

Effects of Openness of Leaders in Success of Organizations

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Abstract

Nowadays many seminars, conferences and courses held and books written in order to improve leadership skills of different kinds of leaders from all over the world. However the openness of leaders in the organization has not been mentioned seriously as it is one of the main skills that successful leaders should have. In this research paper my intention was to demonstrate the idea that openness of leaders is directly related with the success of organization. With the present study, I argue that the characteristic of leaders that is openness of leader's plays as big role for the effectiveness of employees as well as success of the organization. It is very important because many organizations nowadays fail to operate because of its leader's lacked skills.

Keywords: Openness, Leaders, Organization, Success, Employee, Motivation, Effectiveness.

Introduction

Openness has been defined as willingness, readiness to receive impressions and ideas also characterized by an attitude of ready accessibility about ones actions and purposes. In organizations leaders are defined as the most influential people. So in order to communication be strong and information to flow effectively inside of the organization, influence of leaders openness would be a worth topic to study. In this research paper, research questions as 'What is openness?', 'What are the criteria of successful leaders?', 'Are openness of leaders and success of the organization are related', 'Whether motivation of employees depend on the openness of leaders ?' has been demonstrated in order to identify what openness is, to establish suitable effectiveness criteria of successful leaders, to determine what place does openness takes in these criteria, to measure the exact relationship between leaders openness and organizations success and to develop an explanatory idea that shows the importance of being open in success of organizations. In the rest of this paper there is a literature review of this topic which includes different scholar's opinions, writings about this topic. Later the method used to conduct this research paper and survey has been displayed. Each question that has been asked to demonstrate the opinions of people has been discussed, and then results been shown. Later on discussions and conclusions have been included in the detailed form.

Literature Review

Many organizational theorists suggest that openness is very important factor for effective and successful leadership. For instance Charlene Li (2010)) research shows that the most affecting factor of organizations success is not the number of employees neither their

knowledge but an open mind-set—openness that is very right in terms of time, place, and amount.

Also Scott Cambell and Ellen Samiec, (2005) state that there are 2 excellent two-way communications between leaders and members, and also among members. People can speak openly, without fear of being thought critical. Facilitating consensus decision making depends on a wide range of activities and skills which are building trust and openness among group members. All that matters is to ensure that the best decisions are taken.

James M. Kouzes, (2007) corroborates this interpretation by saying that trusting leaders nurture openness, involvement, personal satisfaction, and high levels of commitment to excellence. They are willing to ante up first in the game of trust, they listen and learn from others, and they demonstrate their trust by sharing information and resources with others.

According to Mai, Robert, and Alan Akerson, (2003) since the mistrust inside of the organization has been increased vastly in recent times, once trust is gone later it would be very difficult to get it back, loyalty toward their leaders will be less possible, so it will require more deep revelation of leadership honesty and openness than it was before. Being informal can allow leaders to communicate with employees freely, support their contribution and build trust. It will make the bond stronger between leaders and employees. So openness is very valued inside of organizations communication. It has several scopes, which are answering to the questions what, when, to whom and how to speak with particular employee. When leaders speak employees will want to believe them, which mean if they trust them they can follow and do their jobs in a complete way. They also state that trust and openness is needed mostly in bureaucratic organizations. Most of the time organizations hierarchy constitutes the distance between top, middle managers and employees, which later may reduce the honesty and openness of each worker in the organization independent from the authority he or she has. If leader's communication is in the dangerous part of process of making healthy environment inside of the organization, leaders should assess values in use which are trust and openness by which they can observe how well they are doing in communication.

John Adair(2007) contributes to the topic by listing criteria of a great, high performance group. One of them is atmosphere of openness which states that there is brilliant shared communication among leader and associates, and between associates. Persons can speak openly, with no fright of being thought critical. All that a matter is to make sure that the best decisions are taken.

