

# Introduction of leadership and mentoring management essay



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According to Northouse, P, leadership is defines as a process whereby a person influences a group of persons to achieve a destination. In simple terms, leadership is a transactional event that occurs between these individuals instead of a characteristic that resides in the leader. This definition also includes goals attainment and these goals are pursuit by the leader and the followers. Another great definition is given by Batten (1989) who defines the leadership as a development of a complete system of expectations in order to determine evoke and implement the strengths of all resources the most important of which is people.

## **1. 1 Definition of Mentoring**

According to Garvey (2004), mentoring is defines as a human interaction which depends on an intended purpose of the relationship between the individuals. It involves two people talking with a purpose for the main benefit of one of the individual. Mentoring also is a term that describes a confidential relationship between two people in making improvement in work or knowledge and through this process enhancing their capacity (Clutterbuck, D & Megginson, D . 1995).

## **1. 2 Characteristic of a Good Leader**

As Cox, D (1996) has stated leadership is a position that must be earned day by day. Effective leaders are foremost effective people in an organization. Thus, the characteristics of the leaders are very important.

The following list five of characteristics that seem especially important to make up a good leader:

## **Integrity**

Good leaders who possess the higher standard of integrity will make their followers trust them. A leader who is centered in integrity will meet his or her commitment and will be honest in all dealings. Therefore, followers will find them reliable and trustable. George, M. D (2005) has written that integrity requires the ability to understand oneself honestly and acceptance of one's self.

## **Confidence**

Building self-confidence is always the preliminary to become a good leader. Having confidence in leaders is about having belief that they will act in effective and efficient way to accomplish goals. As Vojta (2010) stated, leader who possess confidence in himself or herself has the ability to influence an organization internally and externally. However, Adair (1997) agrees that confidence is essential but overconfidence will lead to arrogance.

## **Vision**

A good leader possesses great vision to foresee a variable future state for the organization. Leaders need to be able to makes vision tangible and communicate the vision clearly to organization in a way that gains commitment. According to Bennis, W (2009), vision is an important characteristic to be an effective leader because lack of a clear vision will lower the effectiveness of a leader.

## **Respect**

Respect should not be restricted only from the team members to the leader. As a good leader, he or she must treats all team members with respect and

dignity all the times. Respect is simply treating team members as leader wish to be treated. This is a vital characteristic of an effective leader.

Shriver, S (2011) suggests that leader must make sure they treat all human beings with respect regardless of differences.

## **Locus of control**

Lee, Don & Tsang and Eric (2001) state that a successful leader shows a high standard of internal locus of control. Leaders high on the internal locus of control are more likely to experience success and they also believed that their success is due to their personal efforts that they implement.

## **1. 3 Characteristic of a Good Mentor**

To be a good mentor, mentor need to display certain characteristics.

Although not all successful mentors will displays every characteristics listed as below, but these characteristic are highly desirable characteristics for all mentors.

There are certain key characteristics a good mentor should possess:

### **Enthusiastic**

A successful mentor believes that the mentee will enthusiastically share the knowledge and skills with the mentee. Mentor allows mentee to explore their feelings and thoughts openly with them. A good mentor possesses enthusiastic attitude are interested in and willing to listen with care and concern (Starcevich, Matt. 2005).

## **Patience**

Effective mentors are patient by nature. They allow the person being mentored to make mistakes and encourage them learn from the mistakes. A good mentor will know how to respond with patience and grace.

## **Honest**

A good mentor is the one who willing to provide honest feedback to the mentee. Good mentor thinks that it is their responsibilities to be honest to the mentee. They believe that there are huge lessons for mentee to learn as they speak the truth, transparent about their past experience and share with honesty (Cate, R. 2012).

## **Supportive**

In order to be an effective mentor, he or she has to be supportive rather than critical. Good mentor are willing to give moral support and encouragement to help mentee to improve their performance. Most of the mentors have already achieved success and they are now giving support to mentee to meet the goal (Campbell, M. J. 2006).

## **1. 4 Leadership Roles and Responsibilities**

There are several roles and responsibilities that a leader has to consider. Firstly, the world renowned business trainer, Tracy, B. S (2002) suggests that the role and responsibility of a leader is to solve problems and make decision. Leader has to make sound decisions that help the organization to achieve its target. To make a suitable decision, leader need to ensure that all discussion is productive and solve all the greater problems, in order to lead the team toward the decision. Secondly, leader has the role and

responsibility to set a good example for the followers. Leader must strive for a good ethic and traits which leader wants his or her followers to follow. Thirdly, according to Fayol, H (1949), delegation of tasks is an important role and responsibilities of leadership. Leaders have to recognize the abilities of their subordinates by assigning them with important task. Leaders must understand the strengths and weaknesses of subordinates so that they may assign the task to a proper person. Lastly, leaders possess the role and responsibility to motivate their followers to produce effective result. To do so, leaders should encourage them by giving recognition awards, remind them the desire to achieve and give support in their work (Rampur, S . 2011).

