

Management assignment flashcard



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Question 1

Define “ issue management” and “ crisis management”. Support your definitions with at least one example for each concept.

Issue management is a strategic management procedure that is anticipatory and assists the organizations in developing optimal detection and response strategies that depict changes and trends in the socio-political arena. Most of the trends and changes that organizations experience finally crystallize into issues which attract attention of stakeholders. The way an organization responds to these issues through policies determines its relationship with stakeholders and stake seekers. The issue management allows decision makers to respond adequately to shifting the stakeholder expectations (Timothy, 2002) which normally has huge impacts on the organization e. g. the shift by McDonalds from plastic to the paper packaging was a result of conclusive decision to address environmental conservation.

Crisis management is the process which is followed by an organization when dealing with issues that pose serious threats to its sustainability or that of its stakeholders or general public. An organization must therefore respond expeditiously within a short period of time, since such occurrences normally come as a surprise and must be addressed. This means that there is the need for change in order to avoid endangering the survival of an organization e. g. a software failure in a company.

Question 2

In the form of corporate communication that existed before the information age, what was “unidirectional communication”? What implications did it have for corporate communication?

Unidirectional communication is the use of a network appliance that allows data and information to flow only in one direction.

The unidirectional networks were constructed in such a way that information could flow only from the lower side to the higher side but not in the reverse (Denver, 2007). This accessing the data on the higher side guaranteed security, confidentiality and authenticity of the information available.

Corporate communication was therefore enhanced since the information available could not be compromised through network attacks. Most security guarantees in the network were physical by nature which made them even less susceptible to attacks. However, most of the unidirectional paths could not be used to relay information back in form of an acknowledgement.

Question 3

Define “innovation” from a strategic management perspective. Support your definition with at least one possible example of managerial innovation.

Innovation is creation of value for an organization which leads to increased efficiency in execution of an organization’s roles. It makes a company realize and benefit from competitive advantages in its operations.

An example of managerial innovation is where the management comes up with new ways of managing employees. A manager can decide that employees who meet their daily targets are at liberty to leave the premises

regardless of whether it is time or not. Such a recommendation makes employees ingenious in the performance of their tasks. They become innovative in developing new ways of overcoming the pervasive problems that they normally encounter at the workplace. The employees of such an organization will engage more in sharing information which leads to the development of new time saving mechanisms that do not compromise the quality of their work.

Question 4

What is “ strategic flexibility”?

This is the organizational preparedness in reversing some of the ineffective strategic decisions that might have been made. Strategic flexibility enables the organization to identify major changes in the external and internal environment and then take proper mitigating measures to counter any adverse effects such changes may have on the organization. Strategic flexibility requires the management to commit adequate resources in adopting new ways of arriving at the set goals and objectives.

Strategic flexibility is a vital ingredient for the continued growth of an organization. In order for strategic flexibility to take roots in an organization, there must be a commitment from the management in the growth of an organization. This growth can be realized only through identity and sustenance of the firm’s competitive advantage (Green, 2005). If the competitive advantage of the company does not guarantee this growth, then a decision is made for a shift in focus. The competitive environment is also given frequent reviews in order to identify new opportunities for growth.

Such opportunities are quickly seized. There is also close communication and consultation amongst the stakeholders of a company that harnesses strategic flexibility. Such stakeholders include employees and members of the supply chain.

Question 5

Describe, using examples, one significant barrier to change within an organization.

One of the main barriers to change in an organization is lack of communication. This entails lack of communication both internally, between the employees, and externally, between the company and its main stakeholders.

Lack of communication between the management and employees creates a lot of tension and resistance since employees perceive change of the efforts as a threat to their jobs and will be reluctant to implement any change of the efforts. Effective communication during the change process is fundamental since it shapes right attitudes and behaviors among the employees. This is in recognition of the role of employees and other stakeholders as the main change agents due to their vital role in explaining the change process to others. The employees usually act as a link between the organization and their main stakeholders such as customers. The way they communicate with such stakeholders determines the reception the change efforts receive from such stakeholders.

Question 6

Describe the “ vision” and “ crisis management” schools of thought in change management.

Vision in change management allows the change agents to have clear view of how the organization will look like after the change process is over. It allows the management to make prior plans on how they will exploit the competitive advantages that will be presented to the organization after realization of the change.

Crisis management allows the management of the change process to respond promptly to the issues that may emanate from implementation of the change process. It allows for timely detection of signals that characterize the impact or need for change. This allows the change management teams to adequately prepare and take precautionary measures that limit the adverse effects that may emanate from the change process. This allows for containment of such situations and taking control measures to limit the extent of any damages. It enables recovery and gives the teams a learning experience.

