

The link between leadership and motivation



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\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

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1. [Introduction](#) \n \t
2. [The link between leadership style and motivation](#) \n \t
3. [Conclusion](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

Introduction

Self motivation is very crucial for those who have the ambition of being leaders at some point in life. This is especially applicable to those who are starters. The type of motivation required in order to ascend to high level of leadership is powerful. It is not a matter of chance that leaders with high capability come into being. It often entails an individual taking a decisive step to cultivate that success regardless of the huddles on the way. Hence, leadership and motivation are so much interrelated that they cannot be separated. Styles used in leadership have a greater impact in an organisation. Workers who are well lead become self motivated to deliver their best effort. Therefore, it is definite that changes in leadership style can improve motivation at workplace.

The link between leadership style and motivation

According to Manning and Curtis, “ there are two aspects of caring leadership: first is commitment to task; second and equally important, is concern for people” (10). Effective leaders have the potential to inspire workers in an organisation and in turn improve productivity. Leaders need to create passion among workers so that they can see meaning and sense in

the different roles they are playing. Both passion and inspiration are key ingredients in motivation. They can be cultivated by sound leadership styles.

Leadership style which attempts to share and impart the significance of vision of an organisation with the rest of employees is very important in the process of motivating workers. Once every employee understands the common goal and objectives of an organization as enshrined in its vision statement, it will be quite easy for leaders to build motivation in them. Employees will only have a powerful desire to achieve the goals of an organisation if they understand or identify themselves with its vision (Maddock & Fulton 15). It is only through a relational leadership style that vision can be shared from the top leadership to junior employees.

An effective leadership style will ensure that workers are well informed of the impact of the vision and mission of the organisation (Clegg, Kornberger & Tyrone 241). They should be made to feel part and parcel of the entire process of achieving success as well as enjoying the beneficial outcomes of their commitment. Once this is achieved, workers will be motivated not only because they have attractive fringe benefits but also because they have a bright future together with the organization. Poor leadership will conceal pertinent information from workers. This will make them have a feeling of alienation from the organisation and become less motivated. It is common knowledge that people will tend to have personal drive if they know quite well that they have something to benefit from or be excited about either in the short or long term. When such employee relation is achieved, then the work of a leader will be very smooth. Leaders who understand the fact that they need to create a close working relationship with employees are often

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successful. It is out of being close with fellow workers that it will be easy to identify and solve their problems at work and therefore motivate them.

The link between leadership and motivation has scarcely been researched upon in the past although each of the concepts has been studied at great length (Daft 225). The manner in which the two components of organizational behavior interact is very important in ensuring positive growth in a business organisation.

Since it is not possible to measure or quantify motivation, its impacts in an organization can only be felt or realized in the performance of a company over a given period of time. The process of motivation is complex and unless the impact of leadership on the latter is brought on board, it may not be an easy task. Nevertheless, it is sometimes possible for a leader in an organisation to motivate workers without translating to positive outcome in the organization.

There are several initiatives which can be put in place in order to motivate workers. However, it is imperative to point out that any such measures can be hampered or enhanced by the leadership style in operation. For example, most workers will be motivated to offer their services if they have job satisfaction. This cannot exist in an organization unless it is well cultivated. It is upon the leader to change the leadership style for employees to derive satisfaction at work. For instance, one way of making sure that employees are satisfied at their place of work is by reducing the level of supervision. Effective leaders do not supervise their juniors too closely. This may create an environment of discomfort and a feeling of being threatened. Most

workers would generally prefer to work with minimal control. This is also important because each one of them is made should be made accountable and responsible as well. Additionally, good leadership will recognize the extra effort by employees. Exceptional performance by workers ought to be rewarded. Both monetary and verbal recognition from the leadership is welcome so that motivation can be enhanced.

When organizational members are motivated, it leaves a positive impact on the performance of the organization. Further, theories of motivation like that of Marslow attempt to expound how leadership may be linked to motivation. Leaders in an organization are directly correlated to the growth and motivation of employees depending on the style used. Much research indicates that the top leadership has a key role to play in the determination of company's performance. Positive growth can only be achieved in a case whereby workers are wholly devoted and committed to the realization of the set goals and objectives.

