

Lesson learned in organizational leadership



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Gong Chen

Abstract

This paper include an assessment of the organization I'm currently working for with definitions of and detailed analysis on how that organization applies the lessons learned in the course, including fundamentals of leadership, organizational culture and climate, high performing teams, problem management and decision making, ethics and professional codes of conduct. This paper also includes an overall organization of document with an introduction, body and conclusion.

Keywords: leadership, organizational culture, team, decision making, ethics

Assessment of My Organization

An Application of Lesson Learned in Organizational Leadership

Organization Overview

My organization (" the firm" in this article) is a multinational professional services firm headquartered in London, UK, Ernst & Young (EY). EY is one of the largest professional services firm in the world and is one of the " Big Four" accounting firms. The organization operates as a network of member firms which are separate legal entities in individual countries. It has 231, 000 employees in over 700 offices around 150 countries in the world. It provides assurance (including financial audit), tax, consulting and advisory services to companies. In 2016, Fortune magazine ranked EY as 49th of the 100 Best

Companies to Work For, and in 2016, EY is the 11th largest privately owned organization in the United States.

During my days working at the firm, I observed several concepts applied by the organization that are closely related what I have learned from this class so far. This paper will focus on and provide a detailed analysis of the following five major areas.

Fundamentals of Leadership

The firm understand that strong leadership is what required to achieve our ambition and fulfill our purposes. Professional with leadership traits at every level of firm are the keys to the change and growth.

Specifically, there are four fundamental categories of leadership the firm had defined for our people – business leadership, client leadership, team leadership, and personal leadership. In a firm that “ people culture” was emphasized every day and everywhere, personal leadership is the most important trait among others. This means communicating with confidence, humility and integrity to build trust and support others, actively maintaining your personal well-being, energy and enthusiasm and exhibiting curiosity and self-awareness to adapt your behavior and connect in diverse contexts. As business leaders, they enhance our reputation and standing in the market through applying financial, operational, risk, sector and global insights to make business decisions in dynamic markets, leveraging the firm’s business development practices to responsibly achieve market leadership, collaborating widely within the firm and externally to bring new ideas. As a client leader, they ensure that our people are connected, responsive and

<https://assignbuster.com/lesson-learned-in-organizational-leadership/>

insightful by bringing all of our clients with the right people in the right locations, building trust and enriching relationships, being proactive, visible and timely sharing our experiences and a point of view tailored to the clients, thereby advancing their thinking. As a team leader, they have a fundamental role in building and supporting the high-performing teams by articulating a bold, clear vision that engages and inspires everyone, selecting, respecting and developing a diverse mix of talent with the right skills at the right time, setting the high standards expected of our profession and enabling each individual and team to deliver quality results.

On the other hand, in my opinion, even though there are plenty “authoritative-type” of leaders, the firm has leaders that are very different in leadership style. They tend to inspire other people, especially younger professionals to unleash their potential to achieve better. They also tend to identify others with purpose, building robust partnerships that enhance our impact and inspire those around them to see the bigger picture.

Additionally, these leaders lead our professionals and serve the clients by leading inclusively and being open-minded for new perspectives that help us thinking creatively and lead to better answers. This will help solving our clients' challenges and build trust and confidence in the industry. Even more, our leaders also achieve our purpose by making an impact in their careers beyond the firm and helping the industry to work better in businesses, communities and organizations across the globe.

After all, leadership is about everyone at the firm, not just people at the top. However, as role models, it is important to lead by example and exemplify our leadership behaviors.

High Performing Teams

From my observation, high-performing teams at our firm demonstrates three key characteristics - common vision, balance, and quality results. Common vision means the team articulate a bold, clear vision that engages and inspires everyone. Balance means the team select, respect and develop a diverse mix of talents with the right skills at the right time. Quality results means the team sets high standards expected of our deliverables and enable each individual and team to deliver quality results.

Specifically, there are five winning behaviors that are commonly observable drive consistent positive outcome and team experience.

1. Trust is the foundation of a high performing, cohesive team. Trust is the confidence among team members that their intentions are good, and that there is no reason to be protective or careful around the group.
2. Confront conflicts - Teams that trust one another are comfortable debating key issues to produce the best possible solution. All opinions and ideas are put on the table and considered. By confronting conflicts, teams will solve problems efficiently, have lively, productive discussion, and utilize all opinions of all team members.
3. Focus on results - High-performing teams at the firm are able to set aside their individual goals and agendas and focus exclusively on the

team's collective accomplishments. By focusing on results, teams could not only accomplish the results they set out to achieve, but also avoid distractions by making their results a priority and stay focused by clearly defining their targets and keeping them tangible.

4. Accept accountability – High-performing teams that commit to decisions and standards of performance hold one another accountable for adhering to those decisions and standards. Members of great teams are willing to challenge their peers on performance or behaviors. By accepting accountability, teams enhance alliance by setting high expectations for each other, expect team every member to deliver, and have low tolerance for mediocrity.
5. Commitment – This is a result of two things: clarity and buy-in. Clarity is the removal of assumptions and ambiguity from a task. Buy-in means taking the ownership of a task. By showing commitment, teams could establish clarity around direction and priorities, obtain buy-in from all team members, learn from mistakes, commit to deadlines, and move forward without hesitation.