SECOND SET OF QUESTIONS

Question 1

How is “ pre-emptive planning” important to organizational issue and crisis management?

Pre-emptive planning allows for formation of effective teams in an organization. It ensures the right quality mix among the members of such teams in terms of qualifications and training, experience and exposure to <https://assignbuster.com/management-assignment-flashcard/>

events. This ensures that such teams are cohesive and effective in the formulation of solutions in the face of any issues and crises that an organization may be exposed to. Pre-emptive planning also allows for contingency planning. It allows for determination of back-up processes and procedures that determine the level of the organization's preparedness for response in times of crisis and post-crisis recovery.

Pre-emptive planning also allows for analysis of vulnerabilities that a business is exposed to. This involves identification of risk factors that may curtail the achievement of organizational goals and targets. It allows for adoption of appropriate strategies and measures that reduce the probability of risk occurrence. It allows for sharing and deflecting of any adverse effects of the risks that an organization may be exposed to. This is mainly done through adoption of insurance plans by the organization that limits its exposure to risks.

Pre-emptive planning also entails designing plans for training and familiarization of employees to exposures that an organization faces and assessment of performance.

Question 2

Explain three of the effects of information technologies on corporate communication.

Information technology has made communication easier and instantaneous. Technology has led to the increase of communication platforms such as emails, Facebook and twitter. This has led to increased interactions due to

ease of accessibility of targets at any time. Increase of fast communication platforms that are conveniently accessed has led to increase in business transactions between corporate organizations. Increased business volume have directly contributed to the increased profitability.

Information technology has also enhanced information sharing between employees and other stakeholders of an organization. Increased information sharing enables employees to execute their roles and responsibilities in a more proactive manner. This is mainly through consultations and seeking clarifications. It leads to making the optimal policy decisions that guarantee prosperity of the organization both in the short and long run.

Information technology enhances the safe storage of an organization's information through the use of electronic storage systems. It ensures that all vital records of a company are stored in virtual vaults where accessibility can be easily limited to the top managers in an organization. This ensures that vital information is not leaked to competitors and is not destroyed in case the physical facilities in a company get destroyed. The use of information technology security engineering ensures that company information is safe from hackers.

Question 3

Conduct a brief personal SWOT exercise. What do you currently face in terms of SWOT in your professional life?

A personal SWOT analysis lets one identify his or her personal strengths and weaknesses. This allows an opportunity for someone to seek strategies for

personal improvement in weak areas. It also permits one to take advantage of his or her personal gifts and talents over others which can be exploited for supremacy and success in life. The strategies for exploitation of personal strengths are set in line with available opportunities presented by general trends in the global environment. One also exploits his or her capabilities in full knowledge of persistent and possible threats that can curtail success of individual ventures.

Question 4

What is the purpose of a mission statement? In your estimation, are they generally effective?

A mission statement guides activities of an organization by spelling its overall goals and providing for a path that should be followed in pursuit of those goals. Mission statements provide the context (Francis, 2003) within which strategies are formulated and fundamental decisions made regarding an organization.

Effectiveness of an organization's mission statement is determined by its design. It must entail thorough knowledge of the main customers for the business through addressing the scope of services being provided and the effect the business will have on these targeted customers. Customers are interested in knowing what their expectations can be from the business. This makes them know how the business will improve their lives and also convinces them why they should include the business in their choice list.

Mission statements are effective in setting strategies and guiding the decision making processes in organizations so that they are within the scope and ability of the entity. It keeps the management in track when seeking opportunities for growth and expansion of a business. It is also imperative for an organization to provide the necessary financial and logistical support to its teams to ensure the mission is accomplished successfully. An organization also has an option of reviewing its mission statement at least after every three years.

Question 5

Briefly explain the steps of Hurst's organizational ecocycle and discuss how they relate to organizational change.

The strengths of a company which are the key competencies become the weaknesses for a company in the long run due to change in circumstances and general business environment. A company must respond promptly to the changes in the business environment so that it does not get caught up in the spiral (success) trap. If they are caught in the spiral, there is high probability the company will fail and fall into destruction (Hurst, 2012).

Destruction paves the way for new growth and reestablishment of a business. The business experiences the entrepreneurial trap where it employs various strategies to survive. Between success and failure traps is the profitability zone. Growing companies get rationalized through strategic management policies to ensure their survival amid intense competition from established companies.

Successful organizations must also exhibit creative leadership. People working for the organization must portray excellent leadership skills for success.

Question 6

In Flach's model of response to change, at which two stages do people commonly get "stuck"?