### **1. 5 Mentoring Roles and Responsibilities**

The mentor plays certain roles and responsibilities. Firstly, according to Byington, T (2010), mentor has the role and responsibilities to provide guidance and feedback to mentees on task progression. A mentor should provide guidance based on their experience and give constructive feedback which is in connection to the established target. Secondly, mentor has the role and responsibility to actively listen to their mentee's problems. The mentor need to show respect by listening attentively to the problems of the mentee (Marquardt, M. J and Loan, P. 2006). Thirdly, as a mentor, he or she possesses the role and responsibility to generate motivation with the mentee. Mentors can motivate the mentee through encouragement or rewards, to drive a mentee to meet the ambitious goal. Lastly, mentors have the role and responsibility to act as a positive role model for their mentees. In order to set a good role model for the mentee, mentor must demonstrates

a positive attitude and strive for a good work ethics. This can help to set an example for their mentees to follow (Parkinson, L. 2010).

## **1. 6 Benefits of Leadership**

According to Bennis (1999), the benefit of leadership is that it helps to increase productivity. Leaders have the role to provide guidance to their team members, to motivate team members and to solve any problems. Thus, team members are empowered to succeed and increase the productivity. Robert Zemsky and Susan Shuman of the University of Pennsylvania have conducted a research of 3, 200 U. S. companies, the research showed that a 10 percent increase in spending for development leadership will increase an 8. 5 percent in productivity. Besides that, leadership also helps to develop a better vision which simplifies in solving problem and also creating a mission statement and actionable goals. This statement and goals will be used to lead the team member to success. In addition, one of the benefits of leadership is limits employee turnover. This is because leadership encourage leader to motivate the employees, respect them and provide support to them to make them stay on the job. As a result, companies get to keep talented employees while reducing the recruitment costs (Jones, P. B. 2008). Leadership can also help a company maintain focus on its business. In large companies, there are many managers attempting to make decision. Leadership can get managers and staff on the same page and let them focus on the original company vision (Vitez, O. 2009).

## **1. 7 Benefits of Mentoring**

According to Makin, L (2010), mentoring can benefit the organization by retaining the business knowledge and practical experience from long-term

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employees. This is because mentor will transfer their insight, knowledge and past experience of the company with the mentee so that mentee can gain potential knowledge about the organisation from the mentor. Besides that, mentoring can benefit the organization to become more productive. Mentor will provide guidance and help employee to seek solution to overcome the problem. Hence, employee can accomplish the task quickly, accurately and increase the productivity of the business. Organisations may incur additional cost problems when employee solves their problems inaccurately without a mentor. Moreover, mentoring allows organization to enhance professional development through sharing of skills, information and behaviors. Lastly, mentoring also can help to improving skills such as communication, listening and questioning skills. This could help mentee to gain better understanding of how to interact with others now and in the future (Morley, M. 2012).

## **1. 8 Principles of Leadership**

Sugar, B (2008) has demonstrated that there are several principles linked to leadership. They are :

Be technically and tactically proficient

Leader must be technically proficient by demonstrate the ability to accomplish the mission and able to answering the questions. Technically competent leader will earn the respect of their followers.

### **Seek self-improvement**

Leaders must have a clear understanding of themselves through determine their strong and weak personal qualities. Self-improvement can be achieved



by questioning and observing. Leader can seek for honest evaluation of others of their leadership ability. This could help them to understand their strengths and weaknesses.

### **Make a sound and timely decision**

As a leader, he must be able to make a sound and timely decision through practicing estimates of the situation. To make a sound decision, leaders need to consider the effects of the decisions in the organisation and also accept the suggestions of the subordinates.

### **Set an example**

Set the example to followers is considered one of the leadership principles as leadership is taught by example. If leaders can keep a positive attitude and high personal standards, then leaders can get the same attitude and same personal standard of their followers. This is because leader is an inspiration to all the followers.

## **1. 9 Principles of Mentoring**

Rolfe, A (n. d) has written that mentoring is underpinned by several key principles that must be understood by mentor. They are :

### **The professional relationship**

Mentor and mentee must maintain a professional relationship through acknowledge the one another's contribution and celebrate their achievements. Other than that, mentee and mentor need to develop mutual trust and respect each other to maintain a professional relationship.

