Business and Management: Week 4 Assignment

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Abstract

A leader must possesses the quality to inspire others. Bertram Raven and John French presented some characteristics that could make a person an inspiring leader. In this study we attempted to implement French’s theory in a case study. This case study proved that possession of power is not the only thing that could stimulate others. It’s the use of power and personality of a leader that made his subordinates devoted, enthused and loyal.

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**Legitimate and Reward Bases of Power**

Bertram Raven and John French were two social psychologists and they presented their theory of bases of power in 1959. In this theory they discussed different elements and sources that made a person more powerful as compared to others. This theory was of great importance in the study of organizational behaviour. This theory defined its first source of power as Legitimate Power. A person enjoys this source of power when other persons think that he has the right to exercise this power. This power is given to a person by a social or judicial law or by some competent authority (Erchul & Raven, 1997). In the provided case study, Carly was the director of creative department of an advertising company. There were four teams working under Carly and each team was headed by an associate director Jack, Terri, Julia and Sarah. In this situation, Carly enjoyed a legitimate source of power as all four of her associate directors and their member of teams were bound to obey Carly.

In the theory of Raven, the second source of power came when a person could reward others for their efforts and it was named as Reward Power. A person with this power could increase salaries, give promotions or provide with desired assignments. One person’s control over resources enabled him to enjoy power and influence over others (Lunenburg, 2012). In the given case study, Carly was enjoying Reward Power as well as Legitimate Power. Carly had the power over distribution of financial and human resources.

A good leader not only influence actions of others but he also affect the intellectual faculties of others. Legitimate power provides a person with essential bases that are required to influence others. A person cannot influence others by just his position. He needs other powers like reward, expert and coercive powers to inspire others. In fact, it’s the use of power in right direction that can stimulate subordinates and colleagues (Tichy & Devanna, 1986). A person with legitimate and reward bases of power should exercise these power with an unprejudiced and impartial way. A leader with Egalitarianism and fairness can influence others and can put their efforts in the right direction.

**Solving Problem with French and Raven’s Theory**

In the provided case study, Carly had to face the problem that two of her associated directors were not happy with her. Both of the associate directors were thinking that Carly’s behaviour was unjust and biased. In their views, Carly was misusing their power of reward. She was providing one of her subordinates with extra financial and human resources. In order to solve this problem and regain the trust of subordinates, Carly had to do two important things. First she had to reconsider her manner of using reward based powers. She should made sure the disinterested and impartial distribution of all resources among all associate directors to remove the misconception of favouritism. Secondly, legitimate and reward power were not enough to influence and inspire the actions of associate directors. Carly must had to possess the powers of Expert and Referent in order to get adoration and veneration from her subordinate. Carly’s Ownership of expert power would inspire subordinate by proving her exceptional level of knowledge and skills. Referent based powers would made Carly’s personality more striking and radiant. Possession of these features and powers will make Carly an inspiring leader.

References

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