

Developing management skills by david a whetten circumstances



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sitting at a corner table bathed in sunshine, I was enjoying reading the textbook *Developing Management Skills* written by David A. Whetten & Kim S. Cameron. The cafe pub was not so busy at noontime. Unconscious distraction to the conversation at the adjacent table immersed me deeply in self-reflection. That was a conversation between a superior and his three subordinates, an usual coffee talk as I offered to my subordinates countless times in the past years, but now, an unusual talk as I concepted not a talk scene but a show of many vivid strategies and skills in practice. Easily and also unconsciously in my mind, things underlying the talk-show surfaced, coaching, counseling, motivation, reciprocity, reasoning, gaining power and influence, managing conflict, etc. It's amazing suddenly I felt. Why? There are something very different happened in me I know.

Such feelings recalled me a piece of story from Chuang Tzu-“ Cook Ting Slicing Up An Oxen”. Highly praised by Lord Wenhui for his superb performance, the Master butcher mentioned that, when he first began cutting up oxen, he could see nothing but the whole ox, but after three years, he no longer saw a whole ox. Now, reviewing my past six years' working experience as well as management practice, on the basis of the systematic learning of the theories of management organizational behavior, I can see no whole images from my prospective, but more clearly the underlying driving forces of fragments formulated the whole story.

In 2004, after graduated from the Southwest University of Political Science and Law, I became a wilder job hunter among millions of undergraduate in the HR market. Clearly I remembered that on the date of October 10, 2004, I stepped into this company named Teamhead Marine Surveyors Co., Ltd, and <https://assignbuster.com/developing-management-skills-by-david-a-whetten-circumstances/>

then stuck to the company (never think about jump-out) until taking the Bimba education here. Like watching a baby grow up day by day, during these six years, I have gone through her expansion from a group with 3 members only to a medium-sized survey company with over 20 staffs in the head office and three branch offices in Dalian, Shanghai and Huangpu, her development from the inception to the No. 1 independent marine survey company in Tianjin Port, her metamorphosis from a merely self-employed to a normal company with her management system approved and certified by DNV ISO9000.

Concurrently with the growing of our company, I have also experienced a remarkable period of my career life, promoting through the rank of an assistant and surveyor to the Deputy Manager of this team. In retrospect the beginning of my career, considering my lacking of maritime background, and also for attaining a better understanding about marine survey, I gave up all my Sundays and holidays for studying marine books and going through hundreds of veteran surveyors' survey reports. From the second month of my join-in, I can manage my job as an assistant without making many mistakes. And as a reward for my quick integration to the marine survey society, my boss recognized and contracted me as a formal employee from the third month. In the following days, when there short of hands, I took another role as a rare female surveyor who burst into a man's field, examining the quality of steel tubes, bars and slabs in rural mills, participating in cargo dimension survey (climbing up and down for the figures in the quayside yards), and fighting with stevedores for dunnage and cargo securing during stuffing operation to containers.

I am not a genius. But in those processes, my spirit of perseverance, outstanding abilities, industrious efforts and continuously emerging ideas on improvements in work finally won me the trust of my boss, the respect of my colleagues and the approval of our clients. In 2007, I was promoted to the position of Deputy Manager of this company, with full responsibility for routine survey organization and supervision.

However, a person with strong working abilities doesn't mean that he or she can perform management very well. In my understanding, management consists of only two parts, managing business and, managing men. I am good at managing business (narrow meaning), but really awkward at managing humans, those employees younger or older than me, those colleague graduates, Captains or Chief Mates with years of marine experience, and even those under-educated foremen or stevedores from ports. What confronted with me was a real harsh dilemma situation. On the one hand, I want to implement strictly the survey regulations on procedures and standards and ultimately to improve our service standard to clients; however on the another, the really challengeable complex employee composition for me a green-hand manager to cope with. Very soon all my disadvantage as of lacking experience in management exposed.

