

# Sainsburys team and leadership behaviour



## **Introduction**

In this assignment I need to understand the team and leadership behaviour. The organisation I have chosen to look at is Sainsbury's where I was a former employee. Sainsbury's plc is a leading food retailer supermarket. The Scenario that I have presented took place when I was working at Sainsbury's which will highlight what team skills took place. The main focus in my report is on leadership I will analyse the group interactions and interdependence that were implicated by applying appropriate theories from the Team Skills. This will then enable me to draw conclusions and offer recommendations for improvement.

## **Sainsbury's background**

Sainsbury's plc is a leading food retailer supermarket, founded in 1869; it is the longest standing and the third largest supermarket in the UK. Not only is Sainsbury Britain's largest retailer of food and wine but it is also the most respected, according to the reporting's of the nationwide surveys of industry analysts and company directors. The company has received top or near-top ratings for product and service quality, successful development, profitable pricing, overall financial performance, advertising and marketing, and superior management, as well as recruitment, training, and retention of high-calibre employees.

## **Characters**

The four characters that I have chosen to look at have different roles within the company however; they all play an important part in the scenario which

shows their great team working skills. I have highlighted their roles within the store (Please see appendix 1).

## **The Scenario**

I used to work in Sainsbury's as a cashier and one day when I was working over-time there was a power cut. The store manager Clive called all the supervisors down to the check outs department and said we need to get all the customers out of store and so the check out manager Kristina done a tannoy on the speaker telling all the customers to leave the store due to the power cut. Meanwhile the store assistant manager, Duncan was calling the Head Office to inform them that the store had a power cut. Imran the supervisor of frozen foods than done a call out to all the staff asking them to leave the building and come to the main entrance of Sainsbury's. After arriving to the main entrance of the building all the staff got in groups of 8 which were led by a supervisor. We then had to take the customers cold products and put them in the big fridge at the back of the warehouse which was running on a generator. The staff got told by the store manager Clive that all the cold products of the shelf had to be taken off and put it in to big plastic boxes which then went in the big fridge at the back of the warehouse. There were four supervisors; Amy, Dave, Steve and Imran, I was in imran's group and our task was to take of all the milk products off the shelves and put it at the back to the warehouse where the big fridge was. After we done the milk section we were then asked to do the yogurt section, in total it took us 3 hours, 1 hour more than we expected, this meant that the store lost out on 3 hours of business. After the store reopened I got told by my group supervisor to stand on the door n greet all the customers and tell them all

the cold products can't be sold due to a power cut. After a few hours we got the power back and Clive the store manager asked a lot of the staff to do overtime and put all the cold products back on the shelves. The staff doing the over time were split in to 3 groups of 5 and in total it took us four and a half hours to put all the cold products back on the shelf.

## **Transcription of Interaction**

The dialogue that took place between the main characters in the scenarios described above shows the team work that took place (Please see appendix 2).

## **Theories**

The trait approach to leadership arising from the great man theory identifies the key characteristic of a leader as being successful. Stodgill (1974) identified a list of main traits and skills that a successful leader should acquire. According to Stodgill, a good leader should possess the trait of being able to adapt to different situations, should be alert to social environments, be ambitious and achievement-orientated. As well as this a good, successful leader should be assertive, cooperative, decisive, dependable and dominant in the sense that they should have the desire to influence others. Stodgill also highlighted a good leader to be energetic, persistent, self-confident, tolerant of stress and willing to assume responsibility. The key skills that Stodgill identified as vital for a successful leader are that they should be creative, conceptually skilled, diplomatic, tactful, knowledgeable about group task, organised, persuasive yet socially skilled.

The contingency theory proposed by Fiedler (1964) states that there is no one way that is best for managers to lead, different situations will require different leadership styles for a manager. The managerial situation depends on various internal and external factors such as the working environment. Fiedler identified 3 situations that could describe the condition of a managerial task; leader-member relationship, this refers to how well the managers and staff get along, task structure which relates to how structured the job is, position power which associates with how much authority the manager possesses. It has been noted that task-oriented managers tend to be better in situations in which they have good relationships with good leader-member relationships, structured tasks and a strong position of power. Leader-member relationship refers to the amount of dependability and support that the leader receives from his or her employee.

The Hershey-Blanchard situational theory (1977) suggests that the appropriate leadership style depends upon the developmental level of maturity of the subordinates. This means that in order to establish the appropriate leadership style, the leader must first establish the maturity level of the subordinates in relation to the task that they are trying to accomplish. According to Blanchard the key situational factors are the readiness and developmental level of the subordinates and therefore four different leadership styles have been recognized; directing, coaching, delegating and supporting.

