

# Important areas for self awareness psychology essay



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In a changing corporate world, strong leadership is becoming necessity for Business to survive. Complexity and chaos are creating emerging concerns in solving problem in business world, which leads more attention to leadership. This in turn has increased arguments how leadership is different from management. Management focus on responsibilities and reaching goals effectively and efficiently which means it is the activities that keeps organization running(Huey, 1994). However leadership is a role to influence others and guiding them to go in right direction to effectiveness(Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Three skills required for managers to create success organization includes establishing direction, motivating and inspiring people and aligning people (Cohn, 1998). This new leadership role, it puts more pressure on leaders to deal effectively in an environment in which knowledge is an economic resource. Knowledge includes “ explicit” data and statistics as in history and “ tactic” or inner sense. These are considered as key skills of leaders (White, Hodgson, & Crainer, 1996). Self awareness is a foundation for tactic knowledge. In the White, et al(1996) self awareness involves the leaders being aware of their strengths and weakness and ability to accept them. Self analysis is a process of raising self awareness. So the key thing here is to collect sufficient and efficient information to make effective decision on one’s future for a self managed development. By examining your strengths, weaknesses, skills and competences, a person can get a clear picture of ‘ what you are’ and ‘ what you have got’.

## **Important Areas for Self-Awareness**

Being a very complex and diverse creature Human beings need to have an understanding in many areas like psychological needs, personality traits,

values, habits, emotions etc to become self aware. Understanding our personalities can help us to find the solutions in which we thrive and help us to avoid situation which will give us too much stress and mental pressure. It could be in personal or professional life. For instance an introvert person can find it more stressful in sales job than an extrovert person. So either the person has to learn skills to match the job requirement or should look for other opportunities. So Awareness of personality helps to make a decision that will lead to less stress to lead a happy life.

Every person has its own personal values. Unawareness of own values may misguide to pay more attention to less unimportant work and feel guilty for not concentrating on priority works. Habits are the behaviours that are repeated routinely and automatically. Personal habit may affect our effectiveness. For instance if a person who is a manager doesn't have a habit to consult staff in decision making process may affect his ability to build staff members commitments.

Knowing the psychological needs like esteem, affection, possessive, achievement, self actualization, power, control etc will help to understand their effect on interpersonal relationships. Emotional self-awareness is one of the five facets of emotional intelligence. It's about knowing ones feelings, what caused that feeling and how it impacts one thought and action. A person with high emotional self awareness can understand the internal processes of any emotional experience so can have a better control over it

## **Managerial self Awareness**

There are many developmental assessments like multi-rater technique, Feedback process, filling questionnaire etc are designed with the underlying assumption that the awareness of any contradictions in how others see us and the perception of ourselves will lead to a greater degree of self awareness which in turn enhances the leadership behaviour. So it's makes important to understand what is self awareness and its impact on managers performance.

Piaget(1928) defended that a child is a self centered or egocentric being and so the perspective of others is largely ignored and are of no concern. Then there is gradual progression from self centered view to more socially aware view. Gradually a child learns to take others role in social interactions where self is viewed as an object(Mead, 1934). This process of " role taking" involves paying attention to needs, opinions, intentions, emotions and intellectual capabilities of others which are important characteristics for a child to become an actual communicator (Flavell, Botkin & Fry, 1968).

The child that is not actively taking part in this role taking behavior is not able to be an effective communicator (Piaget, 1928), because the concept of one's " point of view" is absent. Intellectual egocentrism can be defined as the inability to take other roles. The ability to search for the opinions of others and compare them to their own viewpoint in order to make comparisons is absent, and therefore hinders almost every part of the child's life.

According to Flavell et. al (1968), the ability to assess what another person's capabilities and tendencies in a given situation are, paired with the ability to use this information to communicate more effectively is a skill that is developed with age.

The move from intellectual egocentrism to consideration of perspective of others that occurs in childhood is of great importance in which manner a person perceives the self.

Mead (1934) argues that for one's selfhood awareness, it is necessary to detach awareness from inside of oneself and use vantage points from another person. So taking the role of other is important in this context, as the concept of self consists of the perception of others.

Duval and Wicklund's (1972) theory of objective self-awareness contradicts Mead's theory by postulating that " self-consciousness occurs because consciousness

can focus its attention on the self in the same way that attention is focused on any object."

So there is no way an individual is dependent on others point of view as in the sense that Mead intends. " If the object-like nature of the self has been discovered, and stimuli in the environment are such that consciousness turns in the direction of the self, the person will become objectively self-aware" (Duval & Wicklund, p. 31, 1972).

In other words, others point of view is not necessary to be self conscious, instead a mature individual has innate consciousness ability to focus in <https://assignbuster.com/important-areas-for-self-awareness-psychology-essay/>

different directions. Duval and Wicklund (1972) define objective self-awareness as the state in which the self is the object of consciousness. On the other hand, subjective self-awareness is the state in which the self is not the focus of consciousness. So it shows the early work of Piaget, Flavell, Duval, and Mead in the current studies on the concept of self-awareness.