## **Needs and Goals**

This principle drives the relationship between mentor and mentee. The mentor helps mentee by determining the desire goal, giving feedback and formulating steps to achieve the goal. Then mentee will consider the steps given by the mentor and implements the action to achieve the desire goal.

## **Active Listening**

Mentors often act as sounding boards for the mentee. Mentor must be able to listen the mentee's questions, ideas and plans. Therefore, their conversation becomes a dialogue where ideas and plans are shared.

## **Limitations**

Mentee can seek for the idea and information from mentor. However, mentee must also refer to other resources such as professional counselling services. A mentee must recognize the limitations of a mentor and cannot demand a mentor to know everything.

## **Part 2 : Discussion on the Competencies needed**

### **Introduction of Competencies**

Dubois, D (1998) defines competencies as certain personal characteristics, knowledge, skills, mindsets, skills and thought patterns that applied whether in singularly or in combinations of these, to bring a great performance.

### **2. 1 Competencies needed by leaders**

The first key competency needed by leaders is self-awareness which allows leaders to have a clear understanding of their personality including strengths and weaknesses, reactions to problems and sources of frustration (Schein, E.

H. 1978; Goleman, D. 1998). Both Schein (1978) and Goleman (1998) suggest that leaders having a clear perception of their personalities can help them to regulate of their emotions and make a change they want. It also enables leaders to understand their followers so that they can maintain an effective relationship with their followers.

The second competency needed by leaders is engagement in personal transformation. Brake (1997) describes this competency as a desire to enhance personal skills and knowledge and stay up to date. The reflections of personal transformation are strong, willing to learn new things, re-ective learning and no limit assumptions. The leader who possesses the competency of engagement in personal transformation will accept the criticism and learn from the criticism (Spreitzer, 1997). Engagement in personal transformation is also includes items such as being open to change (Jordan and Cartwright, 1998) and willing to change personal perceptions (Harris and Moran, 1987).

The third competency is visioning thinking. Frank (2005) describes this competency as the ability to provide a vision, foresee the future within the organisation. To create a best vision requires leader to get many ideas and supports from others. Hence, leaders can partnering with their team members, key employees or executive members throughout the organisation.

## **2. 1 Competencies needed by mentors**

Building Rapport is one of the most fundamental mentoring competencies needed by mentors. Kram (1983) defines building rapport as the skills of the

mentor to recognize and manage positively a lack of rapport. An inappropriate balance of common ground and dissimilarity will lead to weak common bond between mentor and mentee. Mentor can use open-ended questions to find some common ground between them to help establish an instant rapport between mentor and mentee.

The second competency needed by mentors is active listening. An efficient mentor has to listen on all levels and understand what is the mentee body language message tells, what messages do mentors get through observing their facial expressions. These elements tell clearer than the words alone (Rogers, C. R. 2009).

Rogers (2009) also suggests the balance of power is one of the competencies that are found in the most mentors. This competency enables mentor to determine the balance of power between mentor and mentee and to be understand about their desire achievements. Mentor has to empower his or her mentee to work out the skills at mentor's disposal and impose his own agenda in order to achieve mentor's goal.

### **Part 3 : Mentoring at Work**

During February 2011 to November 2011, researcher worked as a senior accounting assistant for an accountancy firm – Wezmart International Company, before taking up a degree in Teesside University. During that working period, researcher has encountered many mentoring opportunities. Researcher has applied several roles and responsibilities, characteristics and skills as a mentor. It also helped researcher to gain lots of valuable experience and knowledge in the mentoring scheme.

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While researcher's works involved a range of mentoring tasks, there are several characteristics of a mentor that researcher has displayed in mentoring the beginning accounting juniors. Firstly, researcher has to exhibit the patience and tolerance in mentoring juniors to accomplish their task. Kanaskie (2006) suggests that mentor must possess patience as all tasks take time and learning a new knowledge requires repetition. Therefore, researcher allows her juniors to make mistakes and she believed that her juniors will learn from the mistakes. For example, researcher showed patience by investing time to teach juniors how to use accounting software to generate financial statements of the company. Secondly, researcher was very supportive to coach beginning accountants to improve their accounting knowledge wherever their knowledge level. Researcher provided her juniors with helpful instructional support, direction and encouragement to support her juniors to provide accurate and timely accounting reports of the companies. Thirdly, researcher has to display the characteristic of empathy. Card Rogers (1985) describes empathy as accepting others without making judgments. For example, researcher accepted the new accounting staff as a developing accountant and did not judge the accounting reports prepared by them as being poorly prepared. Empathy allows the researcher to gain clear understanding of the perspective of the mentee.

