Contingency theory of leadership empowerment

Contingency Theory of Leadership/Empowerment

Contingency Theories of Leadership Contingency theories of leadership stress upon the specific variables which belong to the environment which helps depict the leadership style that best suits a particular situation. The contingency theory does not render any style of leadership best-suited to all situations because it considers success to be controlled by a whole range of variables that include but are not limited to the qualities of followers, the style of leadership and different aspects of the situation.

Situations affecting leadership from the Industrial Age to the Information Age

The most prominent situations affecting leadership from the Industrial Age to the Information Age are those of the communication and the conflict resolution. There has occurred immense change in the way leaders communicated with the followers in the Industrial Age and the way they do nowadays. In the Industrial Age, there used to be no cell phones, emails, or skype. Accordingly, communication used to be very ineffective. Leaders could not communicate with the followers anywhere and at any time they wanted unlike in the Industrial Age. Videoconferencing is increasingly being employed by the leaders to conduct meetings with the followers that are spread in different parts of the world. Apart from the revolution in communication, another area that has changed considerably from the Industrial Age to the Information Age is conflict management. Multiculturalism has become omnipresent in the Information Age unlike in the Industrial Age. The increased multiculturalism has caused the followers to indulge in interpersonal conflicts and the leaders are exposed to new

kinds of challenges consequently.

Contingency Theories of Leadership:

They are discussed below:

1. Fielder's Contingency Theory

This theory links the contingency of the performance of a group to the psychological orientation of a leader as well as to three of the contextual variables namely the power position of the leader, the atmosphere of the group and the structure of the task.

2. Hersey & Blanchard's situational theory

This theory explains the Reddin's 3-D theory of management style to a further level and expands the notions of the task dimensions and the relationship to the leadership (University of Twente, 2010). Moreover, this theory creates a dimension of readiness in the leadership.

The Concept of Empowerment

Empowerment is fundamental to enabling the followers to achieve the objectives of the leader. A leader empowers the followers through the skill called as resource management. Different kinds of tasks require different kinds of resources to be accomplished. These resources include but are not limited to money, equipment, manpower and material. A leader decides the right time to release the right amount and type of resources. Once the followers acquire the resources, they are empowered to accomplish the task. In addition to that, the leader empowers different people among the followers to different extent. The leader develops hierarchical positions and fits people in those positions. Thus, some are assigned more authority and responsibility than others.

The Best Practices in Empowerment

The best practice for empowerment is to make use of a resource management software like Primavera and assigning people authority and responsibility considering the outcomes of the performance review. The performance review must be conducted regularly.

Situations Influence the Effective Leadership

Situations influence the effectiveness of leadership. Strategies successfully employed by a leader in a particular situation may altogether fail in another situation, depending upon the political, socioeconomic and cultural factors that impact the outcome. A leader must assess the situation before choosing a set of strategies and the particular course of action.

References:

University of Twente. (2010, Sep. 7). Contingency Theories. Retrieved from http://www. utwente. nl/cw/theorieenoverzicht/Theory%20clusters/Organizational %20Communication/Contingency_Theories. doc/.