

Diploma in police service leadership and management management essay



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The review established that the branch was failing to meet the training needs of the force, in relation to specialist skills, in part due to only firearms training having dedicated instructors. Removing officers from operational duties catered for all other specialist role training. This highlighted a number of weaknesses. (CI D. Carradice)

In his vision, Mr Carradice created a mission statement for the division, “ We will provide the highest standard of specialist operational support for the force”. This statement was created as a guide; mission statements are used as “ guides in times of uncertainty and vagueness” (candidate support pack, organisational management) during times of change.

On completion of this review, the CI realised that the force was disadvantaged due to a major shortfall in relation to specialist skills. Due to lack of structured training, this impacted on O Divisions’ ability to provide proficient and professional support to divisions.

The review highlighted that previous restructure had implemented a shift systems within Specialist Operations which left teams over stretched and under resourced. In addressing this problem, a new shift system was implemented, changing the structure, and allowing for dedicated training days.

It also had the same affect on the SRU (specialist response unit), although the number of teams remained the same, personnel and supervision was increased; a shift system that incorporated dedicated training days was also implemented.

In this essay I will analyse the role of the CI within the restructure of specialist operations, with regards to the leadership styles adopted, how interpersonal skills can impact on the role of a leader during the management of change. I will also analyse what changes were implemented.

Approaches to leadership

The definition of leadership is:

-noun

1. The position or function of a leader: He managed to maintain his leadership of the party despite heavy opposition.
2. Ability to lead: (S)he displayed leadership potential.
3. An act or instance of leading; guidance; direction: They prospered under his leadership.
4. The leaders of a group: The union leadership agreed to arbitrate.

(<http://Dictionary.reference.com/browse/leadership>)

Extensive research has been done in the field of leadership, and the questioned posed by many is “ are people born leaders or can leadership be learned”?

Although totally different from management, both seem to have been categorised as one. On one hand, managers are focused on the problem at

hand, are given the authority to direct staff endeavours in order to accomplish a particular objective or goal.

Kotter (1990) believes that both leaders and managers have three main tasks, but achieve these tasks in different ways: –

Leaders and Managers Three Main Tasks

TASK

Managers approach

Leaders approach

Deciding what needs to be done

Setting targets or goals for the future

Developing a vision of the future

Allocating resources to accomplish these plans

Developing strategies for producing the changes needed to achieve them.

Creating a network of the people and relationships

Creating an organisational structure and a set of jobs for accomplishing plan requirements

Communicating the new direction to those who can create coalitions, who understand the vision and are committed to its achievement

Staffing the jobs with qualified individuals

Communicating the plan to people

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Delegating responsibility for carrying out the plan

Devising systems to monitor implementation

Trying to ensure that people do the job

Monitoring in some detail results achieved against the plan through reports, meetings and other tools

Focus on Motivating people by appealing to their basic needs and values, which keeps them moving in the right direction, despite obstacles to change.

Identifying deviations from the plan

Planning and organising to solve problems

Drucker (1989) states, it is a managers role to “ co-ordinate, direct and guide the activities undertaken to achieve organisational goals”, where a leader must have the ability to inspire and influence others, to understand what is required to be done and achieve this by utilising attributes such as knowledge, character, values and ethics.

Adair (1979) created a concept of leadership called ACL (action centred leadership), stating that to be an effective leader, the needs of three groups within an organisation must be given due consideration and met.

The needs of individual team members – (strategic)

The need to achieve a common task – (task)

The needs of the team as a whole – (maintenance)

The CI created a vision for specialist ops with a more streamlined management structure, with less bureaucracy. The main emphasis on change would be the continuity of training within specialist roles and the creation of the STU (specialist training unit).

In order to implement this change, the CI proved his leadership and interpersonal skills by aligning the officers within the unit according to specialism's thereby creating a sense of unity within. He provided each unit with personal updates on its progress, dispelling any false rumours, While operating an open door policy and encouraged feedback from all ranks.

There was also close and open consultation with the federation representative on shift change, which allowed officers to vote on their preferred pattern. This showed effective leadership skills, demonstrating management was " sensitive to the impact of change process on people" Hooper and Potter (1997)

Lewin (1943) concentrates more on the leader's behaviour towards the task at hand and the people involved. His theory contained the following leadership styles.

Autocratic (authoritarian) style – the leader concentrates on getting the job done and takes responsibility for everything that is done.

Democratic (participative) style – the leader concentrates on the needs of the team or group.

Laissez faire (delegative) style – the leader deliberately allows team members to decide what has to be done and how to do it.

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Initially, the CI adopted an autocratic style of management. He stated his vision, and how it was to be achieved. This style is synonymous with such an organisation like the police, which has a hierarchical structure.

Due to reservations within certain specialisms, in particular the dog handlers, a period of conflict arose. The CI then adopted a democratic style of leadership involving negotiation. The negotiations involved the reservations the dog handlers had regarding 12hr shifts and the impact on dog welfare. These allowed the officers to play an integral part in the selection of a suitable shift system, allowing for a smooth transition of change.

