Leadership Plan: Improving Adaptive Opportunities

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LEAD 622

November 7, 2020

Abstract

This analysis will take results from a prior leadership assessment and apply SMART goal analysis toward suggested behavioral changes. The initial leadership assessment discovered gaps between the author's adaptive leadership qualities and supervisor expectations, which prompted further analysis. Influence from secular and biblical resources helps define the recommended actions to be taken.

Keywords: Leadership assessment, leadership analysis, servant leadership, adaptive leadership

Leadership Plan: Improving Adaptive Opportunities

Modern leadership requires a deft balance of innate personality trait management and interpersonal communication. These balances are inherent to the leadership process, especially as it has evolved in recent years toward more complex scenarios (O'Neill & Nalbandian, 2018). It also requires a healthy dose of self-awareness regarding one's strengths and weaknesses as a leader. These qualities guided me toward a thorough assessment of my leadership style. Balancing practices of both adaptive and servant leadership, I discovered gaps in both that will need to be addressed. Narrowing these expectation gaps requires an honest analysis of how best I can succeed in a leadership role.

Areas of Improvement

After administering my leadership assessment to myself, my peers, and my supervisor, I identified the largest expectation gap among areas of empowerment. While I am still relatively new at my current organization, I have not yet addressed major challenges or encouraged others to address them. Even considering the time and budget crunch from COVID-19, most of the difficult decisions were made by executives. The ability to empower others to tackle difficult issues is a vital part of adaptive leadership, and it remains an area of improvement (Jefferies, 2017).

The second-largest expectation gap involved helping others with personal issues. Again, this might be due to my limited time at the organization and the isolation brought on by COVID-19, but I still have been here long enough to develop personal connections with colleagues. The connections so far established with peers, while certainly warm and cordial, have not risen to a level of personal connection yet.

Areas of Strength

I received universally high marks regarding attitude and general demeanor, which tracks with my servant leadership approach. I rarely appear overtly hostile or frustrated when addressing co-workers, and this cheery demeanor extends to most of my written communication as well. Positive behavior, especially when communicating with peers and supervisors, is a hallmark trait of high job satisfaction (Tsai, 2011). My high marks in that area demonstrate such a correlation.

The other high-ranked trait involved feedback. Leaders should be willing to give and receive feedback in search of better results (Moss et al., 2020). I approach my role with the understanding that the learning process is eternal – I will never reach a point where I know all the answers. I struggled with this dynamic earlier in my career, and those failures served as teachers for a better perspective.

Using God's Gift of Grace for Guidance

The teaching moments I experienced earlier in my career also help with areas of improvement. God calls me to be an advocate, and to perform His will in any setting. I look at the gift of grace as the catalyst for achieving His goals for me. If I fall short in developing strong personal connections with coworkers, then I must rely on His guidance and grace to compel me toward those conversations. If I am afraid or reticent to address difficult issues in the workplace, I must apply the grace given by Him and trust that it will help resolve those situations. Grace is the key.

SMART Goals

Given these expectation gaps and the guidance provided by God's grace, I propose two SMART-defined goals to address my areas of improvement. These goals focus on the need for increased communication to identify and address issues as they arise.

- Conduct biweekly 1:1 check-in meetings with every member of my immediate peer group over the next three months, and document the issues or challenges they raise (whether relevant to my role or not).

- Document at least three ideas from each peer member for improving the quality of team communication and present a report with recommendations to address those issues to my supervisor after three months.

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