Earthquake is a nightmare. Almost at the same time when the 2008 Earthquake happened, our company experienced our own " Earthquake", which triggered by the intensification of accumulated contradictions and divergences to conflicts between I (as a manager) and majority subordinates. Deeply involved in the " battle", I faced with a situation wholly out of my control. Then for solving the conflict, our boss stood out and, had to think <https://assignbuster.com/developing-management-skills-by-david-a-whetten-circumstances/>

about making a very difficult decision, actually focusing on whether to retain my position and let those dissenters go or otherwise. My boss choose the FORE option, though bearing a clear mind on foreseeable hardships the company would suffer immediately, from the extensive turnover.

The only chance I appreciated throughout my life it would be. Valuing the chance and appreciating my boss's trust and efforts on cultivating me to be a good manager, I started to reflect on my doings of the past years and, try to implement improvements incrementally. Since then, simultaneously with my progress and gradual maturity in management, all atmospheres in our company renewed. Following my leadership, all my subordinates unitize harmoniously and contribute their best efforts to provide international recognized highest standard of service to our clients. Though unavoidably being impacted by the Global Economy Recession, our company still runs steadily with zero layoff and zero clients loss.

With the guidance of theories I learnt from the Managing Organizational Behavior class, and marking our company's Earthquake as a watershed, hereinafter I would like to progress and deepen the reflection on my personal management development.

From Self-boast to Self-diagnosis

To be honest, before attending this class, I am very boasted of past performance (exactly management performance after the company " earthquake") and even self-definite to be already a good manager, " being right person doing right things and in right ways", though most often being humble and modest in appearance. However, after finishing the first on-line

Diagnostic Survey-Personal Assessment of Management Skills (PAMS), as well as comparing the result with the reports from the PAMS Associates (two previous assistants invited for the survey) and with those of a national norm group, I blushed actually at the first glimpse of the ratings that far behind my expectations.

Score Categories

Your

Maximum

Norm Group

Norm Group

Scores

Points

Comparison

Mean

Self-assessment

405

510

Second Quartile (395-424)

394.6

Associate I

413

510

Second Quartile (395-421)

394. 6

Associate 2

447

510

Top Quartile (422 or above)

394. 6

Skill Area

Your

Rater1

Rater2

Norm

Score

Score

Score

Group

Developing Self Awareness

26

24

28

24

Managing Stress

28

29

31

26

#Solving Problems Creatively

62

58

59

53

***Communicating Supportively**

39

44

50

41

Gaining Power and Influence

38

40

40

38

***Motivating Others**

41

42

43

42

Managing Conflict

44

45

49

44

Empowering and Delegating

44

45

52

43

***Building Effective Teams and Teamwork**

46

48

53

47

Leading Positive Change

37

38

42

37

Comparing my score against the maximum possible (510), I am in the second quartile only, not as outstanding as I thought should be in the top quartile and, there exists a WIDE gap between my rating to the maximum. Compared to a norm group of approximately 5, 000 business school students, majority of my skills rate just NORMAL, even with skills for Communicating Supportively, Motivating Others and Building Effective rated BELOW the average performance. And, comparison between self-assessment

and Associates' version exposes obviously the difference on rating my skill for Solving Problems Creatively.

In general, the most impressive, and also valuable lessons from the starting class are that, my realization of the fact that " I am NOT AS EXCELLENT AS I thought to be"; so be REALISTIC and MODEST; do careful diagnosis on my management practice as to identify skill strengths and weaknesses for further self-improvement and perfection.

And, for carrying out the diagnosis as well as therapy work effectively, I tailored myself a reflection method and named it " Match & Patch". " Match" refers to basing on my past experience, match my behavior with what I have learnt from this class, to analysis definitely my behavior, its nature, causes as well as outcomes. And stepping further, apply the guidelines of strategies and skills to plan and implement a " Patch" necessary, filling the gaps identified out, and to enhance a successful career in management.

