

Sample essay on organizational management

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



- Self Analysis

It is difficult to talk about oneself without appearing either too judgmental or too self-serving, but it is important to find a balance for the purpose of the discussion of self-analysis. I consider myself a conceptual person. I have always enjoyed working with ideas to achieve more efficient productivity, to work smarter not harder, and to see problems as they fit into the larger context of projects or ideal states. The corresponding roles to someone like me include creator and linker.

Realizing that this observation is self-perception, which is prone to number biases or blinders, I cautiously recall myself in team meetings as eager to offer new conclusions or ideas for further research. More importantly, I consider myself a linker of ideas, which means that I have a desire to compile multiple ideas into one stream or plan for the team. While ideas are created, linked, and produced in a marketable way, they are only valuable if they pass an assessment process.

I consider myself to be a Type A personality, which means that I have a need to accomplish as much as possible in the time given. I know that this personality type can be distinctly off-putting to some individuals-- including other Type A personalities-- but the group worked well synergistically in this case. We rarely had conflicts within the group, and luckily when we did, I did not experience too antagonism on the part of the other group members.

When working in groups like this, it is always a goal of mine to reign in my Type A personality traits that demand I take control of certain situations; this can be incredibly difficult, but I often occupied myself with keeping meticulous notes of whatever was happening with our projects.

I like to think that despite my Type A personality, I am more of a “fixer” than someone who merely takes control of situations without a good sense of how to truly solve problems. In the Field Notes, which were read by our entire group, I wrote: “Finally, I guess I should analyze myself. I’d say I either function or would like to function as a creator and a linker of ideas. I like to throw out ideas, but when new or modifying ideas are also tossed around by others, I enjoy either fitting them together with previous ones or modifying one or the other or both. I’ve always liked working with ideas, which is part of the reason I am currently considering a minor in one of the more liberal arts studies like philosophy or even theology. That said, I definitely need the other people in the group to serve both as the key roles within the team to guide any ideas I am wrestling with as well as to serve as interpersonal connections that bring this project to life” (Field Notes #2). I feel this is an accurate representation of my personality and my abilities as a participant in this project.

I consider myself to have an excellent work ethic. I have been tardy to class only one time, and I found the instructor’s reaction to my lateness very inspiring; at the beginning of the semester, my work ethic was not what it is now. I have changed extensively over the course of the semester, and a large part of that change is due to the work of my professor. Rather than scold me for being late or skipping class entirely, the instructor spoke with me about motivation, and my responsibility to my team; rather than being accusatory, the instructor helped me work through my motivation issues. As a result of the work put in by the instructor, I have been much better about working hard over the course of the semester, and I have done much better

insofar as teamwork is concerned. I am much more motivated to excel, and I feel that our team was better for it later in the semester-- if I had been neglecting what I was supposed to be doing, I think it would have been significantly harder for them to finish everything they needed to do.

This is not to say that I was perfect by any means-- I was not, and I was not the perfect teammate. Once my work ethic got back on track, I can admit that I can be somewhat overbearing in certain situations, especially when I feel that my ideas are the right ones and that other solutions to problems may lead the team astray. I am not intentionally being antagonistic-- it is just a function of my Type A personality that leads me to want to succeed.

Strangely, I think it is my Type A personality that also leads to my motivational problems: if I cannot do it perfectly, I am generally unwilling to begin working at all, because I am afraid of failure. However, I do not think that these characteristics are particularly unique; a lot of people feel this way, and once I was able to address those feelings, like I said, I began to work much more effectively in the team environment.

Once I became more comfortable with my teammates, we were able to have extremely open, frank discussions regarding the decision-making processes that we were utilizing. This was excellent for me, as I feel that these kinds of discussions are where I really shine; I came to really enjoy our team discussions about solving different problems, although I'm not certain my teammates necessarily felt the same way-- sometimes these discussions dragged on longer than strictly necessary, I am certain.

- Team Analysis

Working with these team members has been an overwhelmingly positive

experience for me. I have had a number of excellent learning experiences with these individuals; we have gone through a lot together, and developed the chemistry of the team as time went on.