Warren Bennis, Daniel Goleman(2008)contribute to the topic by writing in their book "Transparency; How Leaders Create a Culture of Candor" that in order to have an effective information sharing, employees must be open and be able to speak freely and their leaders must always be available to listen them. Even if they have also included it in their mission and vision statement, most of the time many companies fail to value the openness. If culture of fairness in any organization does not work because of some secret agreements between employees, they will not directly consider rules of a company seriously and find other regulations for themselves that are secure. Fairness and clearness can be a major rule only when leaders explain it clearly and show its importance that openness is very highly valued and awarded in the end. So openness can be taken place in an organization only when leaders importune it.

The research project that has been done by Niels Van, Quaakebeke, Knippenberg Daan Van, and Eckloff Tilman says that there are two steps of becoming one of the best leaders. First one is awareness of ones self. Second one is openness to change. Change is unavoidable factor of all companies. So it is very important for leaders to recognize and adjust to changes and making changes when necessary. Resisting to change is very known because most of the time persons are afraid of it and look for ways of denying it. In order to recognize the changes opportunities leaders should be open to change. If leaders don't want bankrupt they should make this approach work. Leaders should always look for new opportunities and it can be done by openness to change.

Pearce, Craig L., Joseph A. Maciarello, and Hideki Yamawaki's book infers when work is devoted to purposes of valuable services, it has been seen that it is critical for the significant life. They say that there are three key roles however unacknowledged roles at the same time in making a work life of people more meaningful. Third one of these roles is employee's knowledge of themselves, which has direct relationship with organizations performance. Such environment will create courage, dedication and openness to new ideas that are vastly important for the establishment of critical information. More dedication creates less turnover rates, large number of constant communication and inferior of small selfishness when it comes to united concern of the whole organization. If the lines between nearby the self become leakier, borders between persons will be destroyed and faith increased.

Anne T. McCart (1995) states today GDSS applications became more popular and they change the process of managements functions in the scope of testing openness to change in minimum number of experimenting the new technology. They studied the effective connection between the introduction of GDSS (Group Decision Support System) by questionnaire of 26 meetings which took place in Decision Techtronic's Group of State University of New York. As there is strong need of modifying technology, in order it fits the incomparable requirements of each organization, each company also has to be able to alter its defined structures and tactics to acquire new technology.

Openness to change, (L.M., 1991) in management world enables managers to utilize the alternative even though its unknown and acquires consideration.

(Bass, 1990) Working on issues related to leadership soon becomes very mixed and dimensioned concept. For Keits de Vries (2006) there is only one describer of the effective leadership, it depends on traits, values, communication and the perceptions of follower. Behavior is something that person does in a way that others can see and record, on the other hand attribute means characteristics that is in other peoples mind which results from their perception (Luthans, 2008).

Another definition suggests that personality is the organization together with individual psychological systems which gives us the description of adapting to the environment (Allport, 1937).

In 1961 Five Factor model of personality which was founded by Ernest Tupes and Raymond Christal has become very popular in today's business world. Fifth of this model is Openness to experience other 4 being extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability. Openness to experience means being open to different kinds of interests. People who are open experience are innovative, curious and have intelligence of art (Robbins, S.P, Judge, T.A, 2007).

In the analysis which measured the connection between leadership and personality; extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and neurotics were the most connected characteristics of leaders and agreeableness was in the least connection. Openness to experience and conscientiousness got same rates after extraversion in the most important traits of effective leader (Judge, T.A., Bono, J.E., Ilies, R. and Gerhardt, M.W., 2002).

For Tapscott and Williams (2006) today's new thinking comes into view which is concept of peering, openness, moving and sharing globally. In the outcome of it previous managerial aspects like closed and centralized systems, perception of the physical assets as main success indicator is given place to the new concept of organizations as open systems, sharing knowledge, leadership, relation and communication skills. Biology and complexity theories agree on the emergence of new concepts as organizations being perceived like alive sets and systems which depends on interdependencies.

Cartwright and Cooper (1992) say that good middle management leaders are usually quickly lessen the employees negative reactions to change and inspire and motivate them to effectively implement the decisions that are made by top managers.

