

Silver Linings and Flow-on Effects

I have to say, I found the title of one of this week's readings rather amusing given recent events. I found the title reflective of the situation in MGMT 300 right now, which I thought could roughly summed up as 'Leadership Run Amok'. Bearing this in mind as I sat down to write this week's entry, I was cautious to create a learning journal that was constructive and reflected on the 'silver lining' of the situation, which I firmly believe can always be found if you are willing to do a little digging.

So I focused my energies on Spreier, Fontaine, and Malloy's (2009) article and explored what I had learned this week. One aspect of this reading that stuck out at me was the section regarding the six elements which create a strong work climate, particularly team commitment. The authors dictated that 'team commitment is the extent to which people are proud to belong to a team or organization' and seek the same goals as each other (Spreier, Fontaine, and Malloy's, 2009). Upon reflecting on my own perceptions of the class climate and their feelings over recent days, I couldn't help but notice an issue with this definition. What happened when one felt a strong sense of commitment to a team, but not an organization? Or vice versa? And perhaps more importantly, what effect would this have on overall performance?

In the past week I realised a significant split had occurred in the levels of commitment that I and my team felt as one rose and the other fell - much like the respective shareholder values of my competitor and I after my first MikesBikes rollover. The lack of ethical judgement revealed had led to my team becoming surprisingly closer, uniting us in determination to fight our odds and perform to the best of our abilities to prove to ourselves that no one could hold us back. This desire led to a synchronisation of goals, a will to master each of our individual roles and contribute our individual knowledge to enhancing team performance. Our successes in MikesBikes further encouraged us, and I slowly began to see how achievement breeds motivation which further breeds achievement, leading to a positive, upward-moving cycle.

At the same time our commitment to the what you might call the 'organization', MGMT 300, had declined. To put it one way, no one remembers the names of the employees responsible for the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, yet everyone remembers the company that let that happen. Though if anything this week has made me reconsider the discrepancies between university life and the real world. As we all know, life can be unfair sometimes, and things don't always work out in your favour. At university we become so accustomed to set standards and even playing fields that we forget the reality. There is plenty of research I can show you about the glass-ceiling effect for women in the workplace that proves discrimination is alive and well, even when we are aware of it. We are not all seen and judged as equals.

So, do we just accept it? No, we do what humans have done best for centuries and what they continue to do today: we adapt.