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Report -strategic leadership plan

# An Analysis of Your Own Leadership / Stakeholder Management Strengths and Weaknesses

Understanding one’s strengths and weaknesses as a persona and as a leader is a great way to identify the areas where one needs to work on. There are many essential skills that are needed to be an effective leader normally and some require attention specifically in the workplace. Some of these skills include effective and clear communication, ability to motivate, proactivity, organisation skills, analytical and decision-making, negotiation, honesty, integrity, positivity, problem-solving, and many other attributes (Owen, 2014). Some of these skills and abilities are also essential for effective stakeholder management such as communication skills, and negotiation abilities (“Key principles,” 2017). To assess my own strengths and weaknesses as a leader and in the area of strategic management, I employed different tools and techniques that evaluated myself, and my leadership attributes. I used different online tools to have tested and answered several questions online to get an overview of where I stand as a leader.

The most common tool that is often used to assess strengths and weaknesses is SWOT analysis. This is a strategic management tool used at both an organizational and personal level. A personal SWOT is a great not merely to gauge weaknesses and strengths but it also highlights the opportunities and threats that can influence the abilities as a leader in future (Quast, 2013). The SWOT was conducted on the basis of essential leadership skills, identifying the areas in which I excel and highlighting those where improvement is needed. Later these strengths and weaknesses were confirmed by participating in other tests. I assessed that I strongly believe in having open communication with the people, team and I do not believe in strict supervision as a supervisor, and if I am the position of authority. This leadership style is referred to as Laissez-faire or hands-off style which emphasizes on less or zero supervision (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). In addition, I am very goal and target oriented and strongly believe in goal setting as a way to achieve goals. This characteristic highlights me as a transformational leader, which is commonly focused on goal setting and communication of goals (“Transformational Leadership,” n.d.). This leadership style is also known as the pacesetting style, which is mainly focused on performance. Communication is not just intended towards the followers but towards teams and stakeholders as well.

I assessed that I have the ability to communicate my ideas, thoughts and opinions very clearly; in addition, I always give room to others to share their opinions. My belief in involving others is also an indication of my good interpersonal skills. I believe that actions come from motivating and encouraging others and the basic driver of motivation that I believe is the unmet needs of people. The analysis of these needs can be used to motivate employees, my familiarity with the several motivational theories such as Maslow Need Hierarchy theory that is focused on hierarchy of needs (Sadri & Bowen, 2011), Herzberg's two-factor theory and McGregor's theory X and Y which holds simple elements for employee motivation, highlight my ability to motivate others (Carson, 2005).

Several questions were answers online, which made me aware of my ability to motivate and influence others. I also came to know about flexibility in my style and leadership behaviour, that I could adapt to different situations and in case of unexpected problems (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). I also believe in being open and honest with others and especially with my team so that everyone is trusted and they are also able to make a better choice. I also respect diversity and cultural differences among the people, which can be traced as a good leadership attribute. I always take the responsibility of my actions and consider the impact of my actions and decisions on people, environment and society, which is an attribute of sustainable leadership (“Leadership for Sustainable Business | Blog | BSR,” n.d.). If I would have been at a leadership position in an organization I would always evaluate what is best individually and what is best for the group.

One thing that I judged is having doubts about what is going to work in the future. This hinders my ability to set clear goals. This is the weakness of strategic thinking and I have the routine to get bogged out in daily details. The weakness makes me a little disorganize and it may obstruct my ability to manage things on time. I also find a deficiency in my problem-solving skills, in case of tough situations, it is not easy for me to devise solutions to complex problems, and I assessed this my putting myself in different scenarios to evaluate my problem-solving skills. This also reveals a deficiency in my analytical skills that are essential to analyze carefully a situation to reach a better solution and outcome. Decision-making skills are also needed at this point to make quick and correct decisions, and evaluate different alternatives. It is necessary to choose the optimum solution in case of problems and issues.

Despite the weaknesses I have identified, I am an optimist in getting there. I strongly believe in the functional or group approach of leadership, which states that leadership can be learned and developed. The behavioural theory of leadership is more focused on the behaviours of a leader, and the effective behaviour of an individual, which makes him/her different from others and leadership behaviour becomes more important than the innate traits (Publisher, 2015).

# Plan for developing leadership skills

An evaluation of my skills and abilities as a leader reveals that some areas that need development and improvement. The evaluation of skills and abilities revealed that few of the essential and common leadership and strategic management skills are there and some most important is lacking. Building leadership skills is effective and essential in the modern workplace to excel (Amagoh, 2009). Employers are looking for people who have the necessary skills and abilities to lead people, solve problems and have strong interpersonal skills as well. The tool I have used to make a plan of developing my leadership skills and abilities in setting SMART goals for myself, based on the gap between what skills I already possess and what else I need to improve in future. I made a checklist of a few areas where I need to improve and identified ways I utilize to do that. the first step I did was to write down my goal for developing and enhancing my leadership skills, and that is to make a difference in whatever I do, especially professionally.

The first task I have to do is to develop my organization skills, for this purpose it is essential to stay disciplined in all the areas of life, personal and professional. The discipline I will display at work will hone my ability to manage more stuff on board and it will become a habit to stay organized. I also intend to use planners and other tools to manage more than a single task at one time. In addition, I intend to take more responsibility in order to enhance my ability. This will not merely enhance my ability to make clear goals but also boost my strategic thinking abilities to set and achieve goals. Additional way to improve my weakness of confusion and uncertainties is to practice developing clear and smart goals. It is an exercise, which needs paramount attention and care; however, this will boost my ability to set clear goals and objectives.

One more area I need to improve is to lift my problem-solving skills. I have devised a strategy for myself to use whenever I need to solve an issue or a problem. The first step when the problem will arise is to look into the problem for a solution. I realized that I focus more on the problem rather than the solution, which makes the problem worse and cause disruption, instead of focusing more on the solution will enable me to develop a solution-oriented mindset. Five why questions is another helpful to analyze the problem, this is an actual method to hone analytical skills and gives a detailed analysis of the problem and highlights causes of why it occurred. After analyzing the problem, next stage is to identify maximum alternative solutions to the problem, not only it allows thinking creatively with the perspective of the solution but it will also highlight the optimum solution in the end. Changing the direction of thoughts can also change the approach of looking at the problem and it provides a solution that is more viable. I am looking forward to using these methods whenever I need to solve the problems I will encounter.

In order to improve my decision-making skills, I have devised the plan to use different techniques such as cost-benefit analysis, narrowing down the opinion to make things simple and easy to understand, evaluating the significance of the potential decision, and getting well-informed opinions. Group decision-making skills are also essential to develop as a leader and for this purpose, I will improve my conflict management skills by practising conflict management. Other methods that I have devised, as part of my planning to become an effective leader is to grow and learn every single day. In addition, I will be taking more responsibilities because with more responsibilities come more experience.

I will also develop the skill of looking into the bigger picture and anticipating problems before they occur. This is the most valuable skill a leader can have. Effective stakeholder management also requires these leadership skills, trust and relationship development which also requires effective planning skills. I believe that setting goals and improving my leadership skills where I am lacking will also give a boost to my skills of stakeholder management.

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