

Comparison of three managers in three different companies critical thinking

[Business](#), [Company](#)



Managerial context

Managerial roles and styles vary from company to company. This depends on various factors which include the type of company, the managerial level, the resources under one disposal and many others.

Three different managers were interviewed in this case. The managers included a Public Relation (PR) manager in a public relation firm, a production manager in a manufacturing firm and a human resource manager in a media house.

Managers can be at different levels depending on the nature of the company. The different levels determine the chain of command in a given company. There are basically three managerial levels. These include the top, the middle and the lower level. Managers at the top level mostly have administrative functions and enjoy the most authority in any given company. Managers at the middle level mostly perform executor functions while those at the lowest level perform supervisory functions. They include the first-line managers. (Pamela, 298)

In this scenario the PR manager was at the top level, the HR manager was at the middle level while the production manager was working at the low level position. The PR manager was almost like the owner of the PR firm in question, the HR manager was only in charge of the HR section of which he worked in line with two other managers all of whom were under a general company manager while the production manager was a junior manager responsible for a production unit in a manufacturing firm. He was responsible

of supervising a few machine operators and foreseeing that production was efficient and to the required standards. (Gomez, 29)

The PR Company is as the initials suggest a public relation company which is still growing. It is not fully established. It was established three years ago by a public relation officer who previously worked for the government. It currently boasts of about thirty top public relation practitioners who also have several officers working under them. The role of this firm is to carry out market surveys and research on behalf of other companies without PR departments. The management philosophy for this firm is “ value and belief in hard work”. (Pamela, 300)

The manufacturing company deals with the production of motor vehicles spare parts. It is a large well established company which has been in business for the past twenty one years or so. It deals with the manufacture of motor car spare parts of various car models which include among others, ford, range rover, Cadillacs etc. The management philosophy for this company is “ determination to produce the best ever quality”.

The third company is a media house. It is a well established media house in the country which has been in operation for fifteen years. Started as a branch of another media house and later establishing it self as an independent entity. Its activities include other than news broadcast, production of home entertainment programmes and promotion of artistic talents. It management philosophy is “ commitment to the best in international standards”.

Summary of definitions

a. Planning

This is a very critical aspect of any organization. It involves putting down a strategy on how the organizational goals are going to be achieved. A plan will show what is to be done, by whom, how, when and with which resources. Failing to plan is planning to fail. Planning is a long term project and is altered from time to time.

b. Organizing

After preparing an elaborate plan, the next step is to determine how the plan will be implemented. This includes organization. A manager must determine the particular personnel to carry out certain duties and also ensure that the resources required are available for the activities to be done. Organizing helps to save time and minimize losses and also ensures quality in production.

c. Leading

Leading involves being on the forefront and serving as an example towards achieving a given goal. It involves guiding and motivating other people to give their all in achieving organizational goals. Leading is quite different from managing. It involves giving a sense of direction and influencing those of whom you are working with to follow that direction.

d. Controlling

This involves assessing the employees' performance to ensure that organizational goals are met. It is to ensure that the required quality and quantity of production is produced and to try and minimize the cost of this production but without putting employees in undesirable conditions.

In doing this the manager has to analyze the trend and ensure that it is in line with the organizational goals.

Behaviors associated with the four functions

All of the four managers agreed that the four functions are crucial in the attainment of any organizational goals. The three managers all practice these functions but in different ways since they are in different businesses and are at different levels.

The PR manager appeared as the one more involved with the aspect of planning. This is not to say the other two managers were not involved in this process, they were involved only that they were passively involved. Since the planning face involves setting the actual objectives or goals of the entire organization, the top management seems to be more involved in the planning process. The PR manager here was involved in the planning process of this PR firm. The junior officers only execute what has been planned.

The PR manager also was directly involved in organizing of the company's activities. He directly issued directives to the PR officers under him who the executed the directives. He did not do so much in leading as the junior PR officers were highly involved. This is because unlike the junior officers, he

never went to the field. He was although highly involved in controlling as he made sure that the required activities were done efficiently and effectively.

The human resource officer was involved in recruitment of personnel in the media house. Since this is just a part of the whole or rather just a department, the HR was involved in the sub-planning regarding to the affairs of the PR department. The overall plans were done by the overall managers of the media house. The HR department plans though were in line with the overall company's plans. The HR was not very much involved in organizing the organization's activities. Employees recruited could under go an orientation after which they would be left under the heads of various departmental heads. This made the HR manager less proactive in organization. The HR manager also neither led nor controlled any thing to a large extent.

The production officer under whom only a few employees were working was directly involved in making short term plans which sometimes were suitable for only that particular working day. These plans were all in line with companies plans. He was also highly involved in organizing to ensure that the production was to the required standards. He also acted as a leader to the extent that he could physically show the employees under him how to operate certain machines if they encountered problems they could not handle or when they seemed lax in the job.

