Example of business plan on action learning leadership development plan

Technology, Development

Summary

This paper describes the Leadership Development Plan that will enable me to improve targeted competencies. In this paper I will outline the importance of the chosen competencies in achieving my short term and long term professional goals. I will also document the specific actions that I intend to take in order to build competence in the identified areas. These will include a combination of self-learning and continued guidance and feedback from identified coaches and role models both in my personal and professional life.

The Plan

The two competencies that I have chosen to develop through my Leadership Development plan are Building Relationships and Solving Problems and Analyzing Issues. Through my personal development plan, in conversations with my learning partner and from my own introspection I believe that these are the aspects that will truly help me to achieve my long term goals. Building relationships as a competency involves the following indicators of high performance: expressed trust from work group members, demonstrate a balanced concern for productivity and results with sensitivity for employees' needs and problems, are approachable and friendly and handle difficult situations constructively and tactfully1. The second competency that I have chosen to develop through this process is one that I believe will bolster my primary area of focus. By building my ability to solve problems and analyze issues I will be able to effectively equip myself to focus on productivity and devise new and innovative technique to solve productivity and people issues that may stand in the way of achieving personal and

organizational objectives. High performers in this competency are described as exercising a high level of professional judgment, exercising a high level of professional judgment, making good decisions based on a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment and encouraging alternative approaches and new ideas. 2

Any major management theory today focuses on two key elements of effective leadership – people capabilities and task capabilities. Building Relationships with the people that I work with whether they are subordinates, supervisor, clients or customers will form the basis of my people management skills developing my competence in this area will ensure that I create a strong foundation for this critical aspect of leadership. One of the areas that I intend to focus on in particular is building trust in my relationships. This is one of the areas that has been highlighted as a fatal leadership flaw by the authors . They have expanded the definition of trust to include a combination of credibility, reliability and intimacy. They have defined credibility as " the degree to which people believe their leader to be technically competent and to have adequate knowledge about an issue" (pg. 154). This is a competency that ties in directly with the solving problems and analyzing situations effectively. The ability to accomplish tasks with high quality and meeting deadlines rests on the ability to proactively identify and mitigate risks and to generate alternative solutions, by focusing on problem solving and analyzing issues as a competency I will develop my ability to build my results orientation as well. In describing the traits of some of the most successful leaders Zenger and Folkman describe that the leaders in the top 90 percentile possess proficiency in the combined areas of Building

Realtionships and Drive for Results. An indicator of Drive for results is the ability to effectively problem solve and analyze issues. I believe that focusing on these items will ensure that I grow into this top 90 percentile as a leader.

The Project

In order to develop my identified competencies of Building Relationships and Solving Problems and Analyzing the project I have identified is to organize a fundraising event for a local charity. The goal of the project will be to raise $10, 000 in 3 months for the identified charity. In doing this I will lead a group of volunteers and approach corporate sponsors who will be able to make donations to the charity. The identified project has unique characteristics to it that I believe will allow me to effectively measure my success in objective terms and in behavioral terms. By ensuring that I achieve the target amount in dollar value I will be able to check my development in tangible terms and it will also help me to determine my development in terms behavioral terms through a post project feedback form. In choosing this project I have sought to ensure that I give myself sufficient opportunities to encounter situations that will enable me to use and practice the skills, knowledge and trait aspects of the competencies I have identified.

Some of the action learning elements that I will need in order to achieve my objective will be to ensure that I have an opportunity to build relationships with people that are critical to the success of my project. In his paper on Building Highly Effective Relationships, Ron Crosling says that the basis of building relationships is operating in an environment of trust and

interdependence. The foundation of this is building self-awareness and identifying what level of personal integrity you are perceived as possessing. In my own introspection I believe that this is an element that will form the basis of my development within this competency. In this project I will need to work with a team to organize the event, I will also need to identify potential sponsors and look at how I build necessary relationship with these potential sponsors in order to raise the funds needed. I will need to develop high levels of trust in order to achieve my identified target. In developing my problem solving and analyzing issues competency I am using a simple process defined in the fact sheet Effective Problem Solving in Groups which describes a 7 step process for effective problem solving. Elements in these 7 steps such as root cause analysis techniques will also help me develop the analytical skills that will help me analyze issues effectively within a proven framework . I will also need to have opportunities to work out complex problems related to people and logistics and achieving a set target. This project will give me a unique opportunity to practice, in a targeted manner, all the competencies that I am seeking to develop.

When developing specific skills especially in dealing with people it is critically important that you have a role model who can not only serve as someone who you can model the behavior on but also act a mentor and guide. He or she will be able to help me overcome obstacles I may face in the execution of the more logistical and problem solving aspects of the task as well as redirect my behavior if I am heading in the wrong direction. In order to build and practice my problem solving and analytical skills I intend use the Problem Solving Template described in the Handbook of Problem Solving

Skills . In choosing a charity to fund raise for there will be a number of people within the charity leadership team that will be able to help me with the relationship building with potential sponsors and in working with informal teams in a fairly unstructured environment.

Some of the specific training and education that will be needed in order to achieve the target of this project will be training programs on working with teams, conflict resolution training and interpersonal communication training, programs on lateral thinking and problem solving and fundamental aspects of fundraising and advertising and marketing.

Considering the design of the project I am confident that there will be sufficient opportunity to practice and develop the target competencies. As the leader of the project I will have sufficient opportunities of working with people with diverse roles and responsibilities that will allow me to interact in dynamic situations. I also anticipate that during the execution of the project itself there will be sufficient opportunity for me to learn and implement techniques of problem solving. Some of the potential barriers that I foresee revolve around the aspects of being able to ensure at I am able to identify my own progress in the targeted competencies through the project and ensure that I am developing desirable behaviors. In order to ensure that these specific objectives are met I intend to set up a system of measuring my progress in terms of behavior implementation on a weekly basis and ensure that I set up weekly review sessions with my mentor within the charity project team. I also intend to conduct periodic evaluations of aspects of the trust levels within the team by using a feedback form that measures the trust within the team . This will be an indicator of my development in the

building relationship competency with team members and helping the team evolve into a high functioning team.

Throughout the development of my learning plan the feedback that I have received through the learning activities, coaching and feedback and discussions with my learning partner I have identified that these competencies are ones that will most help me evolve into a mature well rounded leader and ensure that I continue in my leadership journey with the required skills, attitudes and knowledge to perform effectively in any leadership role or position. In identifying these competencies I have made a conscious decision to work in the areas of my greatest strengths and build on these skills.

Another critical element of my development plan is to learn from a role model. In identifying this project and working with a local charity I will be able to watch a leader working in the field, I will be able to learn from observation and guided coaching and feedback. This will also give me an opportunity to have someone observe me working in the real environment and guide me through the process of developing my leadership and problem solving capabilities.

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