

LDRS 306: Leadership and Team Dynamics

Study Guide Two – Group Dynamics and Team Interventions Chapters 3,4,6,8

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1. **Compare the following models of team development: 1) Tuckman model; 2) Team member socialization; 3) Person-organization fit; and 4) ASA model. Next explain why these are important in defining the types of team tasks and team member roles.**

Tuckman Model

The Tuckman model started with four and later added a fifth stage. The stages are: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing (Hackman, 177), and Adjourning (Franz, 49-50). The model indicates that all teams start with forming and progress linearly through all stages. Forming is when the team is assembling, people are just getting to know each other, and behavior is mostly cordial. Storming is when tensions start to flare, challenges bring frustrations and stress. True natures are exposed and faults in the team are made more pronounced. Norming is the stage when the team has learned to overcome and to embrace their differences, hopefully discovering these as strengths. The team is coming together and operates more harmoniously. Performing is the stage of optimum performance. The team has transcended their differences and knows how to overcome challenges. Finally, adjourning is the stage where the team disbands, due to the end of a project or lack of need.

Team Member Socialization

Team member socialization focused on the integration of new team members into the team. The premise of this model states, (Franz, 50-51) “Most of the team development literature assumes that members all start together and the entire team develops together.” This model underscores the importance of relationships within the team and between the team and team managers as new people are assimilated.

Person-Organization Fit

Person Organization (P-O) fit goes further than a contemplation of assimilation, or the changing of a person’s values, assumptions, and behaviors. P-O fit attributes compatibility to needs provided and/or the sharing of similar fundamental characteristics (Franz, 52). Personality traits are mapped to organizational, or team, structure to illustrate which personality types will thrive best in corresponding types of teams. This model indicates the importance of team-fit in personnel selection during team construction.

Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) Model

“According to Schneider, the *people make the place* within an organization.” (Franz, 53) This model focuses on the influence of leadership on the overall team culture. The idea is that the leader sets the baseline, or starting point, for the team’s culture. Candidates for the team are then evaluated on the criteria set forth by the founding leader. Team members who are not a fit, but make it past this initial screen are later managed out through attrition. New members who are agreeable with the culture will be higher performing and more successful. This means they will stay with the team longer, reinforcing the initial culture.

Team Tasks and Member Roles

Awareness of team composition is important for knowing the most effective time and approach for intervention. Designing team tasks for maximum effectiveness requires knowing which stage the team is in. A team in the early stages may need socializing or “getting to know you” types of tasks. Team building type tasks with reward for success in working as a team would be more effective in storming through norming phases. Once the team is performing, they would take a more active role in designing their tasks having been provided the ends without the means.

Member roles may be categorized as Task Roles, Group Maintenance Roles, and Individual Roles (Franz, 59). These roles focus on the completion of tasks, the health of the team, and the health of the individuals respectively. Through the assignment of roles, the team manager can avoid undesirable and unproductive self-assignment of roles. Roles will change as the team changes. The team will change both organically, in multiple directions across the Tuckman model and through expansion and attrition as considered by team member socialization, P-O fit, and ASA models.

- 2. Using the concepts from the text, explain the difference between culture and diversity. Then, provide an example of each based on personal experience interacting in a team environment.**

Team culture is difficult to identify through simple observation, it's an unwritten set of values and decision-making criteria that has evolved over time. Franz offers four different ways to identify and understand culture; artifacts, espoused values, enacted values, and assumptions (Franz, 73-74). Team diversity is offered as the differences in cultural assumptions (Franz 75). Diversity of thought, experiences, and assumptions can help teams to think in different directions and to explore solutions that may not have been explored by a homogeneous team.

I've experienced what we called, “the published version” and “the unpublished version” when asking difficult questions of leadership. There was a significant difference between our espoused and our enacted values. It was nothing sinister, it was political. Our leadership was managing the perception of our team for outside groups. While we put forth the impression of complete compliance with corporate policies, we were bending the rules on our favor to get things done. These deviations were accepted by the management team as it worked in favor of our clients, violated no laws, while increasing our team's success.

- 3. Examining Franz's review on the “Background on Small Group Communication,” explain the factors that influence the communication environment. Next, describe the difference between a centralized and decentralized communication network and what are the strengths and weaknesses of each type?**

Franz refers to a 1949 study (Franz, 113 (Shannon and Weaver, 1949)) where four main components of the communication process were identified. I remember three of these being credited to Aristotle, however this is not referenced in the materials. Sender, message, and receiver are three components, with the fourth being noise. The sender is the initiator of the communication. The message is the communication itself. The receiver is the intended audience or target for the message. The noise is interference between the sender and receiver. Noise can manifest as actual noise, interference, or other distractions. Centralized communication networks have a central point or node from which messages radiate, are collected and broadcast. Decentralized communication networks permit flow between various senders and receivers without the constriction of a centralized node. For simple tasks, centralized networks reduce the number of messages, reduce time, and errors, but can lower satisfaction due to the more authoritarian nature of this model. For more complex tasks, the centralized model can reduce the number of messages. Decentralized models are best applied to complex tasks, where in spite of increasing the number of messages, they reduce time and errors while fostering an increased sense of belonging and satisfaction.

4. List and describe several reasons when you would want to use an intervention in a decision making process. Describe at least two possible interventions.

Timing is important for determining when best to intervene. The type of intervention must also consider the team's current stage per the Tuckman model. During the forming stage, if a team was not interacting, a communication intervention may be appropriate. Active listening may be appropriate for a team during the storming phase if they were "talking past each other", not listening and seeking only to be heard. Larger, more involved interventions may be appropriate in the later stages of norming and performing as the team is more likely to have worked past early team-building and base-level communication issues.

Active listening could be applied to a storming team with demonstrated communication problems. Engaging the team in exercises could break them out of their current non-communicative cycles. With a better understanding of how to listen to each other and through application of the feedback loop, a team could emerge from the sessions into the norming phase.

Workplace covenant is a more intense intervention, requiring investment of time and resources. This intervention could elevate a team who had already mastered the basics, looking to take it to the next level. This intervention could also be applied to a team that was struggling with irreconcilable problems resulting in unrecoverable dysfunctionality. Workplace covenant requires the engagement of professional for the delivery and moderation of a highly structured experience. The team can enjoy great success through the engagement of a professional, following the steps, and committing to the program.

Works Cited

Hackman, J. Richard. Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances. Boston, MA:

Harvard Business School, 2002. Print.

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