

Accepting A Follower's Role With New Characteristics

MGMT 300 – Learning Journal Week 03

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It is now week 3 of MGMT 300 and I am surprisingly starting to like this course. Meeting up with team mates to discuss business decisions for Mike's Bikes has been enjoyable and engaging because it feels like I am actually working on a real world business project. Earlier in the week while I was meeting with my team, I did notice that I tended to hold back my opinion while others took charge. I took a step back and reflected upon my actions and realised that I needed to know what I could do to become an effective follower.

At first I thought an effective follower was traditionally someone who just did what he or she was told and also to pretty much fulfil one's role and do so effectively. However by doing the readings and also attending Mike Bikes meetings I was convinced and learned that effective followers differ from a stereotypical follower. I guess I was confused because I based being an effective follower on a typical bureaucratic business structure, where the top of a hierarchy has the power to make all the decisions and employees lower in the hierarchy have little power and tend to become routinized and standardised (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012). The café that I previously worked at was very bureaucratic because the manager did not take care about the opinions of others and it was his way or the high way.

After the first meeting on Tuesday I decided to try and voice my opinion more in regards to other functional areas that do not relate to my HR role (e.g. Marketing and R&D) and by doing the readings I found that many qualities of an effective follower are also found in a good leader and that followers and leader should be seen as equals but they differ in terms of the type of activity they do (Kelly, 1988). According to Kelly (1988) an effective follower accepts their role, is modest, gets along with others, voices his or her opinion without apologising and finds a balance between one's own personal goals and the goals of the organisation. Therefore I think I should voice my opinion more in the group even if it opposes what the majority of the team because this could avoid things such as Groupthink (Packer, 2009) and furthermore I should help out any other team mates if they need it. Ultimately I want get a good peer review so learning how to be an effective follower is crucial.

References

Hodson, R. and Sullivan, T. (2012). *The Social Organization of Work*. Wadsworth: California.

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

Packer, z. J. (2009). Avoiding Groupthink: Whereas Weakly Identified Members Remain Silent, Strongly Identified Members Dissent About Collective Problems. *Psychological Science (Wiley-Blackwell)*, 20(5), 546-548. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02333.x