can be much more effective as tangible rewards. Designing of the job profile making the job interesting and challenging where leader has to play a major role. Making the job looks simple and providing constant encouragement paves way for better results. Constant motivation to the team paves the way for higher

efficiency extracting work from the limited man power. The goal is to maximize the output of each individual rather than asking for additional manpower and resources. Optimal resource mobilization is possible only through motivational and personal touch. Indian culture, history enriched with motivational stories provide various lessons which needs to be told in regular intervals having moral teachings to boost the morale of the team. Also importance of each activity and making them understand that sincere working brings one close to the God. Also each activity strengthens the country so loyalty, sharing and hard work is another way to keep remembering God. Firm believe in one's capabilities result in attaining success.

3. TIME MANAGEMENT

One of the most important aspects as to utilize the provided opportunity in the given time. Importance of well-balanced life can only be understood if individual life is well disciplined adhering to punctuality. As same activity continuously brings boredom, so identification of multiple activities and small get together can lead to have better understanding. Also nature of work postponement to some other day to be discouraged as well as preference for regionalism, linguistic to be sternly dealt. Also any constructive activity and ideas for the betterment to be encouraged. Team lead can show this the way as whatever is preached should be done before expecting from others. The concept of Listen, Learn and Grow to be part of the team building. It is also expected to provide timeline for each of the activity and regularly oversee the daily progress of the assigned activities. Apart from technical or other valid reasons, slippage to be questioned and the importance of the milestone and adherence to timeline to be adhered.

4. ROLE OF CRITICISM

Criticism is to improve the system even if the points raised are irrelevant. This is needed to be told to the team that any points raised should be deliberated in the right concern without proper justification. Also dissent of any nature between the members to be sorted out as the same will lead to disastrous effect on the other members. Any idea floated to be listened as cutting short the same may hurt, harbor ill feeling and kill the enthusiasm and spark. Personal issues and problems should not be part of the individual discussions. Another important aspect is to have healthy competition and groupism of any nature should be dealt with stern warning. Regular meeting to be initiated which should be starting with the action taken report of the previous meeting and the same to be minuted and circulated to all team members. Leader should have the ability to solve problem by engaging in the activity rather asking individual to find solutions. Apart from engaging, leader should involve team with inquisitive questions so in calculating the habit of reading as well as thinking and be ready to accept and amend mistakes.

5. RECOGNITION

The individual work recognition is expected by each individual. The system should encourage to recognize the effort of each individual and simple praiseworthy efforts by higher ups

boost the morale. Leader should have trait to sacrifice self-recognition and providing the recognition to the team effort in every possible occasion. Apart from award, the necessity is to give appreciation by words, encourage them to think out of box and be part of the failure. Even the positives out of failures to be taken out and the person doing so to be recognized. Suitable recognition from sweeper to cab driver, peon to electrician, plumber to cook is very important in the healthy environment. Team leader should always remain cheerful even in the case of adversity as this may lead to happy working environment. The gloomy and frustration paves for the downfall of the team moral. Criticism or finding fault attitude to be replaced by providing suggestions and asking team member to think and deliberate its pros and cons. A leader should praise full team in public platform so as the importance of team effort and recognition automatically works as morale booster.

6. OTHER ATTRIBUTES

Main attributes of a leader stems from the fact that he leads from the front and demonstrate practically the expectations from the team. The attributes can be classified as:

- *Discipline*: Most important trait which makes an ordinary person extraordinary.
- *Knowledge*: Always learning new things in life and acceptable to suggestions for improvement. Leader to be adaptable for criticism so as to gain new insights.
- *Self-management*: Time management stems from this trait and make things to move with ease.
- *Self-belief*: All solutions lies within and having such confidence results in attaining solutions
- *Making God as partner*: One should be ethical in life and not take others share. Making God as partner results in keeping high spirit as the belief that almighty will not allow to sink will keep happy in all circumstances.

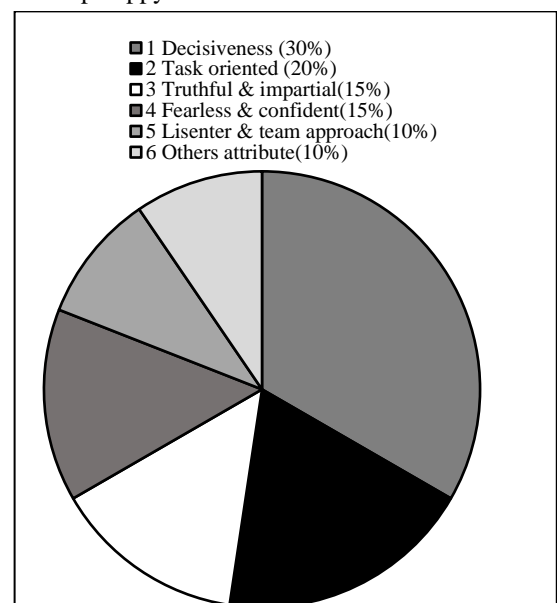


Fig.1. Attributes in percentage for a good leader

The overall environment of the work place should be based on the positivity which is based on the well-being and happiness of each individual. The main elements to achieve the model stems from the welfare-oriented measures and respecting individual dignity. Quick decision, calculated risk, humility are the other traits of a good leader. Further precise communication, fearless approach, flexibility, time bound actions, encouraging talents and providing freedom of opinions are other traits a good leader to possess.

Also, leader should have total control over the various emotions such as anger as this is necessary for the creation of discipline.

