

Case study



Assignment: Case study - Management at Southwest Airlines Judging on the basis of information in the case, describe the managerial skills that Southwest managers such as Colleen Barrett and Jim Parker use in their jobs at Southwest. Include examples of situations in which they use these skills. Southwest Airlines made use of three managerial skills in the process of overhauling the company: decision making skills, communication skills, diagnostic skills.

Firstly Jim Parker, CEO and Colleen Barrett, COO, made use of their decision making skills by recognizing certain inherent flaws in the way their predecessors handled certain aspects of the business and three examples of said decision skills would be their decision to implement a short-haul, point to point schedule in lieu of the hub - and - spoke system schedule, (which proved to be considerably more cost effect), as well as a smaller less expensive airport.

The one that proved to be most efficient was their decision to limit their operation to just one type of Jet which went a long way to cutting costs in three major areas: purchasing, maintenance, and training (Ricky W. Griffin, p. 25).

Secondly, as top level executives of South West Airlines, both Jim Parker and Colleen Barrett made considerable strides in the area of HR relations with the first-line managers who are in charge of supervising and overseeing the employee's responsible for the day to day business activities, which went a long way to establishing a better rapport between the employee representatives and the executives of South West Airlines when it came to

critical collective bargaining regarding contracts, improved wages/ benefits, extensive training, no lay-off policy and a generous profit sharing and stock ownership (Ricky W.

Griffin, p. 25). Thirdly, Jim Parker and Colleen Barrett, and the rest of the team of Southwest Airlines made use of their exemplary diagnostic skills by isolating the chinks in the chain of Southwest Airlines when it was formally under the ownership of Herb Kelleher, a few of which I have already mentioned. Unlike other airlines, such as Delta, ATA, and U. S.

Airways, all of which needed to undergo a reorganization for bankruptcy, which gave way to downsizing, low morale and reduced productivity which adversely affected their ability to properly service the customer, South west adopted a more practical low cost operation, focusing on the needs of the customer as opposed to the doling out superfluous amenities that kept said companies operating in the red most f the time, necessitating the need for layoffs and pay cuts which contributed to low morale which gave way to lower productivity and unsatisfied customers, reduced training, reduced pay, deficient compensation packages and finally bankruptcy, and to insure that they would no longer fall prey to this vicious cycle every airline has finally adopted at least a few of Southwest's pioneering concepts such as eliminating on board meals (Ricky W. Griffin, p. 25). Summarize the internal work environment at Southwest. Relate your summary to your textbook readings, the case study, and the video.

The internal work environment of Southwest seems to have gone from a state of constant flux when it came to job security, under the ownership of

Herb Kelleher, to a revamped operation that had the employee's best interest in mind without having to compromise Southwest's earning potential and they did it by employing good sense when it came to the aforementioned skills and looking beyond the immediate gratification, envisioning a long term system that would meet the needs of both the customers as well as the employee's of Southwest Airlines.