Diagnosis and Reflection on Personal Skills

Developing Self-Awareness

Diagnostic Surveys for Scale Self-Awareness

PRE Self-Awareness Scores

Category

My score

Maximum Score

Norm Group Comparison

Norm Group Mean

Total Score

53

66

I am in the second quartile

52. 20

Skill Set

Score

Norm Group Mean

Self-disclosure and openness to feedback from others

25

23. 54

Awareness of own values, cognitive style, change orientation, and interpersonal orientation

28

28. 67

Relying on seeking feedback information about my behaviors and sharing beliefs and feelings is really an effective way for me to pursue self-improvement. Admittedly, before the “ Earthquake”, I am a quite self-centered person. I conceptualized management simply in the model of “ Give order & Follow order”, and seldom did I think about getting feedback about my behavior from my subordinates, let alone to create any chance to seek such feedbacks from them. At that time, I can see only their disadvantages and pin them with kinds of label such as lazy, tardy, low IQ, dishonest, passive, petty, thickheaded, etc., and from my inner heart, never prepared with real respect to those people I work with.

The only channel I could get feedback on my behavior in the company was from my boss. And, I have a strong preference tendency to communicate with elder persons in both the work and life circumstance, or persons who perform better than me in scopes I am not good at but concerned with. From those people, I can accept even negative feedback willingly. However, habitually I would resist negative feedback from the younger and or the persons who I am not valued or appreciated very much.

Different people have different prospective to feedback to you. Later after the Earthquake, in practice I realized that if I can seek feedback information from more people, I will have more mentors. And actually until that time, did I realize that I possess a great advantage-complexity of employee composition which I should value. There are not only young specialty students and undergraduate students, but also Captains, Chief Officers, Chief

Engineers with years of sailing experience, Experts at maritime field, and even under-educated foremen and stevedores from ports. It is their continuous sincere feedbacks that expedite my improvements on work.

Emotional Intelligence Assessment

Total Overall Score: 85.00 Quartile Ranking: Second Quartile (71-85)

Key Dimension: Emotional Awareness

Points

(1) When I get really upset, I. . .

a. Analyze why I am so disturbed.

a. 10

b. Blow up and let off steam.

b. 0

c. Hide it and remain calm.

c. 0

(5) On important issues I usually. . .

a. Make up my own mind and ignore others' opinions.

a. 5

b. Weigh both sides, and discuss it with others before making a decision.

b. 10

c. Listen to my friends or colleagues and make the same decision they do.

c. 0

(9) In a situation when I have an important obligation and need to leave work early, but my colleagues ask me to stay to meet a deadline, I would probably

...

a. Cancel my obligation and stay to complete the deadline.

a. 0

b. Exaggerate a bit by telling my colleagues that I have an emergency that I can't miss.

b. 0

c. Require some kind of compensation for missing the obligation.

c. 10

Key Dimension: Emotional Control (Balance)

Points

(2) In a situation where a colleague takes credit in public for my work and my ideas, I would probably. . .

a. Let it slide and do nothing to avoid a confrontation.

a. 0

b. Later in private indicate that I would appreciate being given credit for my work and ideas.

b. 5

c. Thank the person in public for referencing my work and ideas and then elaborate on my contributions.

c. 10

(6) When someone that I do not particularly like becomes romantically attracted to me, I usually. . .

a. Tell that person directly that I am not interested.

a. 10

b. Respond by being friendly but cool or aloof.

b. 5

c. Ignore the person and try to avoid him or her.

c. 0

(10) In a situation in which another person becomes very angry and begins yelling at me, I . . .

a. Get angry in return. I don't take that from anyone.

a. 0

b. Walk away. I doesn't do any good to argue.

b. 0

c. Listen first, and then try to discuss the issue.

c. 10

Key Dimension: Emotional Diagnosis (Empathy)**Points**

(3) When I approach another person and try to strike up a conversation but the other person doesn't respond, I . . .

a. Try to cheer up the person by sharing a funny story.

a. 5

b. Ask the person if he or she wants to talk about what's on his or her mind.

b. 10

c. Leave the person alone and find someone else to talk to.

c. 0

(7) When I am in the company of two people who have diametrically opposing points of view about an issue (for example, politics, abortion, war) and are arguing about it, I . . .

