The role of modern industrial manager

Business, Management

A manager is someone in charge of an organisation or subunit. Many would fit the bill of a manager besides a chief executive, including coaches, bishops, foremen even presidents and prime ministers. What is the role of a manager? If you did ask someone in a managerial position what they did they would probably tell you that they plan, organize, coordinate and control. Mangers are persistent individuals and they perform their activities in concise, diverse manners.

Study shows that most activities performed by chief executives last less than 9 minutes and only a small fraction of the time do activities last an hour long. The work pace for most chief executives and foremen are relentless, spending their whole day receiving calls and mail with every break interrupted by a subordinate looking for some sort of guidance (Mintzberg 1990). The role of an ideal manager should be a balance between the roles Mintzberg has described. This is because a manger is the commander in chief of an organisation and through this role he has contact to various interpersonal relationships.

This gives his the opportunity to gain access to various sorts of information which would then enable him to put to good use by planning effective strategies, making decisions or implement in action (Waldron. M. W, Vasanthakumar. J & Arulraj. S 1997). Managerial roles accentuates reasoning and control, and it does not matter whichever direction the focus is on, the manager should always look at ways to achieve results that would make positive impact and make people continue contributing to his or her organisation.

In 1981 Arnaldo conducted a survey of hotel general managers by adapting Mintzberg approach to managerial behaviour. What he found out from this research was that a large majority of mangers viewedleadershipas the most important role among the ten roles as proposed by Mintzberg. From this view leadership is an essential quality required for one who is a manager. (Zaleznik. A, 1978). The trait theory perspective suggests that certain individuals possess the qualities and characteristics that highlight them as natural born leaders and this is what will differentiate them from their subordinates. Northouse, P2010). Although this suggests that leadership is a quality that cannot be learnt but one that is acquired , (Worsfold, 1989)it would give a person who is likely to take up a role as a manager an insight of the characteristics and qualities that are essential for a leader. Furthermore one need not necessarily stick to its outline as leadership is a role that allows an individual to show his or her unique abilities to command and influence others. (Hollander, 1978).

Project leadership is essentially defined as a process that fits into a managerial job that would take into consideration the requirement and perquisite of those people who decide to stand besides you to see the completion of a particular task. (Cleland, 1995). Project leaders should not be too rigid and exercise authority over the situation within leadership criteria (Cleland and Ireland, 2007) but rather as Goetsch and Davies(2006, 254-255) say inspire individuals in making entire enthusiastic along with intentional dedication towards achieving company aims.

Thus one does not need to be intellectually superior to be a manager but rather one need to be determinant, strong willed, analytical, intelligent and

most importantly be tolerant. (Zaleznik. A , 1978). Kanji (2008) states leadership is defined as the conduct related by activities in taking charge signifying the immense difficulties faced by managers and professors. Therefore leadership is a variation of characteristics, principles, behaviour and attitude that acts as the key to long term performance of established organisations. (Lakshman, 2006).

Having an action mindset about the workenvironmentis another trait required by a manager. A popular visual metaphor indicates that an organisation is a chariot pulled by wild horses which represent the emotions, anticipation and ambitions and needs of people in the organisation. Keeping onto to the same track requires just as the same skill that is required to set off in an entirely new direction. Having an action mindset in this context would be to understand the nature of the situation and utilising the capabilities of the team helping to stay on and maintain direction. Gosling Mintzberg, 2003) Nearly all managerial decisions and actions are influenced by the assumptions made based onobservationabout human behaviour. Douglas McGregor published in his book The Human Side of Enterprise, two very unique ways of looking at human nature namely Theory X and Theory Y. McGregor also assumed that a typical manger should operate on the context that his employees are either Theory X or Theory Y. Assumptions uch as these mould the manager's perspective on his employees resulting in either a Theory X manager, who would assume a direct and harsh approach denying employees control over their work , using an incentive based reward system to monitor performance and constantly supervise his employees or rather a Theory Y manager who would be more lenient towards his

employees granting them positions ofresponsibilityand structuring the work environment in a manner which would result in efficient methods to solve problems and increase productivity. McGregor , 1960) The Hawthorne experiments conducted by Elton Mayo from 1924 to 1934 prove this point by clearly illustrating that even when the working conditions were varied the team dynamics of the team remained the same. The women who participated in the experiment formed a cooperative relationship and responded spontaneously to this experiment. As they were not pushed or forced to do work, and every decision they made would influence their work they formed a sense of responsibility and worked spontaneously. The productivity increased and the workers remained happy.