Personality and Team Roles

Motivated by individual personality and the task at hand, Team Brady Bunch met every week and discussed the Academic Integrity Policy. Due to the nature of communication, leadership, and other broad group dynamics, each individual inevitably began to fulfill a myriad of informal team roles. The book identifies three criteria for a discussion of formal team roles, which are positions created by the officially-established organizational structure on page 305 in its “ Foundations of Group Behavior” chapter. These criteria—identity, perception, and expectations—serve equally well in analyzing the informal team roles that develop consequent to our task-oriented interaction. The book, in the “ Understanding Work Teams” chapter, illustrates nine potential team roles[1] that “ successful teams have people fill” on an informal basis (348). These roles constitute a very specific aspect of work team behavior, but they are crucial summaries of the means for a team to develop, communicate, and execute effective ideas in order to produce an end product. Field Notes #3, which I wrote to document the 10/9 and 10/16 meetings, reports my evaluations of the roles of my teammates as well as myself. I will repeat this analysis here, enriching it with later observation and reflection. One should take note, as the analysis continues, how these roles played into both our group’s decision-making techniques and the evolution of the project as a whole.

Individual Roles and Strengths in Group Work

Garrett serves as a producer and a promoter of ideas. As such, he is “ quick to steer ideas toward a direction that is plausible and practical” (Field Notes #3). I also draw attention to his humor, which kept the communication both well-received and more engaging. I see these roles as very complimentary to the two that I assigned myself. I see the assessor and the closely-related advisor roles fulfilled by both Marianne and Cristine. Throughout my field notes, I record instances when each of these members reviewed the ideas being thrown around and offered independent insight. Tim, in a similar but distinct role, functioned most prevalently as a maintainer. To this capacity, Tim provided a consistent sense of progress in our group work—an important force to buttress the evolution already made and enable further work. Finally, Lauren operated as the group’s primary organizer. My field notes recall when I missed a meeting. Lauren typed up the meeting’s minutes and relayed the next week’s tasks to me, catching me up instantly. Organizers are closely related to linkers: she kept the paper and presentation both coherent and focused.

Team Development and Impasses on Decision-Making

Continuing to analyze our team’s idea development, the forming concepts needed to be presented in an effective way. As mentioned above, we were well aware the presentation would be graded, so a certain conflict arose in our plan. Therefore, a dichotomy of professionalism versus entertaining presentation arose. “ Two meetings ago we experienced an interesting conflict, one which pitted two relatively opposite views and personalities against each other” (Field Notes #4). These views were rather to present a

short “ Academic Integrity” skit or not, and this placed Lauren and Cristine against Garrett and myself. While not a conflict in the book’s five-stage definition of the word (506), the decision-making process reached a temporary impasse. To influence the members of the group, Lauren—a champion of the skit, which was eventually scrapped due to the time constraint and not the reasons about which we argued—employed various political pressures. “ She seemed firm about having the skits, but was very willing to hear any oppositionshe offered quick and concise reasons why each oppositional point could be satisfied or how our opinions on the matter should change” (Field Notes #4). My notes call this conflict functional, as it resulted in a frank debate of pros and cons and a decisive, unanimous vote. No group “ appointed devil’s advocate,” suggested by the book to prevent groupthink, was necessary, because our team’s thoughtful individuals naturally functioned as such (322). We were a lively “ bunch.”

Therefore, I trace a healthy completion of a holistic decision-making process through creation, refinement, conflict, and resolution. Brainstorming was our primary method of initializing conversation and eliminating the negative influences on idea creation such as conformity or stagnation. Furthermore, our idea revision was aided by a healthy exchange of ideas, critique, and linking and reorganization. Finally, the functional manner in which we handled disagreements added to both the productivity and trust level of our group, a concept which would take another paper to cover. It suffices in concluding that Team Brady Bunch operated with an effective decision-making process.

The Synergy of “ Team Brady Bunch”

The synergy of these roles, as well as the roles’ seamless and unspoken development, encouraged efficient work. While many of these roles deal with what the book considers motivation, most if not all fulfill the final and most important function of team communication. Communication “ provides the information that individuals and groups need to make decisions by transmitting the data to identify and evaluate alternative choices” (369).

