Gore tex essay sample

1) What impresses you about this company? To what extent does the management style match what business schools tell you about " how to manage"? What is impressive about the company is the level of innovation and the management style. Gore & Associates is technology oriented and is based on continuous innovation. An innovative company needs engaged workers and the knowledge employees need autonomy to be engaged. Gore & Associates took it to the extreme point since everyone in the company has freedom to choose what they want to spend their time on. There are no direct bosses or people to manage the employees. They call it the " unmanagement style". Leaders are defined by followership and usually emerge by demonstrating special knowledge, skill or experience that advances a business objective. Although it is an unorthodox management, it is possible to identify concepts of Theory Y and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Bill Gore's views were influenced by the book The Human Side of Enterprise which defines Theory X and Theory Y as two ends of a management continuum based on very different views of human nature. Gore believed in Theory Y, influenced by Maslow's motivation theories, and adopted a participative and empowering model to his firm. One of the company's principles is to encourage and help the associates to grow in knowledge and skills. It matches perfectly with the highest level of Maslow's pyramid. The employees need self-actualization in order to be engaged and motivated. Their sense of belonging to the company could not be higher since everyone who works there is also owner of the company. The sponsors are mentors who help new associates to adapt into this unusual corporate culture.

2) How successful was Bill Gore in defining the business, developing a strategic vision, and crafting a strategy to achieve performance objectives? Bill Gore was extremely successful in defining the company's business because he saw a great opportunity for fluorocarbon polymers. Since his former employer, Dupont, did not invest in his idea, Bill took the initiative to start his own business. Nowadays the firm has more than 9, 000 employees who work in different countries and its revenue is around nearly 3 billion dollars per year. Gore & Associates managed to have highly engaged employees by giving them autonomy and ownership of the company. It is essential in a high performing culture.

The company has a policy of investing in employees' development and gives them recognitioin. The open communication channels ensure every employee will be listened and facilitates feedback. When the workforce feels heard, engagement and productivity increase. Gore's non bureaucratic structure supports employees in sharing ideas and innovations. It is also an adaptable company because associates have decision-making freedom and participative management allow important decision to be taken by the person who is directly involved with the subject. All those factors led to low turnover and high engagement, which are key components of a high performance culture.

3) What key traits define the corporate structure at W. L. Gore? In what ways has the culture contributed to the success of the company? The mid self-management teams implement and organize different projects. Within these teams you cannot find a division with more than 200 employees. This is in

order to maintain a sense of intimacy, improve easy ways of collaboration with each other and decrease confusion about who is from which department. It is important for Gore-Tex to keep the collective atmosphere where people feel a sense of mutual ideas, common goals, innovative progression and a horizontal management structure. They work through equality where employees have decision-making freedom, manage and give advice to each other. This means they can achieve very high results. For these companies, motivation and employee productiveness are very important.

They prefer not to focus their attention on hierarchical positions, so as to make their staff feel more comfortable and not under pressure from higher ranks. In Gore-Tex, people choose a leader by themselves, someone who will guide the team in a specific project and they follow Gore's ideas and pay attention to advice and recommendations. Employees can choose the projects they would prefer to contribute to. The team performance in such a well-knit organization is, as a consequence, is usually higher because everybody is involved in the work processes and is responsible for the results. The work of a team's project should be aimed on one clearly defined final result as this is the key criteria of productivity. Bill Gore's states: " You cannot have innovation without engaged employees", that is why it is important to have a pleasant and agreeable atmosphere within a company. People aren't afraid of taking risks and usually achieve successful results.

4) Is Gore's organizational structure a strength or a weakness? It can be observed as both a strength and weakness depending on the business sector

and industry. In Gore's case, it has been more a strength but this is all down to their focus on creativity and innovation; straight line companies would not have the need for such an organizational structure. In some markets competition is beginning to emerge and Gore must consider to place more emphasis on strategic R&D programmes rather than allowing individual associates to organize and conduct their own projects. The advantages of having a flat lattice organization are absence of pressure from superior positions, good established channels of communication inside the teams, freedom of ideas and employee motivation in order to find new and creative decisions.

Thence we can make a conclusion that this type of organizational structure is more convenient for companies who focus on innovation and where universalization is needed (they autonomously divide the labor among them) such as for example companies who specialize on production – Gore-Tex and IT companies. This approach can also be applicable in HR, advertising and marketing agencies where the employees guide the whole working process. Trust, responsibility, adequate feedback and decision making are based on the transparency of informational flows. One of the problems in hierarchical organizations is that sometimes managers create barriers for information spreading inside the company which can negatively influence any business' performance. However in this type of organization there is easy access to information important for giving and receiving valuable feedback and advice. This exchange of ideas and plans increases motivation and professionalism of employees.

5) Can Gore's management style and culture stand the tests of time and growth? Will the same operating principles and philosophy that sustained the company as a small entrepreneurial firm lead to additional success as a large multinational corporation? A company must work very hard to make the right decision when choosing and implementing the right type of organizational structure, however the company cannot exist only based on expectation. It is evident that in the near future the main goal for Gore-Tex will be the adaptation of its uncommon corporate culture into other frameworks for further expansion into the international market and strengthen their resistance to competitors. They are a big multinational company has existed for a long time and are continuing to expand the market.

6) " You cannot have innovation without engaged employees." And the best ways to get engaged and motivated workers is to give them… Suggest ways to get engaged employees. " Is to give them…" incentives. This goes far beyond financial and focuses more on job benefits such as " employee ownership structure" where the company is partly owned by its employees know as associates. In the Gore-Tex case it says: " in the right environment employees are more encouraged and motivated to perform their best, as every employee shares the same general title, and are compensated based purely on their performance. This also enables the most competent and eager employees to more quickly advance to their more suitable leadership positions, increasing the efficiency of the company." It is very important " to create a unique work environment and support it based on a corporate structure that encourages creativity, initiative and discovery."

The company provides attractive benefit plans which consist of core benefits (ASOP, vacation, holidays, profit sharing, sick pay, basic life insurance, accident insurance, adoption aid) and fairness for associates (valuable financial benefit, which provides ownership, financial security for retirement). Today, the willingness and readiness of employees to take responsibility for something is rare, a lot of people don't want to be responsible for anything, they prefer to play the second role rather than take risks and make decisions, because they are afraid of being refused or judged by society. The company is aware of this situation and highly appreciates the initiative of those employees who are ready to be the part of a team, take initiative and be responsible for their decisions. They are ready to spend more money and provide secure benefits in order to motivate employees to work effectively and efficiently because they are a fundamental part of the company and incur high revenues.

7) Is it possible for a company to go from a traditional command & control culture to one resembling Gore Tex? What steps would you recommend? A transition from a traditional structure to one such as Gore-Tex's depends wholly on the company, what type of business they have and their objectives. Such an organizational structure may not be possible for some companies based on geographical location and cultural differences. Also, it is certainly harder for an already existing company to implement a new organizational structure because it can be difficult for employees to switch to another way of working and collaborating with each other. Therefore it is certainly easier for a start-up. Recommended steps for transition:

Once the decision has been made, the company must take the time to talk with all its employees; explain to them the reason behind the decision and create a clearly defined implementation process. The lines of communication between all people must be improved and opened so that the employees feel like they can ask questions and be interested in learning. Ease of access for employees to the financial reports of the company (when the individual can observe the company's results it is easier for him to have an idea about whether the company has a stable financial position or not. This can influence the effectiveness of the working process if the employee likes his job, wants to stay in the company and make improvements). The company has to focus on the improvement of employee skills, motivate them to study and share information between colleagues in order to have the possibility to make decisions based on different points of view.