

Twelve o' clock high assignment



Assessment of Twelve O' Clock High- Reflection Assignment #4 The movie Twelve O' Clock High illustrated various aspects of leadership approaches in an Air Force general's strenuous attempt to heighten the morale of the 918th Bomb Group. Twelve O' Clock High highlighted the effects of country-club management under the leadership of Col Keith Davenport and revealed the effects of authority-compliance leadership under the command of Brig Gen Frank Savage.

Twelve O' Clock High highlights two Air Force member's attempts to heighten the morale of a group. Strong examples of country-club management and authority compliance leadership were used in this film. Use of the Country-Club management was apparent in the leadership style of Col Keith Davenport. In the opening scene after a flight mission, the crew was in disarray following the injuries and casualties of crew members in a failed mission under the command of Col Davenport.

During a debriefing, as the airmen were questioned and recounting details regarding their flight mission, their lack of knowledge for procedures and protocol in combat were revealed. The mission resulted in the loss of 5 crew members, 3 deaths and 11 wounded airmen. The mission prompted Major General Patrick Pritchard to visit the 918th Bomb group. In further investigation, a lieutenant reveals he missed a checkpoint and had flown off course resulting in the crew being delayed for a target bombing by 3 minutes.

In an effort to protect his subordinate, Col Davenport assumed full responsibility by stating the young lieutenant was under his command. After

a suggestion was presented to remove the lieutenant from the group, Col Davenport stated he would not reprimand the young airmen, because he didn't believe in "chopping off heads because of one mistake", and then refused to remove the lieutenant from the team. His decisions resulted in Major General Pritchard relieving Col Davenport from his command.

I felt the leadership Col Davenport's used was Country-Club management, as he was more focused on his relationship with his crew, than that of the mission. He seemed extremely eager to maintain the "friendships" with his crew members, even when they were at fault. As a result, his type of leadership lacked in increasing productivity, and failed to train his group how to accomplish their mission in war bombing. In an effort to increase the moral of the group, Brig Gen Frank Savage lead the group using authority-compliance leadership.

After being approached by Maj Gen Pritchard about the decline of the 918th Airmen's productivity, Brig Gen Savage was tasked with finding out the "maximum effort" of the group and he decided the best approach to achieve those results were to sternly execute rules and discipline. To sharpen the morale of the group, he began to review employee files and remove ranks from the officers failing to fulfill their responsibilities, reprimand airmen for not verifying credentials of airmen entering the post, and failing to display insignia displaying their rank.

Overall, he began to sternly discipline the airmen for failed adherence of the rules. In order to validate his authority, he interacted with the crew only to give orders, providing harsh criticisms and reprimands. He was directive,

strict and overpowering. He believed this approach was the only way to influence the airmen in realizing their value, and increase pride among the group. After ordering several test flights missions and target bombings, the group's skill level began to increase, but the morale and confidence of the group was lacking.

After Brig Gen Savage requests a personal meeting with Lt Bishop, asking for his feedback, his concern for the well being of the airmen allows Lt Bishop's to perceive Brig Gen in a different light. During an investigation by the Inspector General, Lt Bishop defends Brig Gen Frank Savage and increases the support from the airmen. Next, Brig Gen Fred begins to reassess his approach, taking a proactive interest in developing relationships, providing positive re-enforcement and interacting with the airmen. At first glance, I identified Brig Gen Savage's approach as Authority-Compliant leadership.

Initially he showed little interest in developing personal relationship with his subordinates, and he focused more on meeting the task and job requirements. In addition, the interaction with his group was very limited with the exception of communicating task orders and reprimanding the airmen. His second leadership approach after bonding and developing relationships with the airmen was considered borderline team-management as his interest transitions to being in the well being of his team ahead of the tasks.

In addition, Brig Gen Savage's assignment to the 918th Air Men group was also an example of situational leadership as he was assigned to exhibit domineering behaviors with the in order to increase the morale of the group.

After being unsuccessful with using authority compliant (directive) behaviors, he modified his approach to meet the needs of his subordinates by becoming increasingly concerned with their well-being and more involved (supportive). In conclusion, Twelve O' Clock High successful in highlighting the extremes of two distinct leadership approaches.

Col Davenport's use of Country- Club leadership was effective in strengthening his likability and increased the loyalty of the group but proved to lack in productivity in war fighting. In contrast, Brig Gen Savage's use of Authority-Compliant leadership, improved the productivity but lacked in strengthen the group's loyalty and lessened his likability. Overall, Twelve O' Clock High illustrated how two extreme leadership approaches used in the same situation can still prove to be ineffective.