

The bluesky software consulting firm

Business



People clearly are an organization's most critical resource. Their knowledge and skills along with their commitment, creativity, and effort are the basis for competitive advantage. It is people that have creative ideas for new products or for process improvements that devise marketing strategy or take technologies to the next level. As consultant for Blue Sky, it is my obligation to develop recommendations based on issues addressed in the case, to ensure Willis can develop an effective management team in accordance with company's requirements.

Blue Sky is a fifteen year old software-consulting firm, however, has some obstacle to overcome. As the consultant, I will respond to four outlined questions pertaining to the case study. This analysis will provide areas of improvement for Blue Sky Software and the necessary management techniques to make for their organization to run functional and efficient. Question 1, in the case asked to address the differences in leadership style and approach today and in the recent past at Blue Sky. In the past, the leadership styles were lead by an autocratic leader.

Autocratic leadership can be said to be synonymous to dictatorship where only one person has the authority over the followers or workers. Their decision has to be taken as the golden rule and should never be questioned. They plan out everything and order their subordinates to work according to their rules. Max Blue seemed to think meeting was not necessary and thought planning was a waste of time and no one questioned his authority. This type of leadership style unfortunately made employees at Blue Sky passive as they couldn't make decision on their own.

There seemed to be several types of leadership styles circulating throughout the company depending on the different department you were in. The organization structure was broken down by the CEO, VP of the division, director of marketing, CFO, and the regional directors being in the upper management levels. The regional directors were all younger and had been with Blue Sky relatively a short period of time. They seemed to be more aggressive, whereas, they wanted to expand clientele and product lines.

The older manager mainly the vice presidents who had been with the organization for awhile, had a more passive approach because of the autocratic leadership style from Max Blue. Willis, the new CEO is more of a collaborative leader. When establishing collaborative relationships it is not always natural or easy, particularly because people have different lifestyles, backgrounds, and experiences. A collaborative leader takes a much different approach essentially suggesting that the most effective way to guide an organization, process, or project is through inclusion and consensus.

Also, the “benevolent dictator” approach is highly efficient eliminating the wavering of many competing voices in the decision-making process. Even though, collaboration is the way people naturally want to work, because it builds teams through mentoring and coaching, building trust and mutual respect and break down walls between people, teams, departments and division to accomplish goals. It was clear the others looked to Willis to solve the problem, so this left Willis not being able to come to a consensus as he had hoped.

In question 2, of the case study there was a focus toward the organization looking at motivation being a critical element. Be sure to discuss and evaluate the approaches to motivation at Blue Sky now and the past. In the past, the approaches to motivation were to provide employees with big dividends. Many studies show that interesting work and sense of accomplishment are some of the greatest motivators for an employee. These rewards lead to the type of motivation known as "intrinsic," which can be defined as causing "... people to engage in an activity for its own sake" (www.reference.com).

Studies show that intrinsic motivation is important for high job satisfaction, which can affect an organization's performance. Many different techniques exist to intrinsically motivate employees (Walker, 2008). Some include: job enlargement, job rotation, and job enrichment. As noted earlier, job satisfaction among employees is important for a company to attain, thus, the use of techniques that boost intrinsic motivation is key. However, the employees were happy because they were paid well. The flip side to that is those older employees are close to retirement, and have no intrinsic motivation.

They are not motivated in sharing to new ways in doing things for the organization, such as saving money and hiring new clientele as suggested by Hubres in her memo. Therefore, it has been suggested by Willis that James and Counts work together to develop a retirement package for senior employees in the division without any immediate replacement for retirees. This would be a start in saving money for the division. In question 3 of the case study, it relates to strategic plan and decision-making process. The

question ask, if there has been a strategic planning and decision-making change at Blue Sky?

If so, is this a positive change? Yes, there has been a strategic plan and decision-making process at Blue Sky and positive change. The strategy plan comes from an outside consultant that has been asked to help Willis to develop an organization plan. A strategy plan must be for an organization and not an analysis of the current plan. In the past, there was no strategic plan in place based on Susy Hubres, one of the newest members of the Executive team. In her memo, she is proposing a three-day retreat for Blue Sky executives, and her main agenda for the meeting is developing a ten-year strategic plan.