After all, this is the essence of the firm's high-performing teams: the unique code that will enable us to achieve better and faster.

Organization Culture and Climate

Our culture and value define who we are – “ we are people who demonstrate integrity, respect, and teaming; people with energy, enthusiasm, and the courage to lead; people who build relationships based on doing the right thing”.

In my opinion, our organization really focus on building a “ people culture”. This is easily understandable considering we’re a professional service firm where people is the most significant asset. Therefore, for my organization, globalization and underlying demographic trends imply that competition to attract best people is raising sharply. Top employers are adapting to the trend by building globally experienced leadership and equipping their people with the skills to lead in the future. We aspire to have a leading people culture everywhere in the world. Creating an atmosphere that attracts and retains the finest minds and helps they thrive leads to better service for clients. We are focusing on inclusiveness, development, and engagement of our culture that enhance what is important to our clients and our people.

The firm also focus on improving the team’s capacity for collective action and aligning individuals’ motivations around high level missions, and a shared set of values that build commitment and inspire passion and creativity. Additionally, coaching and mentoring is always one of the top things for our organization. Internally, it is always important to help team members to find a sense of personal fulfilment from their missions.

Externally, we were also encouraged to build collaborative relationship with other firms in the industry for mutual support. The organization also seek to build collaborative partnership with clients and the community.

Problem Management & Decision Making

In this highly interconnected and competitive industry, the firm believes the ability to make the right decisions, at the right time, has become a core advantage. Our people are faced with constantly complex and

multidimensional decisions. We must be able to react to sudden shifts in the business environment, in real-time.

The firm has invested a great amount of effort to improve our decision-making efficiency and level of insight to improve performance. First of all, the firm narrowed down some common challenges faced by our people in decision making. For instance, we were lacking confidence in making strategic decisions sometimes. We sometimes made decisions based on intuition and experience, spent too much time on mechanical tasks rather than analysis, and focused on unnecessary detail. We were expect to be adding more value through better use of leading indicators, conducting root cause analysis of issues, and linking strategy with resource allocation, planning and reporting.

Therefore, the firm has been focusing on implementing a “ driver-based” decision making process at every level. Most other processes out there include a discussion or even a listing of drivers. However, this conceptual listing does not typically build out the driver insights to a deep enough level to really drive decision-making. Our process emphasized drivers should be quantified, built into a mathematical model, with correlations among the drivers, enabling planning and root cause analysis at the driver level. Specifically, we developed a driver-based framework to evaluate each initiative on a consistent set of driver inputs. The driver methodology enabled comparison of driver assumptions for accuracy as well as a repeatable way of prioritizing initiatives.

This could be demonstrated by a simple example. For instances, if a revenue target was missed, the driver-based analysis could help our reveals the roost causes. Revenue decline may be due to units, not price, and unit decline is due to smaller market size, but market share has exceeded plan. That means the firm is still growing share while maintaining price. In this case, our strategic focus should be whether the market size could recover. No matter what the answer is, we should always focus on generating high-performance share growth to maintain our revenue. On the contrary, if a revenue target was exceeded, the driver-based analysis could help us define the contributors. Units might be twice the projected number because the market size is three times the planned size, but market share is lagging plan despite aggressive discounting that has driven down net price. In this case, our strategic focus should be whether to invest more in this growing market.

As this approach becoming more commonly used at the firm, we believe this is a very effective and suitable decision making method for us because drivers enable fact-based evaluations of business alternatives, as well as ability to run risk-specific scenarios. Additionally, drivers enable 1uantitative analysis to hone in on upside opportunity and downside risk at an actionable level.

Ethics and Professional Codes of Conduct

Our firm is one of the world's most respected organizations, and we're aiming to make us one of the best places to work. That reputation is the result of our professional skills, and integrity, embodied in our strong values and our Code of Conduct.

As a public accounting firm, professional integrity is our greatest asset. Acting with integrity means complying with laws, regulations and standards that apply to our professional conduct. It also means complying with the firm's policies and procedures, including competing for business, serving clients, documenting work and reporting hours and expenses accurately. Objectivity and independence are critical parts of making sure the investing public has confidence in our services. Failing to embody these values puts our professional reputation at risk. We embrace the rules and policies regarding professional independence. And we avoid activities that might have even the appearance of impropriety.

Citations:

1. "Ernst & Young". In Wikipedia. Retrieved March 23, 2017 from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_%26_Young
2. "Our people and culture". Ernst & Young Global Limited, About us. Web. March 23, 2017. Retrieved from http://www.ey.com/us/en/about-us/our-people-and-culture/2020-vision_our-people-21st-century-workforce
3. "Our Value". Ernst & Young Global Limited, About us. Web. March 23, 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.ey.com/us/en/about-us/our-values>
4. "Creating an ethical culture". By David Gebler. May 2006. Strategic Finance.
5. "Living Our Value". Ernst & Young Global Limited. March 23, 2017.
6. "Code of Conduct". Ernst & Young Global Limited. March 23, 2017.