

Leaders, who needs 'em? Apparently everyone.

This week's review will be split into two parts: The first on the course in general followed by an analysis of the readings.

This marks the end of the third week of MGMT 300, as we finalized our decisions for the first practice run, a feeling of uneasiness came to my mind. The uneasiness stems from the unknown variable of whether or not we have made the right decisions; if not, will we turn on ourselves and immediately start pointing fingers? This is a problem that we'll have to eventually address as the game progresses. Although the variable is unknown, we have contingencies already set in place in the form of the team manifesto; listing the different responsibilities and expectations we have for one another. It declares that we as a team will strive with the highest possible effort and accept responsibility as a whole.

I hope that this is enough of a guidance to facilitate a positive learning environment for everyone through the good and the bad so we can improve upon our mistakes and move forward on a holistic perspective. Having said that, individuals can be held accountable for their actions if they fail to perform or meet the group's expectations. However, as we currently are, it is still too early to predict what will happen and whether or not that's a bridge we'll even need to cross. However, as history portrays, merely reacting to a situation will not be enough to deal with every problem, especially if the task is operating under a tight time constraint. Although my personal role within my group is not that one of mediation, but given my background and experiences in group psychology, I plan on contributing towards a constructive environment but at the same time, careful not to undermine the opinions and authority of others. However, if the proverbial hits the fan and drastic action need to be taken, I will not shy away from direct action.

This week's readings centralize around the concept of leadership, its qualities, its effectiveness, different styles and how it can make or break an organisation. The first reading by Collins (2005) emphasizes the value of a level 5 leader within an organisation. The readings go into great depth detailing the characteristics of a level 5 leader as a humble, simple character that are wholly determined to the organisation and the people around them. This means that rather than focusing on personal efforts and personal welfare, the level 5 leader downplays their role within an organisation and instead focus their abilities in the uplifting of an organisation as a whole. This is further reinforced by the concepts put forward by Spier, Fontaine and Malloy (2006), they found certain leaders who tend to focus on their personal abilities while at the same time alienating the role of others not only stifle their organisation but potentially hinder their personal progression on the corporate ladder. These readings are of particular interest of me as I have seen time and time again the spotlight of certain individuals that attribute their success to their personal efforts. Like Donald Trump, yet as recent years have proven, while being purely charismatic, they may have improved their personal ratings, but their companies are constantly in the danger zone (O'Connor, 2011).

As interesting as this concept is, it is not fully applicable in our current situation as students of MGMT 300. Although the point of collaborative responsibility and dedication is echoed through the readings, it is difficult to apply it directly to a leaderless group as we have established. However, Kelley (1988) would argue that these concepts are not mutually exclusive. Kelley (1988) pointed out the false dichotomy of the leader-follower dynamic and argues that most people have attributes of both, as there is always someone above you and below you on the corporate hierarchy. The argument thereby puts forth the notion of role mastery between the different tasks we are confronted with and therefore change our behaviour to meet said expectations. Kelley then goes to argue that an organisation is essentially a huge collection of efficient followers who are capable of independent thought that are working together for the common good. This is a direct reflection of what we are doing in our classes. We are effectively trying to be a group of efficient followers that contribute actively and engage in critical thinking. This is again reflected in the basic expectations as passive, anti-social behaviour is frowned upon and punished.

I personally think this is a pretty good method at developing teamwork capabilities but my concerns from week one are still not being addressed. What is the purpose of the paper? What are the fundamental concepts it is trying to teach us? Are we to learn how to behave in a dynamic market environment? Team work? Leadership? Or maybe a combination of everything? Are the objectives too specific to the tasks at hand or are we learning applicable skills that will help us in the long run? Too many questions, too few answers. I hope these will be addressed as the course progresses and I can look back on this week from the final review and address some of these concerns.

Reference list:

Collins, J. (2005). Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve. (cover story). *Harvard Business Review*, 83(7/8), 136-146.

Kelley, R. E. (1988). In Praise of Followers. *Harvard Business Review*, 66(6), 142-148.

O'Connor, C. (2011). Fourth Time's A Charm: How Donald Trump Made Bankruptcy Work For Him. *Forbes*.

Spreier, S. W., Fontaine, M. H., & Malloy, R. L. (2006). LEADERSHIP RUN AMOK. *Harvard Business Review*, 84(6), 72-82.