During that time, researcher has possessed certain roles and responsibilities of a mentor to maintain a successful relationship between her juniors. One of the roles and responsibilities is providing development feedback to the juniors. Researcher, as senior of her juniors, understood that she had an obligation to offer guidance and feedback on her juniors' works. This allowed

her juniors to identify their strengths or weaknesses about their accounting works and then motivate them to work on areas of weakness. Besides that, the researcher also assisted the juniors to build self-confidence. Juniors may feel lack of confidence to navigate challenging accounting tasks as they were still new in the career. Therefore, researcher encouraged juniors to take risks, accept any challenges situation and overcome difficulties to meet their achievement. Researcher also suggested juniors to have a realistic expectation and make a positive decision in order to help them build self-confidence.

Moreover, researcher also possessed the mentor's roles of listen actively and be sensitive to the mentee's needs. Researcher had to listen without judgment and interruption to enable juniors to bring their problems or concerns to the surface (Ryan, V. 2012). Last but not least, researcher also set a positive example to her juniors by showing good personal attitudes (Loretto, P. 2012). For example, researcher followed all the instructions given by accounting executive and prepared timely financial reports so that researcher can demand the same positive behaviour from juniors.

In order to assess researcher's potential to mentor others, researcher has summarised the researcher's competencies in a theoretical framework which suggested from Clutterbuck (2000) within Figure 1 below.

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## **Figure 1: The 10 mentor competencies suggested from Clutterbuck (2000).**

Researcher believes that mentoring requires a whole range of competencies to meet a desire goal. These competencies are include self-awareness, communication competence, good humour, interest in developing others, goal clarity, behavioural awareness, conceptual modeling, professional savvy, commitment to own learning and relationship management.

First of all, researcher possessed the self-awareness in order to understand and control their emotions, strengths and weaknesses. For example, researcher handled her own impatience and tiredness appropriately when giving suggestions to her juniors. This helped juniors to understand the effects emotions may have on behavior and also maintain a good relationship with the juniors.

Researcher also developed the communication competence to meet the needs of juniors. Researcher practiced effective communication competence with juniors by understand the junior's interpersonal style and using active listening. For an instance, researcher listened to a junior described his confusion of unable to determine which accounting methods will be best suited for accounting task. Researcher then provided constructive suggestion to help juniors overcome her confusion. This could optimize the communication between their both.

Besides that, researcher also practiced good humour to boost the morale of her juniors. Researcher believed that it is the best method to relieve stress and tiredness from the juniors (Clutterbuck, D. 2000). For example,

researcher tried to relieve tension of juniors during the tough times, especially the accounting report submission period. Other than that, researcher also possessed the high interest in developing others. Researcher is interested to assist her juniors to achieve their potential. By providing encouragement and supports, such as encourage juniors to participate in accounting update seminar that will improve juniors' accounting knowledge.

Moreover, researcher developed goal clarity to help the juniors understand and determine the achievable goal. Researcher need to discuss the goal with the juniors and set a dateline to juniors to reach the goal, such as complete the ABC company financial reports within one week, to ensure that the juniors can accomplish the goal within the deadline (Adrian, Z. 2010).

Researcher also practiced behavioural awareness to have a clearer understanding of juniors' personal behaviours. For an instance, if researcher noticed her junior is an impatient person, researcher will makes quick decision and try to shorter her speech when communicating with the junior. This helped researcher to maintain a good relationship with accounting juniors in the organisation.

In addition, researcher also achieved the conceptual modelling competence. The models can be self-created, drawn from elsewhere or created on the spot (Clutterbuck, D. 2000). In order to help juniors easier to understand the models of strategic planning, company structure or career planning, researcher has created a portfolio of models and shared the models to the juniors. Researcher also gained professional savvy through participates in various professional seminars such as IFRS for Accountants In Industry and Practice seminar, pay attention to all the information given by the seminar <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-of-leadership-and-mentoring-management-essay/>



lecturer and then combined it with her own accounting experience.

Researcher believed these can helped her to develop professional savvy and make sound judgement.

Furthermore, researcher also committed to self-learning as a role model for accounting juniors. Researcher must improve her own growth if she wants to help juniors develop (Mind Tool Ltd, 2012). Researcher took the opportunities in new experiment such as taking on challenging tasks assigned by accounting executive. This opportunities assisted researcher for powerful learning and helped researcher to enhance her knowledge. Last but not least, researcher also possessed the competence of building relationship management. In order to maintain rapport with juniors, researcher has to develop trust, give respect the juniors and determine some common ground between juniors such as both attended the same high school or same hobbies. Researcher also showed concern for mentee and remembered some personal information of the juniors' background such as academic background and birthday date. This helped researcher to establish instant rapport with her juniors.

## **Conclusion**