

Bt global challenge as a case study (chapter 1)



**ASSIGN
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BT Global Challenge Having a sailing team of inexperienced men and women from different walks of life come together to maneuver a yacht across the globe is the simply explained idea of the BT Global Challenge. What makes this feat truly challenging and unique is that these individuals get together for the sole purpose of accomplishing this seemingly impossible task and end up successfully achieving it as well. This challenge is not merely a test of endurance, competitiveness and sailing skills of participants, but a case of team dynamics, leader-follower relationship, decision making and management. It shows the ingredients needed to have a group of very different people put together to perform a task and successful manage it.

Background

The BT Challenge comprises of twelve teams, each having a set number of core members, skipper, leggers and support staff. The fifteen core members in each team are people from varying backgrounds, nationalities, ages and levels of experience. As discussed previously, the idea of the Challenge is to have a group of novices with very little or no sailing knowledge to take on this challenging assignment of driving a yacht across the world.

This idea was initiated by Sir Chay Blyth who suggested that many everyday people thrive for a certain kind of adventurism and challenge which they can rarely find in everyday lives. This adventure was purported to be provided by the BT Global Challenge. Despite opposition to it, Sir Chay's idea was immensely successful and attracted applications from all over the world.

What now needed to be done was to take the model of the first challenge and streamline it so that a better route, scoring system and technologically efficient process could be engineered and accommodate all the new participants and sponsors. Training and education of the participants was

also necessary before they could embark on the journey.

The organizing committee was able to do just that and created a challenging program, detailing everything from the ports to support staff allotment, food requirements to team training. They recruited proficient skippers who were to take on the leadership role for the teams and steer the challenge to completion.

Research

Researching the BT Global Challenge is insightful and interesting as it provides access to information about how an untrained individual can be brought to achieve even almost impossible tasks. For example, the skippers understood the importance of getting together their team members as soon as possible so they could learn to work and live together. This shows how important it is for new team members to get better acquainted with and understand each other to be able to achieve results. There is also emphasis on the leadership capabilities of the skipper, without which it would be impossible for any team cohesion to occur and even for the first leg of the journey to be completed.

This case makes use of a complex situation where parameters such as team member characteristics, skipper qualification, yacht capabilities, etc. are kept constant so that qualitative characteristics like leadership, learning and teamwork can be assessed. Learning is drawn from how the leaders ran their teams, deployed resources and made use of the time available to compete with eleven other equally proficient teams.