a. Find something upon which they can both agree and emphasize it.

a. 10

b. Encourage the verbal battle.

b. 5

c. Suggest that they stop arguing and calm down.

c. 0

(11) When I encounter someone who has just experienced a major loss or tragedy, I . . .

a. Really don't know what to do or say.

a. 0

b. Tell the person I feel very sorry and try to provide support.

b. 10

c. Share a time when I experienced a similar loss or tragedy.

c. 0

Key Dimension: Emotional Response

Points

(4) When I enter a social group I usually. . .

a. Remain quiet and wait for people to talk to me.

a. 0

b. Try to find something complimentary I can tell to someone.

b. 10

c. Find ways to be the life of the party or the source of energy and fun.

c. 0

(8) When I am playing a sport and the game comes down to my last second performance, I. . .

a. Get very nervous and hope that I don't choke.

a. 0

b. See this as an opportunity to shine.

b. 5

c. Stay focused and give it my best effort.

c. 10

(12) When someone makes a racist joke or tells a crude story about a member of the opposite sex in mixed company, I usually . . .

a. Point out that this is inappropriate and not acceptable, and then change the subject.

a. 10

b. Ignore it so I don't cause a scene.

b. 0

c. Get really upset and tell the person just what I think of what he or she said.

c. 5

The overall score of my emotional intelligence assessment here proves only an important fact that, one's emotional intelligence CAN be enhanced.

Previously as a stiff manager who knows only giving orders, I am rather autocratic and seldom think about listening first others opinions before making decisions. What I expected from them were their complete obedience and performance to my standards. However, if viewed from present prospect, all mentioned behaviors exposed nothing but my lack of confidence as well as the fear of lose control in management due to experience deficiency. On this point, later I changed my way of decision making on some important issues. With more team members participated in the decision making process, the risks of decision mistake or failure as well as members' resistance on implementation were greatly lessened.

Besides, it is true that in life I am aware of my emotion status and changes, especially demonstrating emotional control because my emotions would directly influenced my team members' mood for work. And, I also try to sense others emotions through observing and capturing tiny signals such as their tone, gestures or facial expressions, and then give proper response appropriately.

However, as shown in the survey, still I am not confident enough to handle the situation on the spot, especially when facing the public as well as recognize and attribute my own contributions. Besides, when presented in unfamiliar social group activities, though I aware of the emotional climate of the group, my behavior is passive and inappropriate.

Cognitive Style

Score Name

my score (Mean)

5925 Young Mngrs

2215 Young Mngrs & MBA Stdts

Mean/Std Dev

Mean/Std Dev

Knowing Style

4. 25

3. 89/. 65

4. 06/. 96

Planning Style

4. 14

3. 78/. 77

3. 81/1. 16

Creating Style

3. 71

4. 01/. 60

4. 16/. 80

As shown in the report, my cognitive style is very typical of knowing style and planning style, which proves my great preference on facts and data, as well as structure, preparation and planning as of basis for information interpretation and decision-making. Meanwhile, my score is low on Creating Style exposed my less creativity and, intolerance on uncertainty, novelty and ambiguity.

Interpreting the Defining Issues Test

Story

Statement Chosen

By Importance/Stage

The Escaped Prisoner

Every time someone escapes punishment for a crime, doesn't that just encourage more crime? (Stage 4)

Would it be fair to prisoners who have to serve out their full sentences if Mr. Thompson is let off? (Stage 4)

Wouldn't we be better off without prisons and the oppression of our legal systems? (Antiauthority)

Wouldn't it be a citizen's duty to report an escaped criminal, regardless of the circumstances? (Stage 4)

The Doctor's Dilemma

Can society allow suicide or mercy killing and still protect the lives of individuals who want to live? (Stage 5)

Can society afford to let people end their lives whenever they desire? (Stage 4)

What values has the doctor set for himself in his own personal code of behavior? (Stage 5)

