

Toyota: a glimpse of leadership, organizational leadership, and organizational st...

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Toyota: A Glimpse of Leadership, Organizational Behavior, and Organizational Structure Courtney Berry Organizational behavior is the study of application of individuals' behaviors within structured groups within an organization (Robbins & Judge, 2007). The field of study identifies behaviors within specific groups and individuals in organizations and how the structures of organizations play a role in behaviors (Robbins & Judge, 2007).

In the past several months, the leading company in the car industry has been experiencing a quality control and consumer product safety issue.

Toyota is not only encountering a quality control issue but also a senior management crisis issue. The corporate leadership team of Toyota did not recognize the importance of addressing the consumer safety issue with the sticking accelerator and not to mention the huge public relations blunder that came with it. Does this failure to address a quality control issue and a real senior management public relations issue have anything to do with Toyota's leadership, organizational behavior, and organizational structure?

Leadership, organizational behavior, and organization structure

Toyota's thought on leadership is to empower employees and develop their people. If the employee has not learned a specific task, the leader has not done a good job (Womack & Shook, 2007). Plan, Do, Check, and Action (PDCA) Cycle is something that Toyota implements (Womack & Shook, 2007). This cycle engages employees to question products and processes and implement new action. Senior leadership is also expected to perform this. In fact, senior leadership regularly makes visits to the plant floors to engage with people and help with processes.

This type of leadership employs mutual adjustment and interaction from both the employees and leadership. Leadership has much to do with behaviors within an organization. Organizational behavior looks at behaviors on an individual, group, and organizational level and how the levels are interrelated. According to Henry Mintzberg, organizational behaviors can be grouped into three primary categories: interpersonal, informational, and decisional (Robbins & Judge, 2003). These behaviors are found at the managerial role but play an important and predictive role at determining the behaviors of an organization and its structure. When Toyota led the way in the car industry the organization was firing on all cylinders in their organizational behavior. At the individual level, job satisfaction empowers the employees to make decisions on the line and create efficient processes that lead to high production. At the group level, communication and decisions are made across multiple teams and employees to engineer the highest level of product leadership (Womack & Shook, 2007).

The organizational level mirrors the individual and group level that creates a culture of pride within Toyota. This organizational pride creates a culture of employees with a belief that Toyota engineers the best products.

Organizational structure is the backbone to the strategy of an organization. It helps carry out new strategies by differing structure designs and parameters in which individuals and groups communicate within organizations (Mintzber, Lampel, Quinn, & Ghoshal, 2003). The car industry typically mirrors the machine organizational structure.

The work is highly standardized and is designed to run by a large technostructure to formalize behaviors and actions (Mintzber, et al, 2003). The structure of this design typically limits power at the operator level. This type of horizontal structure ends up not engaging the people at the organization and does not benefit the customer as a whole (Mitzber, et al, 2003). Toyota, while a machine organization, does not place value vertically and rather creates power horizontally. The organization has a history of empowering their operators with knowledge and career paths. Toyota is noted for this.

Conclusion Toyota's leadership and organizational structure does not predicate the failure for senior management to fail to address a quality control and product issue as well as a public relations issue. The organization's role of interpersonal communication and decisions made both vertically and horizontally within its structure would lend to fix a problem and engineer the best product. All employees are empowered to ask why an accelerator should be engineered with a certain spec and require certain raw materials. The leadership and structure creat high quality product processes.

The organizational behavior could have explained the blunder on senior management to fail to address a quality control issue based on the culture. According to Benjamin Heineman, Toyota's culture of, " We did it right, the problem is small, the critics are wrong" (paragraph 5, 2010). Toyota's culture and pride of engineering the best could have predicted this public relations blunder that has striped consumer confidence and may lead to a business

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