

Leadership in Transition: Strategic Considerations

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Abstract

Organizations are facing various types of problems now a days regarding the leadership. Lot of training and development program are organized leaving least impact on the employees. The upgradation of the managers and other employees is the focal theme of the development programs. As it is well known from decades that need for changes is both reactive and proactive, least importance is being given to proactive changes in the organization. The leaders believe in the past experiences and learn from the previous behaviour of the employees. But, the continuous changing phase is not well recognized by the management that's why they get trapped in the surroundings of past experiences. The present paper is the effort of the authors to attract the attention towards the need of making emotional intelligence level as important factor for leaders, while setting their behaviour patterns for employees. The strategies are developed by the authors to improve the soft skills of the leaders. Though a lot of efforts are done in past, but with the new challenges there is always the need of new strategies. There is scope of more advance strategies in the era of globalization and transition.

Key words: Transition, Active listener, Team spirit, Step back, Cling

Introduction

The organization continuously work with the turbulence, so the leaders. If the leaders are efficient to understand the transition and determine the style to navigate the changes surrounding them and continuously modify their emotional intelligence level, then the leadership task may not be so tough. There are number of examples of the failure of leadership in different organizations. They either didn't recognize environmental changes and cling to the past experiences or were not aware about the need of emotional intelligence level for the

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furtherance of the organizations. The actual problem which arises in the organization is due to avoidance of need to make leadership more effective.

Emotional intelligence: A key note for leaders

A SMART leader is the person who is aware of the changes surrounding the organization at any level. Supplier of smart ideas, Motivator, Appraiser, Socially Skilled and Teamer are few important features of the leaders required at transition phase. Emotional intelligence (EI) has become the key word for the success of the leaders and is one of the most important traits of a leader which can be measured and corrected according to the need of the time. If the leaders are able to recognise and control their own emotions, they may perform at their best. EI is important at all levels of management but the leadership requires it with utmost care. The eye-opening and self-assessing method is previously used by different behavioral scientists, EI is the technique through which we can put the leader at the particular level by measuring his/ her traits.

The original definition by Salovey and Mayer (1990) is - Emotional intelligence refers to the collection of abilities used to identify, understand, control and assess the emotions of the self and others. Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist gave **five key elements** of emotional intelligence: -

- 1. Self- Awareness**
- 2. Self- regulation**
- 3. Motivation**
- 4. Empathy**
- 5. Social Skills**

The higher the understanding of leaders to these key points shows the higher level of their emotional intelligence.

Self-Awareness

The leaders aware of their own self and other's too, are more successful. The leaders have to open their eyes and look at themselves and try to find their position and improve it

according to the need of the employees. This trait of the leaders may definitely improve the relationship with the bottom level employees, who are the main workforce of any organization. The leaders need to identify the indicators of external and internal changes and study them deeply. With the help of the analysis of both negative and positive indicators the leaders may find the reason behind any behavioural changes among the employees. Why they themselves do anything? why employees give particular reaction? what corrections are needed for better performance. All these questions may get better answer with the open self of the leaders.

Strategies to improve Self-awareness of leaders: -

- 1. Study positive and negative indicators of yourself and others**
- 2. Take psychometric test.**
- 3. Get analyst expert advice.**
- 4. Have a 3D view of your personality**

a. Study positive and negative indicators of yourself

The best way to analyze oneself and others is to study the positive as well as negative indicators of both. The way one reacts to the particular situation is necessary to study. Most of the time we study the reactions given by others and focus on correcting their behavior. If the leaders want to be more creative and efficient, they should study their own positive and negative indicators which guide their own behavior. By correcting ourselves we may make our 'self' more open and competent. The leaders have to face a variety of employees so by studying both the factor of themselves will convert their weaknesses into strengths.

b. Take psychometric test

The emotional intelligence (EI) or Emotional Quotient (EQ) has been accepted as the measurable trait which may help to improve the soft skill of the individuals. The number of tests is being used in practice to measure emotional intelligence some of them are validated and some are not validated. The leader's EI level needs to be high. If they are having low EI then there is a great need of high EI. Here we need to make it clear that there is a vast difference between Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EQ). IQ means the logical and reasoning part of brain, which focuses on hard skills, but EQ means the behavioral part of brain

which is related to soft skills and emotions of the individuals. The leaders need to go through the EQ test and know their level and try to improve the level of EQ.