At the entrenched stage of response, people are normally characterized by denial and develop a lot of anxiety and anger towards the change process. This is due to their previous familiarization with particular ways and trends of doing things. They become receptive and dismiss the change process as inappropriate. This can be overcome by making people go through various learning activities that prepare them for change. This gradually prepares them mentally for their new roles.

The other stage is when individuals get overwhelmed. People develop feelings of depression and powerlessness. Their actions are normally characterized by negative mindsets about learning processes. This negativity may be passed onto others. Such people need support from their colleagues so that they can develop some positivity to the change process.

Case study 1

The proposed objectives of the consultation process would be to get solutions to the thorniest issues that have arisen between proposals of the company and views and opinions of the stakeholder communities such as government, environmentalists and surrounding communities. Consultation

process must inform the stakeholders on the need to take precautionary measures in identifying and getting rid of all the health hazards that may arise from expansion process of the company. Consultation must also sensitize employees and area residents on the dangers they may be exposed to while working at the pork production facilities. Other objectives of the consultation process would be to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements which address standards that must be upheld. This prevents the company from being held liable for breach of existing laws (Allan, 2010).

The first stage of the decision making process involves orientation and establishing of the relationships that nurture effective interpersonal relations between all stakeholders. The most effective communication's strategy at this stage is the use of various verbal and non-verbal cues to convey the message. The company can use its gents and other personnel to inform the surrounding residents of the importance of the project and positive impacts it will have on their lives.

Stage two of the decision making process involves development of perceptions amongst various stakeholders which often lead to some disagreements and conflicts. The best communication strategy is the use of programmed discussions based on facts. This allows for identity of the points or areas where the stakeholders differ with the views or proposals of the company.

The company must guarantee the most of the residents and authorities that it has the capacity and ability to protect their environmental concerns that the company possesses. The residents living nearby must be guaranteed

that the establishment of the company in their neighborhood will not endanger their lives due to the bad odor. They also see the potential harm to the environment through soil and water pollution, not mentioning threat to the jobs the company brings. The company must therefore endeavor to take care of the concerns by residents by employing strategies that address these concerns. The company can discuss whether they can be in a joint venture with the authorities in order to ensure the necessary infrastructure is there to address various concerns that have been brought up by various stakeholders. This is due to non-anticipation by the government of industries of such scale.

The media can be involved in this process by sensitizing the public to report and contribute on how the existing facilities can be improved. The media can also sensitize the communities on the benefits that expanding companies bring to the community. The media can also be helpful in providing information to the government on how to liaise with expanding companies in providing infrastructural set ups for effective service provision. This is through providing reports from other areas where such projects have been successful. Such reports enable the governments and other stakeholders to have a clearer view of the potential benefits that such big projects bring to communities.

The managers at the existing plants will demonstrate the efficacy of the project and its features that have facilitated their success in other areas. The managers will affirm the viability of the project in creating fair competition which will contribute to the improved lifestyles for the residents. This is

because competition in the job market will lead to improved compensation for the work done.

The main decision makers who will use the stakeholder input are the regulatory agencies and top managers of the company. The regulators will evaluate authenticity of the project and determine its relevance in the light of various sentiments raised by the residents, environmentalist and existing companies. These will determine the nature of conditions and obligations that will be set out in the license agreements that the company will be awarded by the authorities. The stakeholder input will inform the authorities of any additional parameters that should be considered. The top managers of the company will use the stakeholder input to review the viability of their business decisions to set the pork production centers. The managers will take note of all the sentiments raised by environmentalists, residents and existing businesses to decide on the nature of impact they will have on the performance of the business. They will acknowledge how their projections on key performance indicators of the proposed business will be affected.

The main interest groups that will be involved in this consultation include civil society groups in the environment sector, labor unions, employer bodies and local authorities. The involvement of these groups will ensure that there is fairness in the consultation process. The civil groups in the environmental sector can prepare an environmental impact report on the project which it can present during the consultation process. The labor unions will represent the interests of the potential employees who may be hired by the company. Employer bodies will represent the interests of the company in the light of the massive investment funds it is risking and the potential losses it could

suffer if the project fails to take off. The local authorities will ensure that their infrastructure is not strained. They may ensure fairness and equity by advocating for adequate compensation by the investor in terms of fees and rates it pays to them.

Public consultation is necessary in this process since it ensures the long term sustainability of the project. Local residents will understand the benefits that the community seeks to reap from the project. This reduces any negative sentiments and opposition the project may experience from the community. Public consultation also enhances participation and involvement of the public in the initial set up of the company. All public sentiments are taken into consideration which reduces chances of occurrences of events such as strikes and civil disobedience. Other communication strategies that can be used involve the use of billboards and social media where the public can positively contribute and give their personal views on the project.