From business standpoint different feedback techniques are important for manager self awareness. To be truly self aware a manager should not limit his thoughts, feelings to himself rather he should be aware of others standpoint and include this information in self appraisal (Duval & Lalwani, 1999). This can be referred to as other-awareness (Figurski, 1987). So one must be first aware of others perspective in order to alter own's perspective and then adopt those in relation to self (Flavell, 1968). So self awareness is a practise to reflect on self and accurately access one's own behaviour and skills as they are visible in workplace interactions (Church, 1997). Many managers use the information they perceive to modify future behavior.

Figurski (1987) identified four different kinds of person-awareness which all together will provide clarity to this study. As seen in Figure 1, target, perspective, and content are the three main dimensions of person-awareness. Perspective or tacit awareness (egocentric or allocentric) interacts with the target or focal awareness (self or other) to get content of awareness. Four categories of attention result: self-experience awareness, self image awareness, other-image awareness, and other-experience awareness. These can occur together in any combination or simultaneously.

The allocentric perspective results when one focus on how other perceives them being self is the target. When others are the target, one is concern about how others feel. So it important to considers others internal experience before adopting their perspective. Therefore objective self-awareness is dependent upon the consideration of others' experiences.

Problems may arise for those who fail to integrate information from the egocentric and allocentric perspectives. If the other's experience are not adequately considered, there will be less understanding between the self and others resulting in less effective communication (Wegner & Giuliano, 1982). On the other hand, one who relates others experiences to themselves and integrates that information to perceive self should experience effective communication.

The figures with frequency indicate that people are aware of others' experiences almost 50% of the time. So self proves to be the dominant focus of attention. Although managers focus on self, they are not able to accurately judge their own behaviours as they may get biased. However, self-ratings are important as there are some characteristics like intelligence, high achievements status and locus of control are closely related to accurate self evaluation Mabe and West(1982).

The greater the individual's level of self awareness the more similarity that is expected between the self assessment and the ratings provided by peers. The discrepancy between self- and other-ratings is also unclear. For example, an elevation in self-ratings could be due to lower ratings in others rather than over-estimation by the self.

Atwater and Yammarino (1992) sought to determine how self-awareness affects the degree of

relationship between leadership behaviour and its predictors, and between leader behaviour and performance outcomes. On comparison of self and other rating it was found that inaccurate self raters who overestimate their performance show poor performance than people who are more accurate self raters. Additionally, their peers rated over-raters lowest than the under-raters. So self-aware individuals appear to be using direct and indirect feedback to modify behaviour. Over-estimators, however, seem to be using this information to confirm or justify their self-misperception of over-achieving.

The hypothesis that high performing managers are more self aware was tested using absolute average profile differences (d) as well as relative average item differences across each question. High performers showed significantly lower profile difference scores than average performers. This supports managerial self-awareness theory in that high performers display higher levels of self-awareness than average performers Church(1997).

Individuals who are self-aware are more likely to respond to information from past experiences, thereby becoming more effective and displaying more leadership strengths. Individuals perceived by their managers as being high performers will be more self-aware.

This can be concluded high performers receive higher congruence in self-other ratings compared to average performing managers. Therefore, there is



a correlation between the overall leadership measure and higher congruence scores.

If a manager is not self-aware, information on how others perceive the self is of no use. According to the Figurski (1987) model, the allocentric perspective must be utilized in order for one to be aware of how the self is considered by others. Failure to consider the similarity or differences between the self and others results in perspectives that vary. Effective communication is in turn hindered, because the understanding between people is not clear.

Conversely, those who communicate effectively are using information gathered from interactions with others. It is therefore expected that managers with higher communication scores will display more congruent performance data (as reflected in self-rater agreement).

Individuals tend to focus more on feedback they receive from their managers versus peers or others. Data source (self, manager, peer, and other) is expected to explain variance in self-awareness levels.

Managers with emotional awareness are good decision makers. In these changing competitive environments intuitive decision makers can deal with situation with 'gut feeling' and 'sixth sense'. Emotionally aware persons can read their gut feeling and have better sixth sense that help them in decision making process. Jobs that don't suit a person's personality will give more stress than more compatible jobs. This is not like if your qualities are not compatible you can't go ahead with the job but you can put extra effort to develop the skills buy there are other alternative that will be less stressful. Self awareness is very powerful in revealing what is important for a person to

improve performance. Understanding psychological needs increase motivation and get closer to the rewards that a person deserves.

Understanding what click a person, reason of behaviour, reason of excitement etc can make what triggers others as well. So knowing to motivate yourself can help in know what motivate others.

In Summary ... To perfect ones management skills the best way to start is getting self aware. With a sense of yourself and vision of what kind a person you are or what you want to become a plan of personal and professional development can be created, its helps to motivate a person, Help to manage stress and help in decision making and helps to lead and motivate others, which makes an effective leader. Knowing yourself is a slow process so we should try hard.