

Roles of leaders assignment



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Focusing on principles of teamwork, best practices and issues arising in contemporary organizations, this paper will critically discuss the role of leaders in high-performance teams. Before discussing the role of leaders in high-performance teams, it is important to first of all look at why high-performance teams need highly skilled leaders. Hannah (2004) defines a team as a collection of a certain number of people with harmonized skills and whose commitment is towards achieving the organization's goals and objectives using a mutually accountable approach.

A high-performance team normally comes up with results that are extraordinary and go beyond expectations. Transforming teams into high-performance is very important because teams are the basic foundation of many organizations. A high-performance team is essential because most of the projects in organizations are always complex, unclear and require creativity and commitment (Hannah, 2004). Transforming teams to come up with extraordinary results in the shortest time possible requires a leader who is not only competent but who can also employ critical and creative skills in making judgments.

The first major role that leaders are supposed to play in high-performance teams is facilitating an ideal environment for high performance. According to Winter (2003), a facilitative leader is not just a decision maker, director or top person in the organization as it has been traditionally viewed. A facilitative leader should employ process-oriented leadership management tools effectively by guiding the behavior and language of the team members in order to achieve useful outcomes. A facilitative leader should be able to

add value to his or her teams by making them understand the difference between content and process in management.

The leader should take total responsibility over recess issues and provide his or her team members with the freedom and opportunity to be “ 100% immersed in the content” (Shepherd & Isakson, 2013, peg. 2). A facilitative leader should also provide expertise in the all processes involved in fulfilling the organization’s goals and objectives. He or she should acquaint the team members with all the necessary approaches and tools and then select the appropriate ones with regard to the team at hand and the situation.

According to Whelan (2010), team leaders should apply the rules and guidelines that govern the organization to reduce the effect of any barriers that might inhibit high performance. The leader should always interact with team members to ensure that all the natural differences that exist among them are solved amicably. By giving them attention, the team leader is not only motivating the employees but is also impacting positively on the team climate (Whelan, 2010). A facilitative leader should also be in a position to know when and how to employ various creative methods, techniques and tools in managing group dynamics.

High performance in a team requires clarity and a good direction towards the intended outcomes. According to Winter (2003), leaders should be able to arbitrate on unbecoming behaviors in their teams and establish an ideal environment whereby the relationship between them and their group members will be strengthened. Leaders should be able to keep their groups

engaged even in tough conditions. Many teams always disintegrate in tough conditions when they see their leaders doubting themselves.

A high performance team leader should always have faith in the process and even if does not go his or her way, should always be ready to come up with alternative strategies. Leaders should also play the role of laying a concrete foundation in coming up with high performance teams that will last long. According to Sullivan (2012), a strong foundation is built around elements of vision, mission, values, financial plans and strategic plans. By putting these elements into consideration, a leader will be preparing his or her organization in a good position to succeed and overcome any barriers in the aggressive marketplace.

Good leaders are supposed to ensure that they use the stipulated values to come up with good plans that will help in achieving organizations' goals and objectives (Sullivan, 2012). Apart from taking total responsibility over process issues, leaders are also supposed to offer genuine care to their team members, teach them and train them in matters they see important.

According to Kananga & Kessler (2011), placing love, empowerment and service at the heart of leadership ensures high performance in organizations.

By dedicating themselves to the welfare of their employees, leaders will not only be strengthening leader-employee relationship but they will also be opening the doors to high performance in their organizations. Leaders should also earn their team members' trust, assure them that they are valued and then assign them meaningful challenges that tally with their organizations' strategic plans. This will help the team produce extraordinary results.

Alongside valuing and caring for their team members, leaders should always restrain from intimidating them. Outranks payment incentives as the best technique to motivate them. Leaders are also supposed to act in an ethical and fair way in guiding their teams. A high- performance environment is only created when the leader is impartial, promotes cultural diversity within the workplace and ensuring that the team members have the spotlight most of the time. According to Hawkins (201 1), leaders are supposed to make decisions based on the competitiveness of their employees and not cultural differences. Leaders should also promote openness and collaboration among their team members.

Leaders are also tasked with setting up a mutual support culture whereby decisions are made effectively and conflicts are resolved amicably. According to Hawkins (201 1), a leader who sets up a mutual support culture will find it easy to recognize and rectify errors. With a supportive leader, team members will share the same belief and have passion about the fundamentals of the organization. The team will benefit from a set of skills displayed by the employees. By encouraging collaboration and interaction, the leader will pass the mantle of monitoring and helping team members to his group members.

Leaders should also instill in their members a sense of sharing a common set of values. According to Winter (2003), an organization will achieve high results if the members share the same emotional stability, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience and agreeableness. A leader should ensure that all of his or her team members have high personal intensities because that is what builds trust and credibility in a team setting.

