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EXCELLENCE: WORKING WITH PASSION A SYMPOSIUM

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INTRODUCTION

“If excellence is our goal, we already have what it takes to get there. We are a people with both the desire and the ability to do good work! We are competent. The achievement of excellence requires both a widespread competence among people and an environment, which encourages and enables the expression of that competence. We are blessed with the first, but we have defaulted on the last. We have created organizations, which punish rather than encourage and suppress rather than enable a full expression of human competence. There is an irony in all this which every leader should ponder (Hall, 1988, p. xii).”

As one moves up the organizational ladder, the job role becomes less tangible and predictable. The organization is perceived by the leader as more dynamic. Change, ambiguity, and contradiction become more the rule, than the exception. Complex and intuitive decisions are needed. Many new leaders are unable to cope with the stress, uncertainty and tension related to these roles. They are novices. What causes some to become masters of management and some to revert back to the comfort of a job, which is well described and controlled?

A SURVEY APPROACH

A recent (1988) survey developed by R.E. Quinn describes eight management roles, which were used by managers to evaluate how their management is perceived by others. These eight profiles appear below.

The Producer

A producer is expected to be task-oriented and work focused and to have high interest, motivation, energy, and personal drive. In this role a manager is supposed to encourage subordinates to accept responsibility, complete assignments and maintain high productivity. This usually involves stimulating unit members to better accomplish stated goals.

The Director

As a director, a manager is expected to clarify expectations through processes such as planning and goal setting and to be a decisive initiator who defines problems, selects alternatives, establishes objectives, defines roles and tasks, generates rules and policies, evaluates performance and gives instructions.

The Broker

The broker is particularly concerned with maintaining external legitimacy and obtaining resources. In carrying out this role, the manager is expected to be politically astute, persuasive, influential, and powerful. Image, appearance, and reputation are important. As a broker, the manager is expected to meet with people from outside the unit, to represent, negotiate, market, act as a liaison and spokesperson, and to acquire resources.

The Innovator

As an innovator, a manager is expected to facilitate adaptation and change. The innovator conceptualizes and projects needed changes. Unlike the monitor role, where deduction, facts and quantitative analysis rule, the innovator role requires the manager to be a creative dreamer who sees the future, envisions innovations, and packages them in inviting ways.

The Facilitator

The facilitator is expected to foster collective effort, to build cohesion and teamwork and to manage interpersonal conflict. In this role, the leader is described as process oriented. Expected behaviors include mediating interpersonal disputes, using conflict reduction techniques, developing cohesion and morale, obtaining input and participation, and facilitating group problem solving.

The Mentor

The mentor is expected to engage in the development of people through a caring, empathetic orientation. In this role the leader is expected to be helpful, considerate, sensitive, approachable, open, and fair. In acting out this role, the manager listens, supports legitimate requests, conveys appreciation, and gives compliments and credit. He or she sees people as resources to be developed. The leader helps with skill building, provides training opportunities, and helps people develop plans for their own individual development.

The Monitor

As a monitor, a manager is expected to know what is going on in the unit, to determine whether people are complying with the rules, and to see if the unit is meeting its quotas. The monitor must have a passion for details and be good at rational analysis. Behaviors in this role include technical analysis, dealing with routine information, and logical problem solving.

The Coordinator

As a coordinator, a manager is expected to maintain the structure and flow of the system. The person in this role is expected to be dependable and reliable. Behaviors include protecting continuity, minimizing disruptions, doing paper work, reviewing and valuating reports, writing budgets, and writing and coordinating plans and proposals.

As a part of this symposium this survey instrument will be available for discussion as well as an instrument for diagnosing corporate culture.

Research references are available on request from the author.