Nevertheless, there are some instances when leadership has been considered to be a subsidiary factor as far as organizational performance is concerned. The argument is that junior employees are the one who execute the actual task in an organization while leaders are mainly mandated to give guidance and direction on what is supposed to be done. It is perhaps better to consider teams within an organisation and investigate how team leaders can motivate workers.

There is a vivid evidence that the presence of a team leader in an organization is a real motivating factor to workers (Adler & Allison 192). The

level of motivation may be quite low whenever a team leader is absent. From this perspective, the general perception is that leaders who steer small teams in organizations are more influential to the teams they are leading compared to top executives. This can be explained from the fact they are very close to the rest of team members and will often listen and act expeditiously to arising issues. Moreover, workers are found to be less motivated when their team leader has been substituted with another one. It takes a significant amount of time before the team can adjust itself to the changes. Nevertheless, it is imperative to underscore the fact that it is only transformational leadership which can usher full motivation. Leadership styles are different and so is the application.

One main factor which often leads to team members being motivated in the presence of their leader is the team bonding spirit which develops with time. Members in a team tend to bond emotionally with their leader to the extent that separating the two becomes tricky. Even in cases where a substitute team leader is brought on board, he or she is more or less regarded as a manager but not a leader. This implies that the link between effective leadership and motivation is not instantaneous. It is a process which demands time and space.

However, there are demerits when leaders bond too closely with team members. For instance, charismatic leaders who seem to be all efficient and fail to delegate roles to members may prove to be fruitless in the long run. Such leaders fail to empower team members leading to de-motivation. Leaders who take control position of their teams and leave nothing to chance also fall into this category. Members of a team need to be given the chance

to exercise their abilities bearing in mind that each one of them has unique potential different from the rest. Notwithstanding this argument, organizations which have established a culture of exemplary performance may not experience much of the impact of charismatic leaders. This is diffused by the growth momentum of the organization.

At this point, it is crucial to note that there are some team leadership styles which can uplift the team spirit of junior staff. The subordinates also need to be empowered. This is one way through they can be made to feel a sense of belonging not just within a team but also in the entire organization. The subordinate workers will also derive great job satisfaction at their work place when this kind of transformational leadership is adopted. From the Social exchange standpoint, real empowerment of team members leads to the understanding that each member is important in the process of production and no one is treated as means to achieve the end product. This will definitely improve performance of the organisation owing to intrinsically motivated group.

Leadership is a form of social influence which is developed in a cohesive group of people. If a team leader decides to delegate duties to the subordinate staff, then this should be done in a way that it will have the greatest positive influence on each worker. This is now where the difference between superb and inefficient leadership is observed. For example, a transformed leader will first of all judge the ability and potential of each team member and then delegate task accordingly. Workers should be assigned duties in areas of interest and ability so that they can be motivated as they enjoy performing their duties. A leadership style which tends to

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impose task on workers without evaluating their capability will often miss the point. Workers who are compelled to carry out duties are hardly motivated and this translates to dismal performance.

Since leadership is perceived as a social process of creating influence, use of anti-social ways when leading a team may result to de-motivation. For example, leaders who prefer to severely punish errant team members are highly likely to de-motivate workers. A more friendly but firm mode of correcting members should be adopted. Besides, leaders who reward workers with non-contingent stuff may not enhance motivation in them at all.

Workers tend to be more understanding when a leader reasons out rationally with them instead of taking some actions individually (Manning & Curtis 48). It is evident that leadership style used may generate mixed feelings among workers and their level of motivation at work place. Although no particular leadership style can be proved to be effective in motivating workers, it is imperative to note that although leadership and motivation have been treated in the past as two separate and distinct entities, a close correlation can still be drawn between the two. There are those who argue that leadership does not have any impact on motivation. If this were true, then performance of an organization would not be tagged on the commitment and dedication of employees. Such argument may be misleading because as noted earlier, leadership is a form of social influence. Therefore, the team leader ought to be relational and accommodating to the workers. A leader is much more than just a manager who dishes out principles to be followed by workers. Moreover, a leader seeks to build the team through coordination and organization. In any case, leadership is not only about showing the way

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but also leading the way. From this understanding, a very strong link is established between leadership and motivation.