Similarities in the managers

Managers can be compared based on their functions and roles in their respective capacities in their organizations.

A key point to note is that all managers irrespective of the business they are involved in, more or less have the same basic functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

In their capacities as managers the three in this case all dealt with the most important resource in any organization, the human resource.

All of the three managers are involved in coordination and motivation of some personnel.

The PR and the production manager were both involved in assigning duties to their juniors.

Differences in the managers

The differences in managers were as a result of them being at different levels of management.

While the PR manager was responsible for other managers, the HR and the production managers were answerable to other managers.

The production and the HR managers worked in line with other departmental managers and acted as a link between the junior employees and the top management. The PR manager was the overall manager.

Unlike the production and the HR managers who played the role of executing the company plans as stipulated in their respective companies' plan, the PR

manager on the virtue of being a top level manager was responsible in preparing strategic plans for his company.

The PR manager unlike the production and the HR managers was responsible in appointing other managers who worked under him.

The PR manager also on the basis of being a top level manager was responsible in maintaining contact with the world at large and coordinating activities of all the other departments. The two other managers only coordinated the activities of the immediate junior employees under them.

(Kotter, 240)

Explanation for the similarities and differences

As seen in the cause of this study the differences and similarities apparent in the three managers was majorly due to the level of management the respective managers were. This is because of the level of authority vested on the different levels of management. The top most level management is more concerned with the company's overall policies and objectives and recruitment of top level personnel. They also establish and maintain relationship with other companies. This brings about the differences in these managers.

Concerning the managerial roles, the three managers all seem to be performing the four basic functions of management which include planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

Managers motivational and conflict management styles also differ from one manager to another. Key to note is that irrespective of their different styles, they all motivate in one way or another. For instance in this case, the PR manager offered monetary incentives, the HR managers offered encouragement while the production manager worked hand in hand with the junior employees thus giving a real good example.

One interesting thing learned in the exercise is that it's very hard to determine the particular leadership style employed by any one of these managers. This is because these managers had a tendency of using different styles based on the situation or the context. This style of leadership can be explained by the situational theory. The understanding of the different theories of leadership helped in understanding the managerial behavior. No one single theory can fully describe the behavior of managers since it's very dynamic. Mostly the behavior was influenced by the personal traits, the situation or context, the people managed and the roles of the respective manager.

Learning value of the activity

The activity helped so much in acquiring management knowledge. It was learnt in the activity that basically each and every one of us is a manager in different capacities. Management does not only include being in charge of other people but being in charge of one self as well. This is why it's imperative that we all acquire the basic four functions of management.

Analyzing managers at different fields and capacity was of benefit since a lesson was learnt on how one can adapt to different environments. As a manager according to this activity, it is important that one be flexible in any capacity one may be as a manager. Managers should also be very open but at the same time strict when dealing with their both their juniors and their superiors. They should be open to varying ideas and opinions but still be strict towards attaining the company's objectives.

The different management theories also help in understanding managerial behavior. For instance, one behavior as a manager can be determined based on the context, the activities, leadership approaches one applies, the relation with external environment among others.

Interview Questions

These are among the questions used in interviewing of the three managers.

The questions were basically general but there were some specific questions to the respective managers in the course of the interview. For uniformity, the specific questions have not been included in the interview question on this paper.

1. When did you start working for this company?
2. At which level were you at when you began working?
3. How did you work your way up to the position you are in at the moment?
4. How many superiors are your answerable to and at which level are they?
5. How do you coordinate those under you and how many are they?
6. What is your relationship with your seniors, fellow workmates and your juniors?

7. How do you manage to coordinate all of the above?
8. Do you enjoy working at the position you are at the moment?
9. What are some of the challenges faced in the course of your duty?
10. How do you handle the challenges that come along?
11. Are you some times put under pressure by any of your working colleagues?
12. How do you cope with such pressure?
13. How do you handle conflicts if there any among your colleagues either junior or the ones at the same level with you?
14. What motivation styles do you employ to encourage the employees of this organization?
15. Do you have any particular leadership style that you follow in the course of your duty?
16. If you have various leadership styles, which of these styles would you consider most effective?
17. Do you find it hard to manage all the resources at your disposal?
18. What are some of the frustrations you encounter in the course of your activities?
19. What advice would you give to a prospective manager regarding your position?
20. How would you prepare a prospective manager to take over your position and are you doing so?
21. Would you want to go higher up the ladder or you are satisfied at your current position?

References:

Gomez M. et. al (2008). Management: Performance and Change, 3rd edition.

New York, New York USA.

Kotter, J. P. and Dan S. C. (2002). The Heart of Change. Boston: Harvard

Business School Publishing.

Pamela S. L. et. Al (2003) Challenges for Leaders: South Western College.

New York.