Delegating some of the leadership roles to the team members helps a high-performance team to reinforce credibility and strengthen individual integrity.

According to Sullivan (2012), this action will lead to team sustainability even when one team member leaves for greener pastures somewhere else.

According to Hawkins (2011), leaders should be very strategic when identifying constituents of a high-performing team. They should look for certain qualities that must be in alignment with the organization's goals and objectives. Some of these qualities include capability and competency, commitment, passion for purpose, a sense of humor, collaboration, reliability, creativity and innovation, excellent communication skills, perseverance and intellectual curiosity (Hawkins, 2011).

A high performance team does not just require hard work alone but passion and dedication. According to Winter (2003), leaders are also tasked with setting the attitude, tone and culture of the team within the work environment. They must articulate clarity in-group assignments and then hold members accountable. Leaders must lead by example and guide their members towards distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong. Competent leaders must honor and acknowledge their own leadership styles so as to raise the group spirit.

By not emulating different fundamentals, strong leaders instill strength and motivation in their teams thus encouraging them hard towards surpassing their set goals and objectives (Whelan, 2010). After honoring their own leadership styles, leaders must set out to utilize each member's individual contributions by heightening the understanding and awareness of

participants' abilities. By setting the tone for the team, the leader should come up with an environment that allows honesty, effective communication and dialogue facilitation.

This will not only make members work hard towards achieving the desired goals but concerns and ask constructive questions. High performance team leaders should provide information and inspiration to team members to engage them towards producing high results. According to Winter (2003), this can only happen if the leaders classify rules of engagement and ensure that each team member is well conversant with them. Leaders must also be able to single out those team members who are incompetent both in skills and displaying the binding values of the organization.

High performance team leaders are also tasked with the role of making staffing decisions. According to Winter (2003), this is one of the most crucial aspects that can determine whether the performance of a team will be high or not. Making mistakes in staffing will result to the whole team being affected. The leader should ensure that he or she chooses the correct person for the correct job. Before engaging in any short term or long term project, a high performance team leader should spend quality time with his or her members and assess their capabilities in handling different roles.

It is only after assessing team members that a leader can have the wisdom to assign roles. A competent leader should be able to adapt to the changing environment and solve arising risks and threats without any difficulty.

According to Sullivan (2012), some leaders always find it hard to cope with the new environment or even come up with crucial changes in their initial

plans. This normally happens when a team member becomes sick or when the team loses a very important client. This means the leader can no longer stick to the initial plan but instead, should develop a new strategy that will work with the new environment.

A leader of a high-performance team should be able to exactly do that. High performance in any team does not just come easily. According to Kananga et al (2011), a high performance team leader should be able to display to the team members that he or she is not their superior but just one of them in accomplishing the group tasks. The leader should be able to bring candor, vision, ability to listen and vision. Once the team members realize that the leader is relying on them for high-end results, they will be able to perform highly. A high performance team leader should also be able to define the vision and communicate it to his or her group.

According to Hawkins (2011), many organizations have visions and missions just for formality but do not really stick to them. Good leaders should ensure that once employees enter an organization, they should be able to understand the vision well. The organization's vision should always be a top priority as the main motivating factor to make team members stick to it. High performance team leaders should always communicate the vision to the team members, tackle hurdles against goals, reinforce progress and equip them with the necessary tools and techniques to achieve the high end goals.

Missing to communicate the vision to the team might make some members wander and lose direction. To keep the team members motivated, the leader should always provide regular feedbacks on their progress. Feedback should

however be two-way. According to Handle (2004), high performance team leaders should always allow their employees to evaluate them and offer feedback. This will make the employees have more trust and faith in them for they will envisage them as being part of them. Winter (2003) argues that competent leaders should also be able to create environments that can improve their teams' results and processes.

The normal leaders is creating a problem-solving environment. It is normal for mistakes and problems to occur in organizations. Normal leaders will tackle problems by imposing solutions on their team members. For high performance team leaders however, they will give their team members opportunities to come up with their own solutions. According to Winter (2003), human beings are natural problem solvers and can come up with solutions to any problem. By giving his or her members a chance to come up with solutions, a high performance team leader will be preparing them for leadership roles and greater task in future.

In conclusion, a leader of a high performance team acts as a pivot in ensuring that the organization's goals are achieved. As seen from above, such a leader should be able to create an ideal environment that will support honesty, openness, collaboration and integration. Achieving high-end goals does not just require a dedicated leader but also hardworking and committed team members. References Hannah, M. (2004). High performance teams: How to make them work. NJ: Greenwood Publishing Group. Hawkins, P. (2011). Leadership team coaching: Developing collective transformational leadership. NY: Kananga Page Publishers.