

Addressing issues
which have been
identified as
bedeviling cafe hip



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Organizational behaviour is all about how individuals, teams the organization interact to achieve their goals. As evidenced in the case of Café Hip, besides the formal organizational structure there is also a hidden informal dimension can pose problems for most organizations. French and Bell used the metaphor 'organizational iceberg' to illustrate this (Barbara and Senior, 2010, p. 128). For them, the metaphor illustrates the 'overt and covert' dimensions of the organization and shows that the informal part although invisible forms the greater part of the organization. It is where unspoken and unwritten norms, values, attitudes held by management and informal groups subsist. The informal part of an organization and its culture can make work both exciting, and productive, on the other hand it can render it tedious, mind-numbing, ineffective and even dreadful. Such is the problem with which Café Hip is being confronted with. This paper seeks to address the aforementioned issues which have been identified as bedeviling Café Hip. The paper is divided into two major parts. The first part discusses the reasons for the difficulties currently confronting Café Hip. The second part offers some recommendations that should allow Café Hip to address the difficulties it is faced with.

2. Reasons for Cafe Hips Predicaments

The problems bedeviling Café Hip emanates from both its formal and informal structures; sub-cultural issues; power relationships and poor leadership. These problems seem to have festered for a while and eventually burst in the form of a boardroom confrontation between Michelle and Ritchie. The issues identified here will be dealt with in turn.

2. 1 Cafe Hip's organizational structure

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For any business to achieve its aims, it needs a well-functioning organization structure. People, resources and machines has to be combined and made to work effectively; formal tasks have to be assigned to individuals and departments; formal reporting relationships (hierarchical or flat) or lines of authority needs to be drawn out. These essential functions of management has to be carried out in a an appropriate structure. Mullins (2005) has defined structure as the 'pattern of relationships among positions in the organization and among members of the organization.'(p. 596) the present organizational structure of Café Hip is hierarchical or vertical. It is operating a department made up of two teams and both teams have been assigned formal tasks according to their functions with the overall formal authority over the restaurant invested in Michelle (F and B Manager). This implies that as per the formal structure, Ritchie and the kitchen team are subordinates to Michelle. However this has not being the case as it is the informal aspect of the organization with its own culture (in the kitchen) which is actually controlling the organization. This subculture in the kitchen is very strong and need to be addressed.

This has meant that the formal authority invested in Michelle is not respected by Richie and the kitchen staff due to their strong cohesiveness and the special skill which they possess. This personal power being wielded by Ritchie and his team needs to be neutralized by changing the structure and culture if organization is to continue to function as a going concern.

2. 2 Personal power versus positional power

Fopp (1997) defines power as the 'ability to influence.' this has been reiterated by Mullins (2005) they agree on the point that an individual or group who has power has the ability to get others to do things which left on their own accord would not do. Authority is distinguished from power in the sense that it refers to the right to use or exercise power. Michelle has this by virtue of her formal position however it is Ritchie who wields it. However in the informal aspect of the organization Ritchie has taken up this power based on his skill or abilities to do so. This has resulted in a shift of the power centre in the organization. This has resulted in bitter relationship between the teams.

2. 3 Toxic emotions at Cafe Hip

Frost asserts that emotional pain is an inevitable part of organizational life. Yet, he maintains that emotional pain should be addressed if any organization is to perform well. The wielding of illegitimate power, strong subculture in the kitchen coupled with their indispensability has meant that the F and B team have become victims of abuse. The abuse stems from lack of respect for the floor team as they are deemed as dispensable by the Kitchen. Ritchie appears to have no patience for individuals to be orientated and socialized into the organization. Worst of all, he feels people should be dumped when they don't live up to his expectations. Frost (2003) has labeled the kind of emotional pain currently festering in Café Hip as 'toxins'. For him, individuals like Ritchie create these toxins in seven main ways. From what we are told about the way the kitchen team treat the floor staff, it can be said that the toxic emotion currently subsisting in Café Hip emanates from the insensitivity and incompetence of Ritchie and his team. Insensitive: in <https://assignbuster.com/addressing-issues-which-have-been-identified-as-bedeveloping-cafe-hip/>

the sense that they don't seem to care or are just oblivious to feeling of their victims. It could also be sheer incompetence in dealing with people. Ritchie although technically good as a chef seems to lack the skill of dealing with people and more so do not seem to have faith in the F and B team.

2. 4 Culture and diversity

A striking feature of Café Hip is its diversity. Diversity, according to Edmund etal (2010) brings with it some benefits as well as challenges. For them it brings differences in styles and ways of looking at and doing things. Café Hip's problem can be attributed to its diversity: a powerful competitive advantage yet its management do not seem know how to tap into it. It is essential that employees are trained to work, communicate and cooperate with people from different cultures as well people of eccentric personalities, irrespective of their gender, race, and age.

