“Building Core Competencies for Sustainability through Leadership and Teamwork - The FBM Experience”

Faculty of Business and Management
Open University Malaysia
Transforming strategy into reality in a university lies in the right projects, the right sponsors and the right people (Martens and Salewski, 2009).

Sala (2003) - no studies were found that show the impact of organizational climate that is created by an academic leader.

Although many studies have focused on what universities and colleges should change, few have actually addressed how to change (Mintzberg, 2004 and Scott, Coates and Anderson, 2008). Rarer still are studies on how leaders manage change (Scott et al., 2008).
This study fills the gap in research by showing how two academic leaders have paved the way to a positive organizational climate where strong leadership and teamwork have resulted in change and contributed to a faculty’s success.
- power behind an organisation, producing change and movement (Vetrivel, 2010).
- create and manage an organisation’s culture (Schein, 1985)
- influence the behaviour of employees (Kennedy, Goolsby and Arnould, 2003).
- responsible for the success of their subordinates, customers and organizational stakeholders (Ehrhart, 2004).
Academic leaders in particular have responsibility for mission, direction, inspiration, building teamwork and setting an example (Law and Glover, 2000). Academics, staff and students.
Leaders are important as, if they treat their employees well, the employees will then reciprocate by treating customers well (Chebat and Kollias (2000)).

Employees’ extra-role behaviour increases when they perceive that their supervisors or leaders are supportive (Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006; Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003).
EFFECTIVE LEADERS:

- get things done and create a positive environment in which people are happy, motivated, committed and have confidence in their capabilities (Jaramillo et. al., 2009).

- listen, link and lead – and actively teach their staff how to make the desired changes work

-(Fullan & Scott, 2009)
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Vision, Mission and Goals

Ex-Dean

Current Dean

Increased student numbers
Increased staff satisfaction
Increased profits

Assistant Executive (Administration)
Senior Executive (Learning Materials)
Senior Executive (Assessment)
Executive (Assessment)
Senior Executive (Programmes)
The transformational leader

- motivates employees to go beyond their self-interests and adopt the organisation’s visions and mission as their own (Ingram et. al., 2005).

- Ensure changes are effectively and sustainably put into practice, especially in the current turbulent education environment (Scott et. al., 2010).

- Build employees’ talent as this will advance a university’s strategic direction and increase its competitive position (Martens and Salewski, 2009).

- Followers measure how serious their leaders are about key values by observing how much time is spent on them (Kouzes and Posner, 2003) and whether the leader addresses the questions of what needs to be done and what is right for the organisation (Drucker, 2004).

* This is what the Dean does....
Ex-Dean pursues the university’s pursuit of excellence in teaching and learning, he makes sure the faculty is always leading in the exercise.

He is what is described by Hill (2008) as leading from behind or akin to a shepherd. He stays behind the flock whereupon people follow without realizing that they are being directed from behind. According to Hill, leading from behind requires crucial responsibilities and judgment calls – deciding who is in or out, articulating values for the group, developing talents of team members so that they can flourish in their roles, setting boundaries and managing the tensions in the group.
Although the Dean is always involved, the role of decision maker for the individual projects is held by the respective team leader. Thus, he develops competence and confidence and foster accountability in the work that is done.

Supports Kouzes and Posner’s (2002) claim that these are essential factors for strengthening others to act. According to them, workers who feel a sense of empowerment, ownership responsibility and involvement are more satisfied and productive, leading to positive business outcomes (ibid.).
Authoritative vs Coaching

- However, there are times when both the current Dean and the former Dean use a combination of the authoritative and coaching style of leadership. For example, in a recent bid to increase the level of the faculty’s assessment, the former Dean instructed that the format of the examination questions be changed to reflect the different levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Current Dean trained and coached team members.

- Supports Sala’s (2003) findings that the authoritative and coaching styles of leadership showed a direct relationship to both climate and performance outcomes in an academic setting, where the authoritative style was positively correlated with the rate of student retention, support for students and college management ratings.
Supports Grant, Gino and Hofmann's (2011) findings that complementarity between leadership style and employee proactivity contributes to group performance.

Findings show that the highest level of group performance was achieved either when a lack of proactivity from employees was paired with a more extraverted leadership style or when employee proactivity was paired with a less extraverted leadership style.

* Initial stage – team was not pro-active – ex-Dean – extravert/authoritative leadership

* Current – pro-active team – current Dean – less extravert/coaching (listening to team members – high team performance and high rate of effectiveness and efficiency