According to Hersey and Blanchard's (1988) contingency theory on leadership, the CI adopted a situational style. This style is based on the leader being dependent on to what extent their team members are willing or prepared to perform individual tasks.

Theory is based on the extent of "readiness" followers are willing to show.

Using the theory above and the graph below, it can be shown that there are degrees of leadership performance, which have impact factors on change. Directive behaviour is similar to autocratic leadership, where the leader gives direction and expects compliance. The other style is supportive behaviour, where two-way communication between is established and support and guidance are supplied, this is similar to democratic leadership style. This allows for four different leadership styles to coincide with the four stages or levels of readiness.

The officers believed that the restructuring would have implications on both work life balance and working practices. There was also fear of change, due to past experience within the police and mistrust of police management. It can be said then, that the officers within the unit would be at readiness level 3. They were able to carry out the tasks asked in order to implement the change, however, were unwilling due to the reservations already stated.

In the early stages of change, the CI adopted a Directing style of leadership (S1), giving direction to the chain of command on how this change was to implement but giving very little support. By using both graphs, it can be established that this method was not conducive to the officer's state of readiness (R3) and could lead to conflict. The CI then showed flexibility and adopted an S3 style of leadership, engaging in negotiations with the officers showed a high level of support, allowing officers to voice their concerns and vote on various shift patterns.

By adopting a flexible style of leadership, and good use of interpersonal skills, the CI achieved the required change with minimal impact and was successful in achieving his goals.

Effectiveness of interpersonal skills

In order to be an effective leader, a manager must possess a wide range of interpersonal skills. Just because of their position or status within an organisation, a manager must not presume to lead, negotiate, and manage conflict within the group they lead. They must have the ability to listen, communicate, ask questions and also accept feedback whilst applying their authority in a measured and balanced manner.

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How this authority is applied is down to the human element of leadership.

The personality of the “ leader” has great bearing and influence on how this power is wielded.

Mullins definition of power is “ the level of control or influence a person holds over the behaviour of others with or without their consent”.

In the case of the CI, his authority is obtained through the rank structure within the police. French and Raven (1959) state that this is “ legitimate” power, and by virtue of his rank and the legitimate power attached, the CI has the power to enforce the changes within the division.

As discussed, the CI engaged in negotiations with staff on many different subjects. The most important subject was that of shifts. It was within his power to enforce the change of shift to whatever suited the force, but instead utilised his interpersonal skills engaging in positive discussion. The CI demonstrated “ coercive” power by explaining that, if a shift system could not be agreed, then the alternative would be the implementing a regulation shift pattern. This showed that the CI, would rather negotiate with staff than have a less favourable shift pattern enforced.

According to Fisher and Ury (1981), the CI would rather a win-win situation resulting from negotiations as opposed to a win-lose situation leaving officers feeling de-motivated, resulting in negativity towards change.

The negotiations, in respect of shifts went through four stages:-

1st stage-The CI invited officers to submit shift patterns for analysis. After examination the CI prepared various patterns and presented them to
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individual units for voting. The CI showed great flexibility, but stated that the common goal and priority was that of increasing performance within the division. Again the CI was open to feedback holding discussions with units and federation representatives, as he believed the best outcome would be a shift system voted for by staff.

2nd stage-“ The opening phase”, It was then highlighted that the officers from the ARV preferred the 12hrs shift option while the dog unit officer, who were to be attached to each shift within the ARV, had reservations regarding dog welfare. The CI met with the dog section and federation and encouraged debate between both units.

3rd stage- “ Movement to reach an agreement”, the positives and negatives of proposed shift patterns were discussed. The 12hr shift pattern would give maximum cover at peak times, and allow for a good work/home life balance, however, the welfare of the police dogs was paramount in the final decision. This was explained to ARV officers who agreed that this was the correct decision. The CI then stated that a vote would be held on the remaining shift patterns within each individual specialism.

4th stage- “ final and closing of negotiations”, once the vote had been counted, the selected shift patterns were put before the force executive.

This can be defined as working towards a “ win-win” situation. The CI demonstrated that he understood both sides of the arguments and facilitated discussion and also allowed time for and took a pivotal role in both discussion and negotiation’s. He displayed great awareness of the situation

and acted in preventing negatives such as irritators, defend-attack spirals and counter proposals.

According to Thomas (1976), the CI's style in managing conflict was that of accommodating. He recognised conflict existed, allowing it to evolve and run its course. Once he realised the conflict had progressed to a stage where both parties could not come to an agreement, he adopted a collaborating style, using mediation and negotiation to find a solution in an end to conflict.

Demonstrated –

(Taken from study notes)

During transition, the CI showed a high level of interpersonal. He showed the ability to recognise conflict and deal with it in an understanding manner and achieved the win- win outcome he required for a smooth transition.

Analysing the role of leader in change

During change the CI can be categorised as a “ change strategist or initiator”. He is the person who devised the plan for change and who will implement it. Management below him are “ change implementers”, they will implement the plan allowing change to happen. Those affected by the change are “ change recipients”, the people the change will most affect.