Case study 2

The mission statement of the Coca-Cola Company is to refresh the world, inspire moments of optimism and happiness and create value and difference (Seaman, 2010). The company aims at providing drinks to its global market by continuously investing in research and development. This ensures that there is adequate product variety for its customers at all times. Satisfaction of the needs of these customers is met through provision of wide variety of soft drinks which gives the consumer large choice of options. When the needs of the consumers have been met, it instantly stimulates happiness and adds value. The company aims at creating a difference in their

consumers through provision of quality products which cannot be easily complemented by competitive products in the markets. The mission statement can be improved by stating distinct ways, through which the company products add value to the consumer e. g. quenching thirst.

The company has clear sight of where they want to be in three years. They want to boost their sales margins and market share. They aim at cultivating the leadership qualities of their employees so that they can be inspired to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. This is to be done through cultivating a culture of integrity, collaboration and accountability. The company also recognizes the diversity of their stakeholders, mainly employees, and the impact they exert in the organization. Their operations are represented in over 200 countries worldwide. The diversity is also reflected in the brands that suit the diverse customer tastes and preferences.

The vision of the company helps the employees make quick decisions, as reflected in the structure of the company. The regional subsidiaries have great independence in making operational decisions that pertain to their areas. The company's heads in Atlanta normally handle overall policy decisions that affect the global enterprise while leaving the regional operational logistics to the area and regional managers.

The company has a set of values, namely leadership, integrity, passion, accountability, diversity, collaboration and quality. Every stakeholder in the company's value chain must adhere to these principles. The company exemplifies on the need for these values by having a code of ethics. This

code is applicable to all the employees regardless of the region they operate from. It also applies to members of the value chain such as suppliers, distributors and retailers. The values ensure that customer experiences are not compromised in any way.

One of the trends that will have a profound effect on this organization in the next five years is adoption of technological means of production. The company serves a wide global market with diverse consumer needs. The company must employ technology in the collection and analysis of consumer data so that it does not lose any of its market shares to rivals. Another trend that may impact on the company is behavior by some governments to support locally owned companies. This may force such governments to impose heavy fees in form of licenses and import tariffs. The company in such instances may be forced to increase prices for its product which may lead to loss of the market to the locally owned rivals. Coca-Cola Company operates in the countries that have poor economies, especially in Africa. Such countries normally experience high rates of inflation and have poor infrastructure. If these economies do not improve the company may be forced to withdraw its services which can lead to heavy losses. Another trend is the increased awareness that has been created by health advocacy groups on the danger of consuming processed drinks and their link to carcinogenic ailments. Such information can immensely dent the sales performance of the company. Another trend is the appeal these drinks have continued to have in the consumer market globally. The Coca-Cola Company has preserved its unique technology which has been elusive to its competitors. Their ability to

maintain that competitive advantage in light of the current advancements in technology will propel them to greater heights.

One of the customer segments for this company is the youth. They mainly like dining out of their homes, especially during weekends and holidays. Other customer segments are the high and the low income earners. The high income earners normally purchase the product in large quantities which they store in their homes. They mainly live in high end estates and also patronize some of the most expensive public places. The low income earners prefer smaller packages of the product which they can afford. They live in rented areas as majority of them cannot afford to buy a house. Another customer segment is those holding parties and occasions such as birthdays, weddings and other forms of celebration. Such gatherings normally witness high uptake of beverages manufactured by the company. Another customer segment is children. Most of them get mesmerized by taking soft drinks like the Coca-Cola products. The company should mainly target the youth since they are the majority across most of the regions where the company operates.

The company ensures that the communication channels enforce its strategy of accountability of employees and stakeholders within the company. The delegation of most operational decisions to subsidiaries ensures that there is prompt response to issues before they negatively impact on the business. However, this freedom may affect the company negatively due to poor market analysis which can lead to improper decisions that affect consumers e. g. pricing policy for products.

In order to create a strategic culture in the organization, employees are to be fully accountable for their actions. They should set goals and targets and then demonstrate how they are going to achieve them. The company should facilitate this through provision of up-to-date information which will act as a guide in making strategic choices. Employees should also be adequately compensated and rewarded for their efforts in order to increase their motivation and enthusiasm.

Organizational leaders should align their strategies after thorough evaluation of the competitive advantages and resources available in the company. There must also be an elaborate identification of risks that the company is exposed to and ways of mitigating such risks. This creates a clear path for designing of optimal strategic approaches to propel the company.