

The personality type of the social loafer

Look if I'm honest sometimes I think I run a team of four. Coming into this paper knowing it was a TEAM based paper you would assume that all members would acknowledge the importance of their contribution – even a simple acknowledgement of an organised meeting or conscious reply when required – but no. This week's problem has definitely been a build-up but with the pressure of the final few roll overs is more prevalent than ever – social loafing is definitely prevalent.

My initial strategies to elicit an environment of shared and self-leadership appear to have worked for four of us. Eliciting value and able to maintain an independence – within the domains of overall group vision – that over the past few weeks have truly been proven as an asset to the team. Enabling communication within barriers and the opportunity for each member to learn themselves rather than be enforced with direct expectation has meant that the value from their own learning experience has been more meaningful to the team and the result as a whole. Therefore, the process has been of learning – which has been applied in further weeks – rather than dictatorship and seeking constant approval from me as a CEO in decision making or looking for me for ideas alone. To me this has been integral in managing my own workload and ensuring that I am not singularly running the team alone. However, although this has worked for some members, for others it has not. Without constant follow up and direction provided certain members have adopted a social loafing approach – neglecting to take part in group discussion or really find value within their position in the team. Is this because they do not truly understand their role? Or do they elicit the personality of someone who lacks motivation as a whole? Either way I have gathered an understanding that my initial shared and self-leadership approach may be effective for some people but others require tighter direction to be successful.

As a result, I have found myself being more direct with these members, questioning their decisions more than I may question others. Although at the face of it this may appear as a lack of trust, I have developed an understanding that some people require this direction to expose their optimal value in a team environment. They require questioning in order to challenge themselves otherwise they will take the lazier way out – and in our still very vulnerable state – we cannot afford any weak decision making being implemented within our roll over. Therefore, developing an understanding that not all people operate optimally under the same environment and individual needs must be recognised to develop the most highly performing team environment. This is not to neglect their own capabilities – because there is no doubt that when they apply themselves they have the capacity to make rational decisions – they just require an extra push to challenge their thinking away from the status quo and elicit a valuable contribution that other are able to better construct under and environment that provides more autonomy. Therefore, I have recognised that an integral part of my position as CEO is adapting to individual needs and catering to these – catering the overall team environment to be one that is adaptable to the personality mix that is within my team and being more directive when need be; this is something I look to take forward into the final few rollovers to ensure that we continue to increase our SHV with contribution from ALL members – rather than as a depleted team of 4.