What I found most amazing is the unspoken nature of these roles as I perceive them. Even if all other teammates agree with my identification of these informal team roles, no one would feel the need to identify the roles verbally. Nor are these roles static; I note Marianne and Lauren playing a significant “ creator” role when the eventually-scraped skit was being discussed and developed. That is the nature of these informal roles: “ on many teams, individuals will play multiple roles” intermittently (349). These roles did, however, provide an important, ever present backdrop to our discussions as decisions were made. The techniques and idiosyncrasies of our team decision-making processes will dominate the final section of this analysis.

Motivation and Forward Movement

Our team displayed an often-occurring motivational timeline. Early in the group meeting process, at which my field notes following the second meeting hint, the team showed that “ we don’t just want a good grade we want to actually solve something” (Field Notes #2). This early enthusiasm displays the goal-oriented motivation of our team.

However, a mere two meetings later I noted significantly less intensity and

direction in our motivation, suggesting a finite level of persistence in the team's ability to produce ideas and execute plans. "The overall mood of these past two meetings," says Field Notes #3, "has been sluggish and a sense of mutual task avoidance." It is here where I believe that our group fell into the characteristic doldrums following an initial and unsustainable rush of project undertaking. However, the same field notes comment that the following meeting "exude[d] the kind of A+B/2 midpoint of team reorganization and re-energizing" that kick-starts the final push toward a project's completion. Here, I made a reference to the Punctuated-Equilibrium Model, which I link as a phenomenon of individual motivation within group behavior (303). The application of this model fits perfectly for Team Brady Bunch; on the same page, the book notes "it's essentially limited to temporary task groups who are working under a time-constrained completion deadline." Levels of motivation in the final meetings before the presentation were high; everyone in the team expressed an identical sense of preparedness and desire to share our project. One can see from my analysis that our group as a whole was composed of highly motivated individuals who, when combined with each other to form the "Brady Bunch," created a synergy to endure the task characteristics and produce an excellent end product. Despite the somewhat slow start in certain ways, the team was able to move forward with minimal problems after the rocky start.

Leadership

I determined early in the process of working with Team Brady Bunch that we were not going to have a problem of "too many cooks in the kitchen," so to speak. Our group was, if anything, made up of people who were capable but

sometimes unwilling to take the reins and instigate forward movement. Although Marianne was sometimes overbearing and concerned with the movement occurring in the project from the start, she began to relax as Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory became applicable for our group. Initially I wrote of Marianne, "Marianne seems to function as both a controller and an assessor. She offers very insightful analysis and also seems to examine details very well. She does this, along with everyone in the group, with a pleasing attitude and a friendly personality. It's a lot of fun working with these people" (Field Notes #2). As she became more used to us and more understanding of the way we all worked in a group, her personality began to relax.

As our group began to mesh, we began to exemplify the Situational Leadership Theory. Robbins and Judge define Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory as "a contingency theory that focuses on followers' readiness; the more ready the followers, the less the need for leader support and supervision if [group members] are both able and willing, the leader doesn't need to do much (Chapter 12)." In the creation and refinement of our ideas, Team Brady Bunch interacted face-to-face and employed a common initializing tool: brainstorming. Brainstorming is meant to overcome groupthink and stagnant group discussion by "utilizing an idea-generation process that specifically encourages any and all alternatives while withholding any criticism of those alternatives" (324). In the first meeting, my field notes convey a sense of rapidly moving ideas. "Questions were thrown around as people looked through the AI [Academic Integrity] policy" (Field Notes #1). In this participation was relatively equal, except in

the case of Tim who usually maintained a reserved and thoughtful demeanor.

Lauren, in her organizer role, often sketched notes and followed up on ideas mentioned; the refinement process usually began in this manner. Minor conflicts often occurred in this stage of idea development, such as a disagreement between Garrett and myself that concerned the project's thesis. I will only summarize the debate by saying that the difference in thesis statements began after a suggestion I offered was quickly critiqued by Garrett. Both Kristine and Marianne offered assessments and advice, and I embraced the new idea as the better one (Field Notes #2). I think this example provides an excellent microcosm of our idea refinement as a whole. It exemplifies how the informal roles guided the debate and led to a group-endorsed result.