c. Get analyst expert advice of 360 degree

The expert advice is necessary to increase the efficiency of leaders. The 360-degree approach should be followed while getting expert advice on emotional intelligence. The reason is that once we get the expert advice, the 360-degree analysis should be done and the proper feedback is required if any correction is practiced. Without feedback the correcting indicator may lose their authenticity. If the analyst provides some correction regarding the Emotional intelligence, then correcting measures must be taken seriously, and a proper feedback must be given to the analysts.

d. Have a 3D view of your personality

A three-dimensional view of personality is necessary while assessing any self-awareness indicator. Emotions, Attitude and Perception of their own self are the 3 D factors which should be viewed by the leader before assessing others. If the leaders fail to get a perfect view of their own personality, they may commit mistake while judging others and reaching at any decision. The low emotional level, the poor perception and the negative attitude of leaders may make wrong decisions about the employees and the leaders may fail in managing workforce. So, if any of the three factors are not up to the mark then fast corrections are needed to be applied on leaders.

Self- regulation

All the leaders need to control their emotions in both the negative and positive situation. A self- regulating leader will handle the situation more successfully. The values of the leaders play an important role in regulating their self. The more they control their emotions the better will be their performance. They can view the situation in a wider perspective. With high degree of self- regulating quality the leaders become an asset to the organization.

Self-regulation may convert the challenges and threats into opportunities. Everyone faces the challenges in day to day life, as we all know that every morning may not be fine. Some times when things and situations are not under our control and the emotions are very high, our self-regulation may control the situation.

Daniel Goleman, the 21st century guru of emotional intelligence, says self-regulation is a core leadership skill. "In my experience, I've never seen the tendency toward radical outbursts to surface as an indicator of strong leadership," says Goleman. He also mentioned that self-regulating leader may improve inter personal relationship in the organization and such leaders are the asset for an organization.

Strategies to improve Self-regulation of leaders

- **Be aware of your emotional level**
- **Step Back**
- **Divert your attention**
- **Recite your favorite rhyme**

a. Be aware of your emotional level

The leader must be aware of his/her own emotions and accept the situation under which they feel stressed and trapped. The emotional impulse may be checked if recognized well accepted. For example, if the leader gets stuck in traffic and can't attend important meeting, he must recognize the situation and accept the situation, "Oh due to heavy traffic I got stuck and missed the meeting with important client". If he doesn't accept the situation then he may face high emotions and stress, which affects his performance.

b. Step Back

Before talking about the situation and high emotions in front of someone else, step back, sit calmly and analyze the situation taking your own time. Outburst may not solve the problem; in fact, it increases the stress level and one feels more stuck in the situation.

c. Divert your attention

Once faced the unwanted situation, do not think about it again and again. Divert your attention to the other activities which are not important in the normal situation. Have a glass of water and drink it slowly, try to get away from the place for a while. Breathe cautiously deeper, and have a talk with a person who is not related to the problem. Meditation may divert your attention.

d. Recite your favorite rhyme

Accept the fact that no situation may long last. So, get out of the situation and start recite your favorite rhyme which motivated you to convert the negative thoughts into positive response. Chanting and recitation both work to bring you out of the high feelings.

Motivation

Leadership and motivation may be used as synonyms for each other. The leader with high degree of motivation factor is an asset for organization. Leaders are self-motivated and enthusiastic and motivate the employees to get the work done. The leaders must be excellent in communication. Not only this, they also need to be good enough to understand the lines and the meaning between the lines. If the employees speak something, the leaders must be efficient to read their body language and expression too. What is said is important to understand, but what is more important is what is not said but expressed with body language to understand.