According to McGregor a manager's perspective on their employees which could be either Theory X or Theory Y can influence their decisions. What managers need is their employees to perform well and given the right incentive and environment you could achieve excellent results. The ideal Theory Y manager would instead of a directive management approach rather choose an approach which would actually involve giving employees positions of responsibility and forming mutually beneficial relationships. This is what was clearly emphasized by Mc Gregor as a core component of Management.

What is lacking is most managers fail to understand this fact (Bobic. M. P & Davis E. W). Humanmotivationin the workplace cannot be defined of falling into the category of either Theory X or Theory Y. It should be rather viewed as something more complicated which is rather a concoction of the two (Miner, 1980; Schein 1970). It has been observed by many through social interactions with managers over several years that most managers use a

blend of theories X, Y and Z rather than sticking to the framework of one particular on (Sharma.

S 1998). Self regulation is the process of mastering ones emotions. A person who has mastered their emotions would be adaptable to change and would not panic in a circumstance where change would influence his workplace. Self regulation is a key factor that would be influential in the workplace as due to the modern technological trend and competitiveness businesses and companies exist with a great of ambiguity and uncertainness. Companies merge and break at rapid paces andtechnologyis not constant and it will change. Goleman, 1998) currently most companies are adapting to advanced manufacturing technologies that are intended to optimize and improve performance in various aspects of the workplace. These are opportunity to revolutionize the way production processes. Large companies are already making the switch towards these innovations in order to enhance the performance and increase the positions in the global markets. (Tidd, 1991) Industries are constantly undergoing revolutionary technological change to transform them abound. Examples include switching from metal engine parts to ceramic and switching from lead acid to lithium ion in batteries.

When these situations arise a self regulatory person would possess the dexterity to hold his judgement, seek information and adapt to the changes. Effective team working skills are one that is required of a manager. The ability to coordinate individual actions (Zaccaro, Rittman, and Marks 2001) and having a bettercommunicationstructure among team members can greatly influence the performance of the effectiveness of the team. Team

leaders who are encouraging and involve all members in team problem solving enable collective information processing that maximises the teams effectiveness. Zaccaro et al.) Good managers enable their teams to remain goal oriented, ensure a collaborative setting for the team members, build confidence, demonstrate technical skills, set their priorities, manage performance expectations and bring back excellent results. (LaFasto, Larson 2001). Essentially team leaders, who set high performancegoals, demonstrate a clear set of strategies and push their team members to their full potentials will display higher team efficiency and cohesion rather than team leaders who do not involve themselves in such tasks. Zaccaro et al.) Motivation is also a key role for the manager. He or she must be themselves be motivated to perform the task at hand and meanwhile they should be able to motivate the team by keeping the team morale upHow a manager motivates his employees could be varied according to the approach he or she takes. Firstly there is the KITA approach which literally translates as kick in the pants which can either be a negative or a positive approach depending on the manager.

Negative KITA is a direct action approach, and it has its drawbacks of being physically confronting which can build up negativity among the employees and the manager. There is also the softer positive approach which is considered as a seduction technique which is the promise of incentive to the employee which can get them to produce good work. (Hertzberg, 1968) This is supported by the expectancy theory that proposes the idea that people work harder depending on the size of the reward. (Mullins, 2007).

According to Fredrick Hertzberg motivation relies on two factors firstly the hygiene factors that deal with factors such as working conditions, job security etc and the motivator factors. An employee would usually expect the hygiene factors to be implemented in the workplace as these are factors that help an individual to settle down in an environment. Taking these away from an employee would automatically make him or her dissatisfied and hence de-motivated to work. The other motivator factors are based on an individual's desire to be better and rise above others.

These include status, recognition and sense of achievement. Let us take the company Innocent Drinks for example. They motivate their staff by providing a working environment which is pleasant i. e. the inclusion of trees inside the offices and having Astroturf floors. They also provide free breakfast, a team weekend every year and also scholarships of 1000 to employees to fund personal projects such as taking a course etc. Even in their weekly meetings they make their staff feel valuable and this way Innocent helps to keep its staff happy.

This is a good model of How Hertzberg's hygiene and motivational factors have been taken into account and keep employees motivated. (Caterer research how to motivate staff 2011) Mc Clelland's achievement motivation theory categorizes the people who want to achieve. These people were motivated by intrinsic factors such as goals and aspirations of the individual rather than extrinsic factors such as salary etc. These sorts of people were identified by their affinity to perform difficult put potentially achievable goals, and their like to take risks.

These are the sorts of characteristics expected in a manager. In conclusion what should be stated is that all these qualities may not be present in a manager but in general a good manager would be an ideal blend of some of these characteristics. These would not necessarily be outwardly showed but when the situation arises if one could perform that is what is essential. This is the internal meaning of the quote " Cometh the hour, cometh the man".

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