Definition of openness to change is a wish to abide and hold change and it is not the same as the readiness to change says Wanberg and Banas (2000).

In the words of Edwards W.R (2003) openness to change may be affected by not positioned stability of emotions and openness to experience. This kind of openness is valuable and it prepares the appropriate condition for successful inside change and includes good affect on the results and sustain for change (Miller V.D etc, 1994).

People who are open to change react to the change normally and offer opportunities for development, not danger to the security say Kobasa, S.C (1982).

Chernyshenko, Stark et.al (2011) say that people who are good in openness to experience are usually high at being imaginative, exploratory and unusual.

In previous views, creativity has been defined as one of the valuable characteristics of an effective leader (Bass, B.M, 1990), and openness to experience tightly related with differing thought and creativity (Feist, G.J, 1998). This view suggests an opinion that openness to experience is linked with ranking of leadership. They also have broadmindedness of vagueness and predilection for complication which are the traits are effective guidance of followers in the attainment of the goal. (McCrae, R.R., Costa P.T., JR, 1997).

Expressions of characteristics are thought to be contributed to the success of the group. Together with being creative and divergent thinking, people who are good in openness to experience are seems to create more ideas that qualified during the task of group (McCrae, R. R.,& Costa, P. T., Jr., 1997).

Together with other studies that have been done by S.K. Ghosh and B.R. Shejwal (2006), shows that attribute to a certain circumstances affect styles of leadership management. If managers think that organizations should take serious values like belief, honesty, reliability, broadminded; they are more likely to involve employees in making decisions and care for them. If organizations are thought like formal, centralized institution,

managers become more power-centered and self oriented. Surroundings which is thought and processed as open, creative, rising, then managers choose to lead by leading, screening warmth to the employees to make them attain the top of the effective productivity.

Methodology

The problem was that in today's open world we have thousands of companies that strive to survive in this fast growing business world. People become more need able for the motivation and inspiration for them to work better. Everyone relies or is guided by someone or wants to be so. So the main reason of not being able to survive in business world for the most of the companies is that effectiveness of leaders, especially subordinates perception of leaders. So what I did is review on relationship between leaders and openness. Then I have prepared a questionnaire which contains 27 questions about relevant topics to leader's openness and organizations success. It was placed in different social network sites and respondents were chosen randomly. 51 people responded and questionnaire did not need any specific types of respondents so any person who is above the age of 18 can fill it out. Data was analyzed according to the majority of the respondents in the SPSS program and Google drive summary application. Some questions were asked twice, in the beginning and at the end to measure the validness of respondents. 3 to 4 weeks were given to respondents to fill and inside the questionnaire since it was very only background information about research has been given as instruction. After the respondents responded the questionnaire according to each of the response the expanded theory of openness was defined.

Results

After the questionnaires findings we can clearly see that almost every person who responded care about characteristics of their leaders especially about their openness. For instance for the question number 1 most of the respondents answered that employees motivation would result from the openness of their leaders. This shows that if their leaders are closed to themselves and to the environment employees will not be motivated to do their work efficiently and effectively. Motivation of the employees is the first thing to take into consideration when measuring success of the organization. For the second question most of the respondents think that leaders play big role which is 60-80 percent in the success of the organization which means each of the characteristic that leader has is important. In any organization freedom of expressing ideas is important and most of the respondents say it depends on the openness of leaders. In opposite means if leaders are not open employees will have difficulties in expressing their ideas. And who knows maybe some of them have extraordinary ideas, new thoughts that can lead to success and only because of their leaders they don't say it. Being intellectual is very important for the leaders today since high quality of characteristics needed in order to be effective leaders and majority of respondents say that being open means being intellectual. When an employee made mistake only an open leader can show him\her how to not repeat that mistake, and majority thinks that it is the best solution for this matter. Respondents said that effective leaders should be curious which means on the other hand being open to new ideas, searching for new ideas, looking for new information etc. People by their will follow their leaders with great empathy if their leaders are respectful, honest and open, the respondents say. It appears that informal meetings, picnics and barbeques are very important according to the 58 percent of respondents. Only open leaders can organize those informal activities. For the closed leaders it would be very difficult and impossible to spend their spare time with their subordinates and share anecdotes, jokes. This are the things that every employee wants in

an organization it strengthens the bond between people in the organization. Since it is stronger they can work together, share their ideas freely and work to achieve the common goal which in the end will lead to success. As a final majority of respondents which is 68 percent think that there is a direct relationship between leader's openness and organization's success.