The path-goal model of leadership proposed by Evans (1970) and House (1971) suggests that an individual's motivation depends upon their expectation of the reward. According to Evans the most important way that

<https://assignbuster.com/sainsburys-team-and-leadership-behaviour/>

managers can motivate employees is by offering them reward and indicating what they must do to earn that reward.

### **Analyse scenario**

Although the staffs at Sainsbury's have been trained on what to do when there is a power cut, it still occurs unexpectedly, there is no one best way of leading that particular situation, moreover, a leadership style that is effective in one situation may not be effective in another although they may be similar situations. The optimal leadership style is dependent upon many of the internal and external factors; therefore, in this instance the contingency theory of leadership can be applied (Fieldler 1964) as nobody including the store manager Clive expected this to happen however, he was alert and adapted quickly to the situation.

As the store manager to be a successful leader, Clive had to think quickly and act fast, therefore the situational leadership theory proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1977) can also be applied to this scenario. He took the leader role and communicated well with all the staff by keeping them all informed and assigning them to jobs. Mullins (2002) describes leadership as the relationship through which one person affects the action or behaviour of another, from the scenario we can see that Clive leadership qualities affected the rest of the staff as they felt more motivated and knew what they had to do. Duncan used his initiative and thought of calling the head office and informing them nevertheless he still asked for Clive's advice. The same applied to Imran as he thought of gathering all of the staff together however, he still asked Clive first.

Clive possesses many of the traits and skills identified by Stodgill (1974) we can see from the way he handled the situation that he has the ability to adapt to different situations and is alert to what is happening around him. In addition to this we can see that as a store manager he is a good leader because he is cooperative with his staff, dependable because the rest of the staff rely on him and empowering because of the influence he has on others. We can also see that he did not panic, was organised and tactful in his approach. Clive assigned job roles according to the level of maturity of the workers; this is consistent with the Hersey-Blanchard theory. From the scenario we can also see that Kristina took lead as well as she was assigning the supervisors on what section of the cold products to work. Imran was also a leader of his group and took a leading role of his group.

## **Recommendations for improvement**

### **Conclusion**

The scenario shows that relevant leadership skills were in place and therefore the situation was handled successfully although some faults that did occur could have been avoided which has led me to present recommendations for improvement that could be used for future reference. The leadership skills presented in the scenario are also consistent with the leadership theories that have been established. All the characters displayed leadership qualities even though they had different roles within the company; they still worked as a team to resolve the issue.

## References

Evans, Martin G. (1970). “ The effects of supervisory behavior on the path-goal relationship”. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 5: 277-298.

<http://www.j-sainsbury.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=380>

Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K. H. (1977). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources* (3rd ed.) New Jersey/Prentice Hall

House, Robert J. (1971). “ A path-goal theory of leader effectiveness”. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 16: 321-339.

Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 1). 149-190. New York: Academic Press.

Mullins, L. (2002) *Management and Organizational Behaviour*. 6th ed. FT/Prentice Hall

Mullins, LJ (2007), *The Nature of Leadership, Management and OB* (8e)

Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: A survey of the literature*, New York: Free Press



## **Appendix 1**

### **Character**

### **Position**

### **Duties**

### **Behavior**

Clive

Male, 35 years old

Store manager

Clive's main duty as the Store Manager is to look after the whole store meaning that all managers of all departments report to him. He has the leading role in the store and has to support all staff.

He is very charismatic, a strong leader always interested in getting results. Although at times he can be described as authoritarian and arrogant.

Duncan

Male, 28 years old

Store assistant manager

As the store assistant manager Duncan's main role is to assist Clive in supporting staff and managing the store when he is not present.

He is a reliable, organized and motivated individual.

Kristina

Female, 38 years old

Checkout manager

Kristina's main duties are to supervise all staff working in the check-outs departments as well as cashing up the money at the end of the day.

She is a very friendly, sociable, confident leader that looks for attention to detail although sometimes may appear to be bossy and dominant.

Imran

Male, 36 years old

Supervisor

Imran is a supervisor of the frozen foods department. His main duties are to supervise all workers in that department as well as assisting his manager and managing the department when his manager is absent.

Although experienced and of a very helpful nature, Imran is lazy and does not keep to his time keeping.

Jessica

Female, 20 years old

Checkouts operator

Jessica is a check-out staff, her main duty is to serve the customers the products they want and to help them with any queries that they have.

She is a bubbly and friendly person.