Putting the "General" into General Manager

To preface this weeks journal, I have to explain the feedback I received on my second journal last week. While I showed that I had done the readings and understood the content, I was still not explaining what I had learnt and how I had achieved it. In order to improve on that, I will be using Daudelin's four steps (problem, analysis, theorization, and (in-)action). To do this I will be going back to last weeks readings and my journal and reflect on how I actioned what I said. I will then look at what I could work on and learn for next week, based on what I experienced this week.

The problem I identified in my last journal was that we were effectively bottle-necked in our work and decision making due to the way we had chosen to approach the simulation. Instead of splitting off into diffrent subgroups, we had decided (without discussion) to have all decisions flow through me (Cross, R., Nohria, N., & Parker, A. (2002). While maybe this was appropriate for the first one or two rounds, it became clear to us that this is ineffective and will hinder any possibility of challenging the status quo and being effective with our time. It was evident, that something had to be changed and as such I decided to discuss the idea of splitting the work across different days to allow for more time to prepare for meetings and to ensure decisions were made after careful consideration. The idea was to encourage cross departmental exchange to reduce the bottleneck I pose, as well as raising understanding within the team, as to how each department impacts the other (Cross, R., Nohria, N., & Parker, A. (2002). Theoretically this change in approach should begin to empower my team members and move away from shared leadership towards self leadership (Pearce, C. L., & Manz, C. C. (2005).

Arguably, things this week worked better than the weeks before. The decision to split up the workload across multiple days was received positively within the team, as it allowed us all to take things step-by-step and see the big picture more clearly. I personally also felt that everybody was more involved in their role, eager to showcase the ideas and thoughts they had. I definitely felt more comfortable and able to actually live up to my role as "general manager". Up until now I had assumed I needed to know everything to be an effective leader, however this week has taught me that empowering my team gives them the incentive to work hard and the way we worked definitely showed that. I now know that I have to be able tot take a step back in team situations and trust my team. I definitely had more time to gather an overview and provide guidance, rather than just focusing on the decisions and issues right in front of me.

However I can't sit back and rest on this milestone we have achieved as a team. In order to be an effective manager, I will still have to understand the material and content we work on, something which will get harder in the coming weeks, when everybody in my team starts becoming experts in their field. Arguably I can still improve by providing more clear goals and targets for the team, giving them goal posts they can work towards. I guess my job as general manager (CEO) is to give my team a vision and guidance to allow them to comfortably specialize in their fields.

The issue I see coming towards us in the coming week will be my absence, as I am overseas and will not be able to provide direct input. This will provide an opportunity for self leadership, however I will have to provide the playing field for my team to do so without second guessing themselves in my absence.

I hope this learning journal is more clear having follow Daudelin's approach to an extent. I can see that this may be similar to my last journal, however I believe this is a significant enough improvement and change of perspective to warrant the issues being brought up again. If this is not the case, I will happily add/amend it.

Sources:

Cross, R., Nohria, N., & Parker, A. (2002). Six myths about informal networks - and how to overcome them. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 43*(3), 67-75. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/docview/224964199?accountid=8424

Pearce, C. L., & Manz, C. C. (2005). The New Silver Bullets of Leadership:. *Organizational Dynamics, 34*(2), 130-140. doi:10.1016/j.orgdyn.2005.03.003