

Leadership and Management Styles

One view held about the role of managers is that managers are supposed to plan and control, and not be involved in day to day decision making. They should rely upon formal methods of communication to receive information, and to pass on orders and instructions.

Another view of the role of managers, is that they should be, and should want to be 'hands on' in their approach. That is have general outline plans about the future, but fill in specifics on a day-to-day basis. They should not rely upon formal methods of communication, but instead use the grapevine and face-to-face communication. Proponents of this view of management argue that it is only by operating in this way, that information can be received at the right time, and without bias or distortion.

Yet another view of the role of management takes a functional approach. This states that it is the role of managers to carry out functions in the workplace, such as Human Resource Management, organisation of work and tasks, and the setting and checking of objectives.

The theories and methods of management given below flesh out these ideas. But before you examine these in detail, it is worth remembering that the answer to the question, 'Which style, or method, or theory, of management is best?', always starts with the words 'It depends on the situation facing the manager.....'

Leadership Styles

In the long run there is no one leadership style that suits any particular organisation.

Market circumstances change, internal circumstances change, external pressures change, or alternatively there may be a period of stability. These factors mean, that as the business adapts to these different circumstances, then the type of leader that is best suited to the business will also alter. The type of management required to force through restructuring or rebranding of an organisation, will be very different from the management who most effectively oversee a period of stability.

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The management styles we examine below may then be broadly suited to a particular business form or structure, but there will be times when the style is easily transferable to organisations that have previously been run in quite different ways.

Different Management or Leadership Styles.

Autocratic Leader.

Gives orders, which are to be obeyed without question. Probably a Theory X manager, who

has no time for consideration of Maslow's higher needs, or Herzberg's motivating factors. This type of manager can be effective when rapid restructuring is required, but to be effective he will rely upon a strictly hierarchical organisational structure.

Directive Leadership.

Based on the idea that all managers in a chain of command are supervisors. The directive manager will tell their direct subordinates what their roles and tasks are and what is expected of them. He or she will provide a blueprint of how to do a job, and will monitor performance and achievement of standards. This type of management style is often applied when HRM is adopted by organisations, but it's emphasis on control is given as one of the major reasons why 'hard' HRM policies result in demotivation rather than the intended motivation.

Democratic or Participative Leader.

This type of manager consults with subordinates in the decision making process. Subordinates are involved with managers in designing their jobs and the tasks involved. Ideally suited to implementation of 'soft' HRM policies. Definitely a Theory Y manager

Missionary Leadership.

Leaders driven by beliefs can be regarded as missionary leaders. They must have an organisation and employees behind them that also have the same set of beliefs. Steve Jobs at Apple Computers was a missionary leader forcing the pace of change in the Personal Computer market. He was thrown out by the

board when his style of leadership was not seen as appropriate in a multi billion dollar company, but after an absence of several years he was invited back to again lead Apple and has been the driving force behind the launch of the interesting and different iMac computers.

Management Consultants and their employers are seen, more and more, as Missionaries, selling their firms set of beliefs to those businesses that will buy into them.

Laissez faire Leadership.

The direct translation is 'leave well alone', and this is exactly what they do. Middle managers and subordinates are just left to get on with their jobs, and given the minimum of guidance, they succeed or fail on their own.

Bureaucratic managers

Bureaucratic managers focus on developing the specialisation of jobs and departments, They have a reliance on formal procedures and paperwork, and clearly marked status definitions.

Bureaucratic managers use complicated systems of delegation down through clear hierarchies. Employees are allowed to use discretion only within delegated limits. Job roles are defined formally (often in writing) by the use of clear Job Descriptions, and an obligation to stick to these Job Descriptions limit severely the employees ability to act in situations that are unusual or unexpected to "I am awfully

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It is argued that in a bureaucracy each employee within the organisation knows precisely what their duties are, and therefore many tasks will be performed a lot quicker and more efficiently. Another indicated advantage is that workers are secure in their roles, and are therefore more likely to cooperate with other workers. But the main disadvantage of this type of manager is the discouragement of innovation, change and the ability to adapt

Conclusion.

In the long run effective leadership is what makes businesses successful. But what makes successful leadership is open to question. Different styles suit different circumstances, and the same manager can use different styles with different groups of workers, (Mayo and group dynamics). Managers can be task or people orientated, (see HRM) and this orientation will dictate their approach to control, job design and motivation.

Leaders must plan, motivate and control, but how they best do this is a question of circumstance. Using an autocratic style with a group of computer games developers may be a mistake, but using the same style within the armed forces makes a great deal of sense!

Notes