Strategies to develop motivational factor of leaders

- a. Developing team spirit**
- b. Role playing**
- c. Developing forward thinking**
- d. Developing team spirit**

Managers must be aware about the workings of team. A leader needs to make the employees feel associated with the team. Association make the job easier for the employees. The communication must be the most important factor while developing team spirit. A two-way communication must be in practice, so the employees may discuss openly about the project and other job-related matters. Along with responsibility the team members should be given authority for decision making. Empowering the employees, the leaders may get the improvement in the overall performance of the organisation.

b. Role playing

The expectations of the organisation regarding the effectiveness and efficiency may be obtained by setting the example in front of the employees. This is the best way to motivate the employees

and associate them with the workings. Assimilation of values by leaders is the correct way to bring those values in practice among the employees. If they recognize the leaders following value for time and efforts the team will understand automatically that what values are expected by the leaders.

c. Developing forward thinking

The leaders must set the vision and clear goals for the employees, this will help them obtaining the objectives with forward thinking and clear agreement. The set targets must be achievable, and maintaining the work life balance should be the objective of the management. The happiness of the employees is very important, so the goals and their deadlines should be such that they feel involved rather than employed.

Empathy

It is important to talk about the needs and feelings of ourselves and put our own emotions and perceptions forth. But more important is to understand others feelings and needs and put their thoughts forward. It looks so sound to hear like this. But practically it is really very difficult to practice empathy. The reason is that in the era of competition and competence if anyone puts others forward and keep themselves on back side regarding the needs, he may lose his competency and lack in career. But still for leaders it is necessary to understand others needs and behave as an active listener. A leader must be an active listener who not only listen what is said, but understand what is not said.

Strategies to develop Empathy

- a. Improve performance of employees**
- b. Be the active listener**
- c. Make the team feel creative**

a. Improve performance of employees

The leaders must be aware of the performance of the employees and the reasons behind the low performance. If any of them is low in performance then leaders must try to listen them patiently and solve the problem, that will definitely improve the performance of the employees.

b. Be the active listener

Active listener is the person who not only listens others but understand those words which are not said by them. So the leader should always practice to be an active listener. Caring is more important than the listening, and it is possible with the trait active listener.

c. Make them feel creative

If the employees are low in performance and not able to achieve the goal set by the organization, the empathetic leader must make them important for their contribution. Their failure must not be in the center of the discussion. It should be their contribution which needs to be given nor importance.

Social Skills

The main objective of the leaders is to be socially successful regarding the relationship with employees. Though social skills are not completely innate quality of the leaders, they need to develop it according to the need of the organization to control any turbulence. There may be two types of leaders. Some may be socially active and engaged with the team and other may be socially deaf and isolated. These isolated leaders are least interested knowing the changing circumstances and requirement of the organization. They fix the boundaries for their co-workers and themselves too. The challenge for the leaders is the fresh blood of the organization. They have to manage balance between the current and new comers employees. The greatest problem is related to the culture of the organization.

Strategies to improve social skills

- 1. Interactive attitude**
- 2. Conflict Management**
- 3. Training and developing team**

a. Interactive attitude

The need of the hour is to connect and interact the employees on regular basis. The fresh blood of the organization is always a challenge. The current employees always feel competition when new employees enter the organization. The more interaction leaders have with them the lesser conflicts

will arise. The leaders are responsible for more cohesive team and for that they need to be in connection with the employees, over and above their professional relationship.

b. Conflict Management

The leaders have to think and rethink about the conflicts among employees. The top down management style may cause more conflicts, so they need to take the conflicts as the opportunity rather than threat. Managing conflicts means more and more interaction between all of them. Socially responsible leaders have to convert all the negative aspect into positive. The conflicts may open the door for discussion and this will definitely make the leaders able to understand the real problems and find the solution.

c. Training and developing team

The facilitation process must be present in the organization. The leaders have to be aware of the training and development need for the employees. The belongingness to the team is increased if the employees feel that leaders are aware of the performance of employees. The efforts of the leaders are towards development of themselves and others too. They are least affected with the promotion and development of the colleagues and continuously modify their performance

Conclusion

The Emotional intelligence though has been the most important factor for the success of the leaders, there is the continuous challenge for them to assess their own self on regular basis. Number of strategies have been developed time to time, still more efforts are required. If they have developed their soft skill, then the hard skill of the employees may be improved in a better way. The performance may more effective and employees will be more efficient. Everyday

challenge for them is to cope up with the new comers who are having latest knowledge about their job which may cause conflicts among current and new employees.

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