Recommendations to change Café Hip

The difficulties at Cafe Hip were attributed to the problems identified in the previous segment. To remedy the situation, Cafe Hip must reconsider its organizational structure and become an adaptable and flat organizational which can thrive in thrive in a globalizing world. Next, they must align structure and culture by developing training and team building programmes to ensure the changes succeed. The (MD) Harry Bigwuan will have to show leadership and enforce the structural and cultural changes and most importantly assume the position of a true 'toxin handler' to use the words of Frost and assuage the feelings of those emotionally perturbed.

Addressing leadership

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Although the canker eating-up the organization is embedded in its structure, not much can be done until management changes its attitude. Harry Bigwuan being a change agent has a pertinent role to play. This is because addressing the aforementioned issues will require a new vision and strategy from which structure and an organization-wide culture can be developed. Kotter's eight- step approach to change may be helpful here. This essentially entails

'creating a sense of urgency, establishing a powerful group to guide the change, developing a vision, communicating the vision, empowering staff, ensuring there are short term wins, consolidating gains and institutionalizing the change in the culture of the organization.' (Singh, 2009, p 463)

Following Kotter's model, he needs to show he is discontented with the present Cafe Hip and communicate to both teams that the status quo is untenable. As structure follows strategy, the management of the organization will have to rethink their, objectives, vision and this will result in new job responsibilities for the team members. The new vision should capture Cafe Hip's strength (this could be its diversity) to direct it into the future. He will also have to address this problem by showing leadership and intervene by taking control and creating alternative power centres to diffuse the situation this will require a tweaking the present power structures. He may start by openly encouraging the various parties to come forward with ideas to help remedy the situation.

Changing organizational structure from hierarchy to flat

After developing the strategy management can then concentrate on structure which 'defines where staff and volunteers " fit in" with each other in terms of work tasks, decision-making procedures, the need for collaboration, levels of responsibility and reporting mechanisms.' (Trenberth, 2009, p. 395)

As we have seen communication in the hierarchical (vertical) Cafe Hip is very ineffective. The structure does not facilitate collaboration. It rather promotes rivalry as each team cling together and look after their own. These problems can be overcome by moving to a flat or horizontal structure which will eliminate the rivalry between the heads of the teams as they will both come on the same level in a flat organizational structure and will have to collaborate to get results. It will also enhance communication and decision making.

Changing the Culture

In changing the organization's culture, one of the biggest challenges that the MD may face is resistance from the Kitchen. They may resist the change as it could disrupt their established habits; also fear that it may bring about conflicts with individuals whom they didn't have to deal with before and could also result in a possible loss of power for Ritchie in particular.

Overcoming this resistance and creating a new organization-wide culture with shared beliefs, attitudes, rituals and symbols which bind them together will require Cafe Hip to adopt the Kotter's model as heretofore described. A change such as this can be summarized in Lewin's model; unfreeze, move and freeze where the first, second and the latter refers to preparing <https://assignbuster.com/addressing-issues-which-have-been-identified-as-bedeveloping-cafe-hip/>

employees for changes, implementation, and making the change permanent respectively.

The present culture which is inward-looking and egotistical may be serving the kitchen team well but does hamper the overall performance of the team.

This culture change needs begin by creating a sense of urgency. Individuals such as Ritchie and Michelle need to be indentified who will serve as its new role models. Programmes should be developed to inculcate the new culture and its beliefs, symbols, attitudes and rituals into all existing employee. More so reward system should be designed promote team work and collaboration and discourage social loafing. This can be achieved by sharing bonuses across both teams as opposed to individually. This will require building teams, training employees, mentoring new employee and motivating them. Team norms need to be developed as they are important for cohesion and help to establish how the team functions. Creating a team contract will help achieve this. The team contract will have to capture the core values, goals and team members' roles.

Culture aside, further cause for resistance may arise which needs to be dealt with. Through participation, most resistance (wielding personal power) can be overcome. If employees who may be sources of resistance such as Ritchie are encouraged to be part of the planning process they will be welcoming of the change and feel their voice have been heard. Essentially they will feel a sense of ownership of the change.

The last of Lewin's model is making the change permanent. This requires the organisation to manage its recruitment carefully. This can be achieved <https://assignbuster.com/addressing-issues-which-have-been-identified-as-bedeaving-cafe-hip/>

through attraction-selection-attrition model. New employee on boarding has be managed carefully. The organization's mission statement, stories, and rituals have to be inculcated into the new employees. Andrew Carnegie captured the essence of well trained personnel and how the help in building successful organizations in the quotation. 'Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory.'