The concept of motivational leadership is very handy in this discussion. If changes in styles of leadership can improve performance at work place, then leaders who are motivational are very important for improved performance in organizations. For example, workers will tend to admire a leader who is knowledgeable and skillful. They will be motivated by a leader who is confident enough and energetic in leading the team. The leader will also be valued depending on the ability to consider the individual needs of each member of the team in an organization. Workers will be motivated further if the leader is dynamic and capable of initiating changes within a team or organization. Static leadership styles which do not respond to current needs of an organization are cannot enhance motivation.

A changed leadership style which seeks to convey information positively is a real motivator at work place. There are moments in the life of a business organisation when situations are tough and perhaps the returns are marginal. An effective leader will try as much as possible to communicate with workers coherently and in way they can easily understand (Griffin & Moorhead 39). Effective communication will motivate workers in spite of the situation at hand. Employees will also be motivated if the style of leadership demonstrates confidence. This will enhance security level and workers will also feel safe in their jobs.

Another area of importance in leadership and motivation is the decision making process within small working teams or the entire organization.

Workers will feel a sense of value, respect and dignity when they are actively involved in the process of decision making at all levels of the organisation. Workers who take part in passing important decisions affecting them will appreciate a great deal and work even harder to achieve the goals of the decisions made.

Committed leadership is fundamental in the realization of organizational goals and objectives. When ideas are internalized, deliberated upon and finally transformed into action, the greatest positive effect in the entire organization is produced. Leaders who are not committed to their course of duty may send the wrong signals to subordinate staff. It is obvious that the junior employees will tend to emulate the leadership of the team or organization. Therefore, a less committed leader will equally reverse the commitment of workers and eventually de-motivate them.

Transparent form of leadership is the one that operates on an open system. Organizational leadership which runs the affairs of the entire team behind the curtains may not be liked by workers at all. This is also synonymous to directive leadership style whereby workers are supposed to take orders from above and perform their tasks regardless of difficulties. This form of leadership does not permit an open forum where each member of the organization can air opinions. A leadership style based on such principles will de-motivate workers. It makes them belong to the periphery and less significant in the organizational processes.

It is factual that unless workers are happy, they will not be productive. Firstly, people who are happy work well with others because they are

intrinsically motivated (Adair 85). They create a warm working environment and fellow colleagues enjoy working with them. As a result, a strong and well enhanced team work is built. In the case of a leader, a better working relationship with employees is also harnessed and this facilitates smooth running of the organisation.

Conclusion

In summing up this paper, it is worth to note that happy workers tend to be more creative at their place of work because their minds are liberated to think and act positively. This is also evident when problems arise in an organisation: workers who are happy would prefer to fix the challenge in preference to complaints. Furthermore, workers who are happy are more energetic and they devote this energy towards achieving the common goal of the organisation. These are elements of positive leadership which leads to motivation of workers. Either monetary or material rewards are good starting points in the process of motivating workers who in turn feel satisfied at their work place. The justification for rewarding workers is that the primary reason for working is to earn. From the perspective that human wants are insatiable, workers will ever value a token of appreciation due to their achievements at work. Therefore, any additional earning over and above the normal remuneration will definitely lead to job satisfaction. This may be supplemented by verbal recognition on every little achievement by a worker.

The security of the job is yet another positive influence towards satisfaction. Employees need to be assured that their jobs are secure and that they do not need to dwell on worries on how sustainable is their work is. Additionally,

job security will reduce the rate of turn out in an organisation because workers have the assurance their future livelihood and hence satisfaction.

Besides, workers should not be supervised too closely. There should be some degree of freedom. However they should be made to be accountable on their service delivery. This approach will enhance responsibility, sense of purpose and worth hence leading to job satisfaction. A worker who is supervised too closely will often feel threatened and uncomfortable. Hence, leadership style can improve motivation at work place.