Discussion

After the literature review and survey responses and results that we have been collected, we had redefined openness in 5 different factors which are; openness to information and knowledge, openness to mistakes and critics, openness to change, openness to new ideas and openness to religion and culture. We believe that organizations fail because their leaders usually lack skills in these 5 factors.

Openness to Information and Knowledge: It is the first factor that is about sharing the information and knowledge with subordinates. Workers would not be favor of following leaders who know less than them. Since in today's world the education background has been one of the important things that define person, leaders everyday have to try to learn new things, improve their skills and increase their knowledge. After they should share them with subordinates, if subordinates are convinced that their leader is knowledgeable and learn from them new things ever day, they will be more likely to follow and motivated.

Openness to Mistakes and Critics: One of the things that all people in organizations should understand is that we are people, not machines. Human beings can make mistakes and it should be reacted normally. We learn by doing mistakes, we get experienced by doing mistakes. Leaders as well as the subordinates should be open to mistakes of each other. When we asked a question which says "What would you do if your worker made a mistake?" and gave some options like firing him, cutting his salary etc, majority of respondents answered that they would show a worker how not to repeat the mistake. So leaders should have more empathy towards workers mistakes and their mistakes as well. In most organizations when leaders make mistakes it is seen like impossible thing, and leaders in order to be not embarrassed, hide their mistakes. Later that mistake becomes bigger and leads to the chaos in the organization. If leaders do the opposite by being open to their mistakes and admit their mistakes majority of surveyors think that it would not lead to entrust or negative thoughts. Oppositely subordinates will trust more and would not repeat their leader's mistakes. Also being open to the critics is important to understand where leaders are doing mistakes. Because our enemies are the best people who recognize our mistakes and let us know about them. So if leaders are open to the critics they can know themselves more.

Openness to Change: Today world, technology, environment, economy and many other factors are changing every day because of the globalization. For organizations to get well with all these fast changing factors, have to be open to the change. Organizations that resist to the change are perceived as old fashioned and in the end of the day they just cannot follow the new changing world with existing strategies and resources. So it is important for leaders to walk in the same line with its external and internal environment.

Openness to New Ideas: Every person, subordinate is unique in organizations. Their opinions, new ideas should carefully listened by their leaders whatever it is. We believe that the strangest ideas are worth listening because the things that were strange for us 5 years

ago are the trends of today. People are very awake today and they always seek for something new and different. So if every idea of each subordinate is taken into consideration, there can be very light new innovations may come.

Openness to Religion and Culture: Subordinates are motivated when there is a respect to their beliefs and values. Today in one organization there can be many people with different religious and cultural background. Different cultures have different point of view, which is an opportunity for leaders and organizations. Because Japanese may see the picture differently, and American differently. If leader combine two of them they will be able to see both sides of the picture.

Conclusion

This research project mainly met my research objectives and answered almost all of my research questions. I have found out that for every employee, not important in where they work openness of their leaders is important. By their leaders openness employees feel more motivated to work, follow their leaders, trust them. Most of the characteristics of being open has been verified by the scholars who wrote previous studies about leaders openness and also by the respondents that responded to the questionnaire. All these activities and characteristics that open leader has will obviously lead any organization in the success. There is a saying that how is your leader you can only be good as him. Leaders play big role in the success but their characteristics more. As a overall conclusion on the research process I can say that it was worth studying. Further leaders should ask themselves whether they are open enough if they are having any problems in the success of the organization. In my opinion further research may expand this topic area and some experimental research should be done in order to have broader understanding of the importance since this project was only conducted with few numbers of respondents and literature review.

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