Should the doctor have sympathy for the woman's suffering, or should he care more about what society might think? (Stage 3)

The Newspaper

Would the students start protesting even more if the principal stopped the newspaper? (Stage 2)

If the principal stopped the newspaper, would he be preventing full discussion of important problems? (Stage 5)

What effect would stopping the paper have on the student's education in critical thinking and judgment? (Stage 5)

Is Rami using the newspaper to stir up hatred and discontent? (Stage 3)

On the case of Escaped Prisoner, most of the statement I chosen were in Stage 4, which indicates that I am in the conformity level of maturity. My moral reasoning is based on conforming to laws and authority. Whether or not Mr. Thompson did something benefit the society, he violated the law is undeniable and, punishment should not be counteracted.

Regarding the Doctor's Dilemma, most of the statement I chosen were in Stage 5, which indicates that I am in the principled level of maturity.

Judgments are made on the basis of a set of principles or core values that have been developed from my experience, not on the basis of whether or not the action is violated the law. Sympathetic for the suffered people, I support mercy killing to relieve them from pain if they truly desire.

For the Newspaper case, most of the statement I chosen were in Stage 5 again, which indicates that I am a principled individual and based my judgment on my own internal principles. Stopping the paper may not be an appropriate way to minimize the negative effective as well as to avoid unexpected side-effects.

The Learning Style

Style

Score

Concrete Experience

18

Reflective Observation

33

Abstract Conceptualization

33

Active Experimentation

36

According to the survey result, my learning style is flexible and diversified, with similar strength in reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation, whereas less tendency to concrete experience. As I am weak in concrete experience learning style, I should apply and strength the skills by means of creative thinking, trial and error, personal feedback, or a study partner who are strong in learning styles where I am not, to experience fully the learning cycle as well as to deal more effectively a broader range of challenges and situations.

Tolerance of Ambiguity

Score Categories

Your

Maximum

Compared to Norm Group

Scores

Points Possible

Range 44-48

Total Tolerance to Ambiguity

63

112

Over Average Range of 44-48

Subscore

My score

Novelty

21

Complexity

31

Insolubility

11

My decision making preference actually proves my intolerance score to ambiguity to be reasonable. In practice, especially for the company business, I am habitual to make decisions on a basis of at least 70~80% predictable probability of success, otherwise I would hesitate to or feel uncomfortable to make any decisions. And, being somewhat intolerance to ambiguity, I am less adaptive behaviorally and non-flexible to cope with ambiguous or unstructured situations resulted from information-overloaded and or rapidly changeable circumstances. Hence, I should now focus on some ways to improve my tolerance for ambiguity and my cognitive complexity.

Managing Personal Stress

Diagnostic Surveys for Managing Stress

PRE – Stress Management Scores

Score Categories

My scores

Maximum Points Possible

Norm Group Mean

Total Stress Management

49

60

44. 69

Skill Area

My score

Norm Group Mean

Eliminating Stressors

21

18. 26

Developing Resiliency

19

18. 18

Short Term Coping

9

8. 25

This survey shows that there are still more promotion spaces for me to improve my competence to cope with stressful or time-pressured situations, though I have already make some progresses on stresses management. Now I keep close track of my time, set and check task priorities in due course. And also understood how to organize others to accomplish common goals, as well as to avoid upward delegations.

However, as you know, the shipping industry is special and, it seems that we could never expect a stop of its engine and anchor-drop. Vessels call and departure at any time of a day. So just as our catch phrase goes, " Plans go no faster than Changes." (è®;å^'æ²;æœ%åå ~åŒ-å¿«), except for prioritizing some routine work or contracted service appointments, I seldom prepare myself to-do lists because I have no idea what's waiting for me before I stepped into the office door.

Resiliency is the most under-developed skill for me to cope with long lasting stresses. Always in the excuse of busying and or being exhausted, seldom did I take exercise for body building and fitness, as well as participate in some social activities with friends to share feelings or seek any reliefs. No less than 90% my times and energies were occupied with work or at least thinking about business. What's the worse, suffering from insomnia, I stood in the line of sub-health group. Definitely, my life lost balance at that time.