The need for change can be quantified by the use of SWOT analysis, an internal analytical tool which enables an organisation to examine strengths and weaknesses, see below.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Professional Leadership

Highly motivated officers within each unit

A lack of structured training within the branch

No 24/7 Supervision within units

Opportunities

Threats

Improve supporting role of branch to both divisions and force.

Development of specialist skills

Lack of specialist training and development.

From this analysis, the CI was able to formulate his plan for change. In order to implement his plan, the CI would have to overcome any resistance to change. As previously stated, one major group showing resistance were the dog handlers. Kotter and Schlesinger (1979) developed six methods to assist in overcoming resistance to change.

Method

What it involves

Disadvantages

Advantages

Education and Communication

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Educating people Beforehand by Providing training, Counselling, Information

Time-consuming, Especially in a major Change

People become aware of what is involved; trust and commitment can be developed

Participation and Involvement

Involving those who might resist in some parts of the design and implementation of the change

Time-consuming; participation can alter the change so that key objectives are not achieved

Participation improves commitment to a change and builds ownership of it

Facilitation and Support

Helping people to cope by training, emotional support etc

Time-consuming; expensive; no guarantee of success

Directly addresses doubts and fears about change

Negotiation and Agreement

Reaching a mutually acceptable compromise with potential resistors, eg by offering them incentives

Can be expensive; can create a precedent for future changes.

Can avoid confrontation; more straightforward than first three methods

Manipulation and co-option

Making covert attempts to influence people, eg by co-opting resisters into positions where they can endorse the change.

Can be expensive; can create a precedent for future changes.

Can be quick; inexpensive

Explicit and Implicit coercion

Forcing change through by the use of threats and sanctions

Can lead to resentment, reduced commitment in future

Where change has to be done quickly

Although a hierarchical rank structure exists, the CI broke with tradition and, adopted a negotiating strategy. In the first four stages of the above theory, he overcame resistance stemming from fear or anxiety of the change and the impact on a work life balance, the CI engaged in discussion, gaining trust through leadership and transparency, utilising both stage 1 and 2 in the first instance. The CI consolidated his position by implementing stage 3 of the theory, the Facilitation and support method offering support to officers.

By showing leadership and interpersonal skills at every stage of change, the CI was able to implement stage 4 of the theory, negotiation and agreement.

In doing so, he was able to reach a mutually acceptable agreement by offering incentives to officers thereby overcoming any further resistance.

Research has shown that if managers take the human resistance factor in to consideration and allow staff to have a certain amount of input into the proposed changes, then the staff will embrace the change more easily.

The strategy for change utilised by the CI, is that of a negotiated total package. His vision for change and the implementation involved the negotiation of, and input from all officers involved at every stage, thereby allowing for a smooth transition from old to new.

Conclusion

It has been shown that there is more than one approach to leadership/management, and each situation and set of circumstances requires a different approach.

This study identified the CI's vision of creating a specialist unit, with improved training enabling it to provide support to territorial divisions and the force. It identified the CI as a leader, not only did he implement this vision, but managed and co-ordinated these changes at every stage of the process, It showed him as both leader and manager.

The power held by the CI can best be described by French and Raven as legitimate power, this power comes from his rank, enabling the CI to adopt an autocratic approach, where he could enforce change, but he chose not to.

By analysing the CI's style of leadership using behavioural and contingency approach, we see that initially the CI did use an autocratic style of leadership until conflict arose. Using foresight and wishing to avoid greater conflict, he adopted a democratic approach, enabling a smoother and successful transition.

In using the contingency approach, this shows the CI adopted a situational leadership style, which depends on the extent on which those involved are prepared to undertake tasks for change. The CI recognised that certain groups resisted change due to parochial self-interest but was flexible in his leadership style and provided support and allowed the group to participate through forums and included them in the change process, Thereby averting any conflict.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) best describe the CI's approach to leadership, " the style of leadership is dependent on the prevailing circumstances, therefore leaders should exercise a range of leadership styles and should deploy them as appropriate"

In managing the conflict, the CI adopted an accommodating style, viewing the conflict as positive. By good use of his interpersonal skills, he used the conflict that arose to his advantage, adopting a collaborating style, allowing for discussion and negotiations to take place. By doing this, he allowed all parties to be involved in the change. Instead of being divisive, this was inclusive, allowing officers to take ownership of decisions made, creating a greater bond within the unit and essentially ending all conflict.

In the transition from before to after the CI was able to allay fears and anxieties shown by officers by facilitating and offering support. He operated an open door policy, making point of visiting each shift regularly at briefings, thereby building trust between management and staff. This broke down the “them” and “us” attitude, which prevails within the police. This was further enhanced in the down to earth way negotiations took place. When discussions took place, the CI assured all present that anything said during these forums would go no further; ensuring frank and honest discussions would take place. Initially there were some reservations, but after the first couple, he gained the trust of the officers.

As previously stated, leadership is about adopting a “best fits approach” enabling the leader to use situations to their advantage. There is the human aspect of leadership, whether that leader has the required character traits to be a successful leader, whether he can accept advice from someone who knows better, or whether they can inspire those under them. In this essay, it has been shown that the CI, through good leadership, showed all the qualities required to implement and lead the division through change.

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