

Assessment of the role of leadership in promoting innovation and creativity



The purpose of this essay is to assess the role of leadership in creating an organizational culture that will promote innovation and creativity in the workplace. Organizational culture is a very important factor that affects the innovation and the creativity of an organization. Google wouldn't be so successful in technological innovation without its excellent organizational culture that gives the opportunity to its employees to work hard and innovate. Leadership has also a strong effect on the organizational culture of a company. A good leader must encourage, motivate and inspire his employees to be more creative and innovative. When Steve Jobs left from Apple, the organizational culture of the company was no longer the same and Apple failed to maintain its great success.

Leadership & The Example of Apple

Leadership is defined as a person's ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, think strategically and work with others to initiate changes that will create a viable future for the organization (Ireland and Hitt, 2005). The role of an organizational leader is to define the organizational goals, formulate plans and organize people to achieve the goals through the execution of plans. Another important role of a leader is to encourage the innovation and creativity within his company. Many people believe that leaders are born and not made such as Steve Jobs who is one of the best examples of good leadership in action. He is a very persistent leader because after he was kicked out from his own company Apple, he didn't give up but he started a new company called Next Computers which eventually was acquired by Apple Computers Inc and Jobs became for once more the leader of Apple. If Steve Jobs was not a leader but an ordinary

person he would have given up and spend the rest of his life being sad about his loss. The best characteristic of a good leader is innovation. Steve Jobs saw the power of innovation when he started his company and he created some of the most famous innovative technological products such as the iPod, iPhone and iPad. He wouldn't be able to build all those innovative products by himself so he created an organizational culture that would be able to promote innovation and creativity within his company. The organizational culture of Apple is quite simple. Steve Jobs is setting a goal for his employees as for example the creation of the iPhone and he gives them the opportunity and the freedom to experiment and make mistakes in order to achieve innovation. The most successful and well known leaders are characterized by being constantly up with new ideas and have constant innovation in alignment with their mission in whatever industry they are. Leadership is very important to organizations because it is essential for building, encouraging and promoting a strong organizational culture. The example of Steve Jobs proved that leadership has a very important role in creating an organizational culture that will promote innovation and creativity in the workplace. Apple would have failed without its main leader Steve Jobs because he created the organizational culture of Apple which led to the creation of so many innovative products.

Organizational Culture & The Example of Google

Organizational culture has been defined as the specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization and that control the way they interact with each other and with stakeholders outside the organization (Strategic Management, 2001). Organizational
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culture is very important for the business and its employees. These days we spend more than 40 hours per week in our work and many people spend more time with those they work with than their family. In order to be happy and productive we don't need money only but a nice working environment with a good organizational culture. We are all looking for a work that is enjoyable, meaningful and engaging. We don't want to go to work and look our clock waiting for the time to leave and go home. When we are interested in our work we are more productive and more willing and able to satisfy our customers. Focusing on building a good organizational culture is the best way to show that people are the organization's most valuable asset. Organizational culture is not important for people only but for the business itself. One of the most important criteria that employees look at when assessing an organization is the organizational culture because employees don't want only a good salary and benefits they also want an environment where they can enjoy, improve their skills and succeed in. The benefits of a business with good organizational culture is not only that it can attract experienced and talented employees but also it can help them improve themselves by giving them the appropriate attention and the right opportunities to develop their skills. The best example of a successful company with an excellent organizational culture is Google. Google is one of the few companies that successfully blended technological innovation with strong organizational culture and this is the reason that it is one of the top 100 companies to work for according to Fortune magazine (2007).

Google's culture is ethical, customer-responsive, and spiritual. It encourages its employees to be creative in problem solving which can be considered as a risk. Google employees have a sense of team instead of self

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which encourages them to work together to achieve goals rather than compete against each other which would have led them to unethical behavior. Google's employees are allowed the freedom to make decisions that benefit Google users. Google is known for thinking outside of the box. It encourages its employees to have fun with their job by creating a working environment which looks like a playground for children. Google increases its employees' motivation for work and it establishes a culture that creates individuals that have the desire and the motivation to stay and work with the company. The secret behind its success is that it gives enough freedom to its employees to encourage them work harder and be more innovative and productive. Innovation involves a lot of risk taking decisions and it is very important that the leader and the organizational culture of the company will support those decisions.

Leadership and Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is very important to a company's innovation and creativity. It is clearly enough that both Apple and Google wouldn't be so successful and innovative without their strong and effective organizational culture. What we have learned from the example of Apple is that organizational culture on itself it can't promote innovation and creativity. A good leader is needed in order to inspire and guide his employees towards innovation and creativity. This is something that Steve Jobs has proved all these years. From 1985 to 1996 when Jobs left and became again the leader of his company, Apple suffered from a great loss because it stopped being innovative. From 1996 to present Apple is considered one of the most innovative companies in the world because of Steve Jobs. The numbers <https://assignbuster.com/assessment-of-the-role-of-leadership-in-promoting-innovation-and-creativity/>

speaking for themselves in 1996 Apple had -816 million dollars net profits and in 2009 it had 5.704 billion dollars net profits (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Apple_Inc.#cite_note-34). It is clearly enough that the leader is one with the organizational culture of his company. A good leader has not only to set the goals for his company but he must also make sure that these goals will be achieved. The employees of a company follow the steps of their leader if their leader is innovative and creative then they will try to be also innovative and creative and if their leader is just lazy then they will also be lazy. The leader is responsible for the atmosphere and the working environment of the company. A company is like a mirror of its leader if the leader is creative and innovative then his company and its organizational culture will also be creative and innovative.

Conclusion

The conclusion is that organizational culture and leadership are interdependent. It is impossible for a company to have excellent leadership and bad organizational culture or to have excellent organizational culture and bad leadership in the same time. Therefore the role of leadership in creating an organizational culture that will promote innovation and creativity in the workplace is very critical.