Leadership within ambulance services assignment

This assignment will focus on; the INS organizational cultures and theories, leadership cultures and theories, leadership styles, the effect leadership cultures have upon organizational cultures and will address the requirements for modernization of the ambulance service. All of which will be supported by relevant literature and research. Since 1930 authors have focused on organizational culture as a system of " socially transmitted behavior patterns that serve to relate human communities to their ecological settings" (Keening, 1974).

This has been reflected in the work of many ethnographers and psychologists, such as White (1 949), Roller (1974), Scheme (1985 & 1990) and Hefted (1980, 1991). Edgar Scheme continued to define organizational culture as being " A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems" (1985).

His research describes that there are three cognitive levels within organizational cultures of business. These three layers of corporate cultures are; Artifacts including Behaviors, Espoused Values and Assumptions. He suggests ' artifacts' are the tangible items, for example the uniform / dress code.

The ' espoused values' are stated desires or cultural elements of the organization, an example of this would be the London Ambulance Service's vision, " A world-class ambulance service for London staffed by well-trained,

enthusiastic and proud people who are all recognized for contributing to the revision of high-quality patient care" (London Ambulance Service, 2008). Egger Hayfield's research (1980), into organizational cultures provided valuable in identifying two major levels of culture theories, national and local culture levels.

His research provided two identifiable levels of culture which he then sub divided into the five key dimensions of organizational culture. The five dimensions described by his research are; Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Long vs. Short term orientation. In 1972 Roger Harrison researched into ' Organizational Cultures and Structures' which was later supported and publicized by Charles Handy (1985), it suggested that there are four dimensions of cultures through which organizations exist.

They are; ' power', ' role', ' task' and ' people culture'. Organizations can be associated with one or more of the different cultures. Many organizations can be identified as having a different organizational culture at each hierarchical interval. ' Power' culture (Handy, 1985) is described as a similar infrastructure o that of a spiders web, where the " boss" is in the centre of an ever widening web of others involved in the organization. Role culture (Handy, 1985) is best explained as an image of a pyramid of boxes, each box containing a job title and role.

The boxes still stand and the structure remains secure, even if one of the individuals fulfilling a role departs. Role cultures are best operated by a manager at the top of the pyramid, as suggested by Ronald White (1988).

Role cultures operate best in large organizations where roles are clearly defined, evaluation f their progress is continually assessed and feedback is given. Task culture (Handy, 1985) is predominantly used in a field where team work is of paramount importance to ensure a task is completed.

People culture (Handy, 1 985) is the idea of an organization where the individual talent is of most important, there is a need however for some organizational structure. This could be exemplified by the need for managers and team leaders within the ambulance service. Through all of the theorist's literature a common theme to emerge is the fact that dervish affects organizational cultures and argue that organizational culture is born of a leader imposing their values and assumptions on a group.

It is said that once the organizational culture of the group develops, it in turn dictates the leadership culture required to sustain the culture to which the members are embedded (Handy, 2004). Leadership has been researched and studied by many different psychologists, predominantly, over the past 80 years; however throughout the literature there is no one definitive definition as it is qualities vastly change dependent on the environment.