7. LEARNING FROM INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCES

Lessons learnt from the personal experiences are important source for finding out the quick solutions from the tricky situations. Various personal experiences and lessons learnt in the daily routine helps to find out various solutions amicably. Connection with nature brings positivity which automatically spreads to others also. Situation such as distress such as death of close relative, major illness etc play a bigger role in the day to day working, so it is important that people facing such situations to be dealt with empathy. One should stand with them and be a calm listener. Also various motivational stories to be correlated to keep up moral boosting. Each activity to be taken as God opportunity to examine us, so always we should do each activity by putting our heart and soul. Also expectations from people bound us to feel dejected so after completion of the work we should only thank to supreme power and remember only the lessons learnt. Negative thoughts to be quenched at the instance of its beginning as this leads to cancerous effect. One should never encourage a member speaking against another either in isolation or in meetings. The listening of other faults, their shortcomings without observing kills the foundation of the system and even organization. Also bypassing leader for one's self interest by team member and giving weightage to such elements demotivate the leader enthusiasm which further reflects in the overall performance.

Any work starting with the positive attitude and proper home work is bound to achieve the desired results. It is important that beginning the day with positive vibes remains for the full day. So team which always work with sincerity, each individual committed to the cause, loyalty to the organization and spirit of sharing knowledge and experiences plays an important role in shaping the difference between victory and defeat. Also, it is well known fact that everybody is different and having his own unique style so leader should not impose his style as this will lead to confusion and chaos [11]. Another key aspect is to talk less as talkative not only waste other time but also some loose words lead to demotivation. Learning from mistakes and each individual style, grabbing opportunities, thinking differently, proper assignments as per individual capabilities are some of the traits a leader should possess. Loss and win are part of the game and that concept prepares the team to learn so as to be prepared for higher challenges and obstacles. As every winner once was a loser, every teacher was once student, every expert once was a beginner and the only way it can be achieved is by keep learning.

8. LEADER TRAITS

Knowledge, facility and challenge are present everywhere and a good leader should catch them to make a mark. Important traits for the team leaders are:

- Sound foundation and openness
- Calculated risk and taking responsibility
- Throwing new ideas and creating new challenges
- Keep setting new targets with roadmap
- Working together for common aim
- Remain always accessible

Another important aspect for a leader is to be regretful and feel sorry for any rude behavior. This will not only improve individual personality but also will earn respect from the team. The individual should feel proud to be associated with the work and enthusiast enough to take up new assignments. The role of leadership is of utmost important and its relevance is more so in present day scenario [12]. The leader should earn respect by possessing the following qualities:

- In-depth knowledge of the subject or keenness in learning
- Highly dedicated with impeccable integrity
- Leading by example
- No self-centric approach
- Team building, involvement in activities
- Open for constructive criticism
- Principled stand and decisiveness
- Respecting others view
- Admitting mistakes
- Building and keeping trust
- Giving due credit to the team and projecting to the higher management
- Listening others perspectives patiently

A leader should take proactive steps, lays foundation for future organization goal, create pool of young team and ready to give due credit. He should be ready to accept mistake and to be open to any form of constructive criticism. Further creating teams of yes man, self-centric approach, imposing and dictating mandate to internal review committees, influencing the decisions are self-inflicted damages on the basic foundation of the organization and leader showing any such traits to be taken seriously. Promoting right people, impartial reviews and ratings, proper assignment, leading the team from the front, listening to the suggestions, taking strong decisions and provides proper direction are some other important factors which can turn around the outcome. A clear perspective of the activities in this area and road map for the same to be meticulously followed so as to enable the manpower meeting the defined targets with the constant enthusiasm. The bottlenecks to be taken one by one and ensuring remedial actions in time bound manner. It is natural that some people don't want team to succeed, so leader to remain alert and be prepared for alternative plan for the execution [13]. As Doug Larson quoted, "Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you would have preferred to talk"; so a leader should talk less and listen more to have effective impact. In summary, the important traits for building a strong team apart from mature leadership is:

- Openness resulting in free flow of ideas and accepting criticism in right spirit
- Truthful and disciplined workforce
- Liberty of putting ideas
- Importance on quality and reliability aspects
- Optimum usage of available resources
- Dissemination of knowledge and sharing attitude
- Imbibing the importance of moral values

Phase manner approach by putting small targets is better way of execution and gradually boost team confidence. The mentoring to be done by setting an example and making roadmap for the success. This will instill confidence in the team and remember the role of the leader who inspired and shaped the legacy by making difference. ISRO is the shining example of such visionary leaders created the culture of resilience [5].

Recent example of the success of moon mission attributed to the visionary leadership and the identification of the task team. The team having full confidence of the leader worked with dedication and showed great teamwork resulting in the ordinary people achieving extraordinary feat. Further the project initiated in the mission mode with full clarity, defined objectives and clear perspective. All the instructions are communicated to each team member and technical differences are sorted with deliberations and consensus. Role of the leader in keeping the morale high was evident while encountering set back in the previous mission. Leadership also play role in instilling confidence and guided them at each and every stage.

9. SUMMARIZATION

Present scenario of not listening other's perspective and finding faults are stumbling block in project execution. Creating a healthy working environment by giving importance to each individual activity leads to a strong team build which will stand for each other paving way for healthy environment. Leadership plays an important role correlating with the team effort where team captain is not only the role model but simultaneously act as a friend and mentor for each player. As stated by Eric Hoffer ,” Leader has to be practical and a realist, yet must talk the language of visionary and the idealist,” provide the gist of the role a leader should play. Team lead also need to be strong enough to assimilate all the problems and always be cheerful and energetic in every day activity. This automatically make each day productive and results in hidden moral boosting. The outcome of a good leader is that nurturing of team members so that each individual can take much higher responsibility and can accommodate in any team while creating everlasting impact for the given assignment. As our culture always emphasize to give

back to the society, so a good leader should nurture and create more effective leaders.

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