How leaders create and use networks essay

Introduction

Communication is one of the first needs of human beings. Expressing their thoughts, people acquire new the knowledge from others and share their own experience, therefore, discovering life and creating communication networks. In this article, Harvard Business Review provides the survey of how networking creates leaders among the business communities. Some of the ideas in this article might seem ambiguous; however, in general, the described theoretical concept adds the value to newly employed managers.

Summary

The main ideas in the articles, Harvard Business Review (2007) summaries in the following sentence: " as a manager moves into a leadership role, his or her network must reorient itself externally and toward the future". In other words, manager having a future-oriented profession by its nature, has to always think several steps forward to fulfill his/her tasks with the highest success. Therefore, manager's personal wide network of people from different occupational fields plays a crucial role in achieving the decent results in leadership positions.

The authors identify three kinds of networks and group them basing on the purpose of the community. Therefore, the differences between the operational, personal and strategic networks will be summarized below.

To begin with, one of the most confounding and, in some cases, immoral network is an operational one. One can give such characteristic to it due to the reasons it serves for, among which is seeking for the people who can do

one's job for one. From one point of view, it might sound very guileful to make people work for somebody's advantages; meanwhile he or she will perform other tasks, also for his own advantage. However, the authors of the article stress that good manager is the one who knows how to delegate his job to another people with a purpose of bringing more benefits to the company in total.

The key players in operational network suggested by researchers include co-workers, both similar to one's work duties, peers and not so close connections. Basically, the more people from the same operational unit, including the different departments, the better performance will be. This network is created to serve the current demands of manager, who is aimed to alleviate the performance of day-to-day tasks.

The second community researched in the article is so-called personal network. The structure of it is opposite to the operational network, due to contacts involved in its functioning. In the contrary to internal connections, which make a base for the operational network, personal network consists of external contacts mainly. Random people with different interests and distinct fields of occupation, which are connected to a " leader" through outside-the-job activities – such is a picture of a personal network. Important characteristic of it is the future potential interests, thus, in this situation manager creates the relationships for his future needs.

The third and the last network discussed by Hermina Ibarra and Mark Hunter is a strategic network. What is specific to this creation is that it serves towards future challenging tasks and evolving priorities. To gather people

around in strategic network, one must pay attention to his/her relations outside the immediate control. So, with the help of indirect influence and mastered delegation, manager gets tasks done through vertical integration of his/her network.

In the last pages of the article, authors give the so-called instruction of how to create networks and successfully use them. Interestingly enough, the key of starting a better performance lies down beyond the " comfortable manager's zone", and to open the door to prosperity, one just has to start working in the direction of seeking the contacts and assign them into the networks discussed above. There are different strategies of how one could start broadening his/her social circle. Several examples given by researchers include the generation ideas for other departments, the use of own expertise in some specific fields, etc. All of this will definitely expand the number of people one interacts with, and thus, will automatically create networks around the future leader.

Last but not least, it is important to give to and to take from the people in more or less equal proportions. Hence, interaction will not look as a constant begging and abusing of acquaintanceship.

Critique

Although, it is rarely taught in the MBA programs and usually gained through the life and work experience, networking appears as a basis for the successful leadership. One of the contradictory ideas which sound in the article is that networks mightt substitute knowledge in some cases. The

question is to which extent networking alternates knowledge and if it could perform better than knowledge,

In my opinion, knowledge is the basis for performing the work duties efficiently. Through the developed intuition and impressive work experience, managers might achieve the high recognition from colleagues and directory, however, spending many years in the industry and perfectly knowing how it functions. With the theoretical knowledge, it is possible to achieve the similar results much faster, applying educational background. Going one step further and thinking of higher efficiency of performance, as the article suggests, one can come to a conclusion that networking should be involved in the daily business tasks.

Moreover, networking might be useful not only to satisfy the leadership ambitions, but to develop one's personality. One can be quite sure that through the established contacts with the wide range of people, the process of generation of new ideas is taking place. This, in its turn, opens the new possibilities for business and develops leaders in their own independent activities, thus, killing two birds with one stone.

However, the negative point of networking should be considered, as well. To the large extent, the development and implementation of the active networking strategy needs specific human abilities, which, by nature, are not available to everyone, by which one means that the talent of being easy-going person cannot be gained. In my observation, it is an inborn ability of one, which is never improved by the others. Some people get on well with the strangers just after one conversation, yet for others it takes ages to

begin a smooth conversation with somebody. It is hard to imagine how long it will take for the last person to create three types of networks, described in the article. On the other hand, not all people are born to become leaders.

Conclusion

In this article, Harvard Business Review provides the general information about networking, its importance in business and, in particular, for managers in their career development. The examples, brought by the authors, are aimed to demonstrate in practice the value of mastering the community creation skills. Three groups of networking are distinguished in the article, which helps better understand how contacts should be assigned for the most efficient usage.