MGMT414 | Lesson 7

**Leadership Roles in Strategic Planning**

**Lesson Topics**

* Motivation Secrets of Great Leadership
* Energizing
* Encouraging
* Exhorting
* Types of Leadership Defined

**Introduction**

Leadership comes in many shapes and forms. Every person has different strengths and weaknesses that contribute to leadership style. The last section of our reading talks about the importance of leadership and its relationship to the strategic planning process. When studying leadership, and looking at defining leadership, the definitions are numerous. For purposes of this lesson, we will look at ways that managers and supervisors can build a culture that promotes motivation. We will also look at the different types of leaders and how they might be defined. This information can be used to supplement your course reading, and it can be directly applied to the steps in the strategic planning process that were studied in previous lessons. What type of leader would work best at different stages of the strategic planning process and why? Does a certain type of leader fit better with your organization and what are you trying to achieve? Do leaders in for-profits need to have different characteristics than leaders in non-profit organizations? What motives employees in both the for-profit and non-profit sector? These are important questions that stakeholders should consider when evaluating how to implement different parts of a strategic plan.

The end goal of strategic planning is to have a successful implementation that creates solid long lasting value for an organization. A big part of that process includes empowering leaders in your organization that will motivate employees to achieve those end results. Leaders must first understand what motivates their employees to work hard. Money is not always the overriding factor in motivation. Studies have uncovered that things like flexibility, challenges, and responsibility factored higher in employee motivation than compensation. To get people to follow you, it is important to know what they want and it is important to have a relationship that is built on trust and integrity. Llopis states, “Leaders that have your back and that are looking out for your best interests – will win the trust of their employees who in turn will be more motivated to achieve”. Part of creating a trusting leader is for leaders to know what motivates employees. If you help motivate people in ways that please them, employees will view you as wanting to do what is in their interest. Leadership can also motivate by generally including three actions: energizing, encouraging, and exhorting your followers.

**Energizing**

**Exemplifying, Communicating, and Challenging**

* Exemplifying
* Communicating
* Challenging

When pulling together a strategic plan, we talked about vision and mission. A leader must follow and represent the guidelines within those two statements. It provides an example for employees to follow and sets the tone that leadership is in line with the plans. This can be compared to HR staff preaching honesty and integrity in the workforce, but constantly showing up 30 minutes late to the job. If people are going to follow you, and your plan, you must set an example. From a military perspective, if soldiers are going to follow the orders of a superior officer into battle, the soldiers are looking to see that the superior officer puts the welfare of the soldiers above his own interests.

As a communicator, a leader must understand that communication is paramount to success. How does each leader listen, speak and learn? Followers want to know that your message is more about words. People need to be told what to do, but they also want to know that a leader is listening.

Leaders need to challenge their employees. Leaders need to understand the desires of employees to be challenged and to use that inner drive to accomplish goals. Per Llopis, “Today’s employees are motivated to achieve more than ever simply by the opportunity to create impact.” The important part of challenging is to make sure that the directives are attainable.

**Encouraging**

**Coaching, Empowering, and Recognizing**

* Coaching
* Empowering
* Recognizing

Coaching is a foundation to help followers do their job correctly. Leaders are support mechanisms. They provide guidance and directions to attain end results. This could be done with things like one-on-one sessions where not only are core competencies and understanding improved, but leader-follower rapport is continuously developed. Coaching also helps provide and build leaders for the future.

Leaders need to empower their employees and understand the value that it will bring to the organization. Stifling an employee’s progress by constantly trying to complete their tasks will not empower the employee to grow. Leaders need to identify the unique talents that each employee brings to the workforce and use that energy and intellectual capital to fuel productivity.

Leaders need to recognize their workforce. Most people work because they want to be recognized. The more they are recognized, the more motivated they work. As a culture of recognition grows so will employee morale and increased productivity. Recognition can also come in several forms. From a transitional perspective, it could just be simple praise and encouragement. From a corporate perspective, there are monetary incentives attached like stockholder equity or bonus programs that are incentivized. If employees are not recognized, they will not be as motived to help build the organization and help accomplish the goals that are part of the overall mission. Per Llopis, “Employees are extremely motivated to achieve if this means that advancement awaits them. As leaders, you will sustain high levels of motivation from your employees if you can open doors of opportunity and accelerate their chances for advancement”.

**Exhorting**

Sacrificing and inspiring are the foundation of exhorting. A true leader will tend to think of others before his/her self-interests. When employees see these sacrifices, it tends to help build trust. By sacrificing self-serving agendas, leaders show commitment and conviction to the people that they lead. This creates a buy-in where employees will also look to sacrifice their interests for the betterment of the organization and leaders above them. Sacrificing creates a culture of inspiration. People want to be inspired by the people that lead them.

**Types of Leadership Defined**

When reviewing employees for leadership positions in organizations, you should also attempt to understand some of the different types of leadership that you find in your organization. We will address a few of many below. Are certain individuals better versed at transformational or transactional leadership? Would certain parts of your strategic plan implementation have better outcomes with shared and group-centric leadership? These are just a few of the things that need to be identified to maximize success.

**Types of Leadership**

**Transformational and Transactional Leaders**

Transformational leaders are inspiring. According to Spahr, “Some of the basic characteristics of transformational leadership are inspirational, in that the leader can inspire workers to find better ways of achieving a goal.”

They do not only look out for the best interest of themselves, but they try to bring all employees to higher levels of achievement. You will often find that leaders and followers come together with mutual interests, and the process evolves into a common purpose. Transactional leadership is more defined around differing outcomes for participants in the same transaction. For example, a strategic planning stakeholder might agree to work with a certain vendor at a lower price in exchange for providing the vendor additional customers and increased business. Are the leaders of your strategic plan aligned with the roles that require them to be transformational or transactional? The answers to these questions are important to resolve many of the steps of the strategic planning process.

**Shared Leadership and Collaborative Leadership**

Many of the traditional models of leadership discuss the theory that is based on individual power and influence. Shared leadership emphasizes groups working together to achieve a common goal. It is less about the individual, and more about group-centric processes to achieve common ground. According to Goldsmith, “Shared leadership involves maximizing all of the human resources in an organization by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise. With more complex markets increasing the demands on leadership, the job in many cases is simply too large for one individual.”

This is interesting to note because of the communication processes that might be different. Shared leadership might involve more political maneuvering that is related to both lateral and vertical influence. These types of leadership roles might involve different skills that revolve around brokering, negotiating and resolving group conflict. This is important to note while you develop implementation plans in your strategic planning process because you want to involve the correct leaders and personnel in the appropriate strategy implementation process. Will the strategy implementation be successful if it does not include someone with collaborative leadership skills? Again, the answers are plan specific. In summary, review different leadership styles and compare them to your organizational needs. A successful strategic plan implementation will only be as good as the people that lead it.

**Conclusion**

This week, you have learned more specific information about the motivation secrets of great leadership and types of leadership. This lesson has focused on providing you with the foundation to understand that leadership is at the core of implementing a successful strategic plan. Merely following the ten-step cycle will not in itself provide a blueprint for success. The plan must be enacted and overseen by leaders that are energetic and inspirational. We have also talked about the importance of a leader being transformation and collaborative. These skills should be inherent in the leadership team that is ultimately tasked to maintain and oversee the strategic planning process. Hopefully, this lesson has helped emphasize that following the strategic planning cycle is not a guarantee for success. However, this lesson has concluded that a strategic planning process will have a greater chance of success if appropriate leaders are chosen and empowered to implement transformational change during the process.

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