Time Management Scores

Overall Time Management Score

97.00

Your Quartile Ranking

Second Quartile

Norm Group Mean

95

As per survey instruction, as I am scored only 97, it is very necessary for me to consider improving time management skills. However, I disagree with it to some extent.

On the first hand, I have very good sense of timing and understood how to utilize it more efficiently. For avoiding any delays, tardiness and expediting my work, my watch is set exactly 10 minutes faster than the standard time. I also prioritize the tasks according to their importance and urgency, and frequently check and make adjustment if necessary.

On the other hand, I think here it is also a depend-on situation just as I mentioned-above. For me, as I was working in the shipping industry and vessels call and departure at any time, except for prioritizing some routine work or contracted service appointments, we can plan nothing in advance because the time is not in the hands of ours but in the tomorrow. The only thing we can do is to make ourselves well prepared for meeting any disruptive business occurred.

But here, I do agree with idea that I should leave myself some time at least, to do plan, meditation, exercise, etc, so as to seek personal relief from stresses, otherwise, before any vessel's calling at port, our engines stop first.

Type A Personality Inventory Scores

Behavioral Tendency

My score

Competitiveness

13.00

Life Imbalance

16.00

Hostility/Anger

8.00

Impatience/Urgency

7.00

TOTAL TYPE A

44.00

Quartile Ranking

Third Quartile

Before taking this assessment, I have never thought myself as a competitive person. From my prospective of view, I think it is a positive attitude to

pursue better performance than others, or setup a higher benchmark for self-improvement.

Then here again exposed the problem of imbalanced life in my past six years. Because of the great enthusiasm and interest in the job, I put all my efforts and energy to make the company better and I enjoyed fully in the process. However, being too obsessed in one thing just leads to ignorance of all other important things in life. I took work as life but in fact life is not work only. And, the imbalanced life sourced not only from being over engaged in one thing and lack of time, but also from very narrow scope of personal interests outside of work.

Diagnosis and Reflection on INTERPersonal Skills

Building Relationships by Communicating Supportively

Diagnostic Surveys for Supportive Communication

PRE Communicating Supportively Scores

Score Category

Your

Score

Maximum

Points Possible

Norm Group

Comparison

Mean Comparison

Total Communication

93.00

120

Second Quartile (92-98)

92.05

Skill Area

My score

Group Mean

Coaching/Counseling

16.00

13.88

Effective Negative Feedback

30. 00

27. 13

Communicating Supportively

47. 00

51. 04

Learnt from my past experiences, supportive communication is one of the key determinants of effective management. After the company “Earthquake”, this is the first thing I focused on to improve my interpersonal relationships, to stand up from the place where I fall.

In the aspect of coaching, I began with setting complete and detailed standards covering each kind of our survey business. And in our self-developed MIS system, all those standards set were then well integrated into the Employee Performance Evaluation Section, which would automatically affect the scale/grade of employee’s working allowance as well as their year-end bonus on a case-by-case basis. Driven by such kind of economic force, team members actively study the work regulations and procedure guidelines to meet the standards, and also initially seek coaching chance to acquire more advice and information for better performance. We also scheduled some periodic training programs to them. Being open and make my support available, I gradually won their respect and trust in the company.

Regarding to the Eight Attributes of Supportive Communication, my performance before the company Earthquake actually disobeyed most of the rules, especially when I giving negative feedback. When a guy failed to finish a task up to the standard, I always started our talk in this way,

“ You made same mistake again. I have told you this matter many many times. You just one ear in and one ear out. Do have any hearing disorders or understanding problems? Why this happened again. Now, as our client asked me “ why”, you tell me why...”

Yes, I did act in this way, frequently in the first few years before “ Earthquake”. Thinking in others shoes now, if I faced with a manager communicate in such manner, how could I expect building/enhancement of positive relationship between the two communicating parties? My first reaction to the unfavorable occurrence was not solving the problem but finding out who is to