[Developing, Leading and Engaging People]

Lecture Title:

7. [Leading People: Attributes and Behaviour]

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Date: 1 June 2026 9.00hrs - 13.00hrs

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Learning Objectives

Following this session students will be able to:

- Develop a critical process aimed at enhancing effective leadership attributes and behaviours within an organisation.

- Enhance leadership attributes and behaviours within an organization which is crucial for fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, and innovation.

Learning Method

- **Lecture focused on learning objectives and core content** as a key instructional process.

- **Formative assessment through participative learning tools and activities** will be utilised evaluating students' comprehension and academic progress throughout - with respect to understanding and applying HRM concepts.

Cultivating Leadership Excellence:

A Strategic Process for Enhancing Attributes and Behaviours within an organization which is crucial for fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, and innovation.

Learning Activity: Discussion

Why Does Leadership Matter?

Formative Assessment

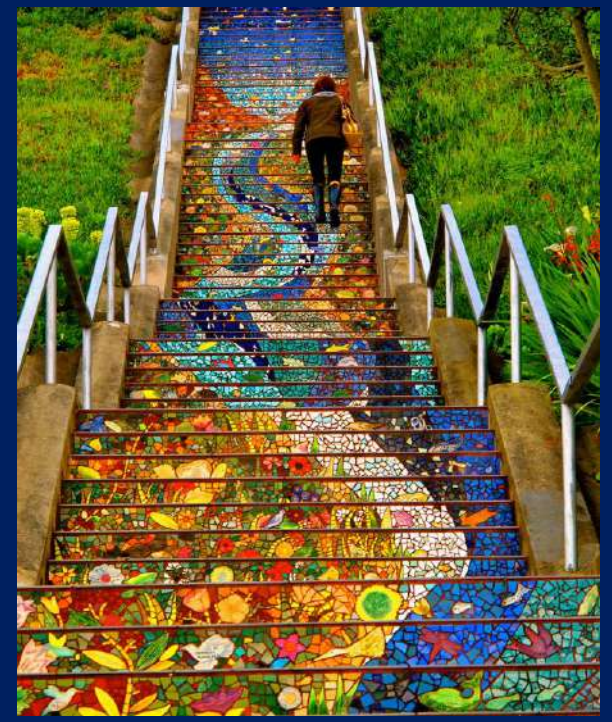
Why Leadership Matters: The Core of Organizational Success

- Drives organizational performance and innovation.
- Shapes culture, engagement, and employee retention.
- Navigates change and uncertainty.
- Fosters adaptability and resilience.
- Direct correlation with bottom-line results.

Comment

Effective leadership isn't just a buzzword; it's the bedrock of a thriving organization.

It influences everything from daily operations to long-term strategic direction.



Defining "Effective Leadership“

“Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”

“

Northouse, P. G. (2021 p.21)

“Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.”

Yukl, G. (2013 p.35)

- Attributes: Qualities or characteristics (e.g., integrity, emotional intelligence, strategic thinking).
- Behaviours: Observable actions and interactions (e.g., clear communication, delegation, coaching, decision-making).
- Context-dependent: Varies by industry, organizational culture, and role.
- Continuum of development, not a fixed state.

The Need for a "Critical Process“

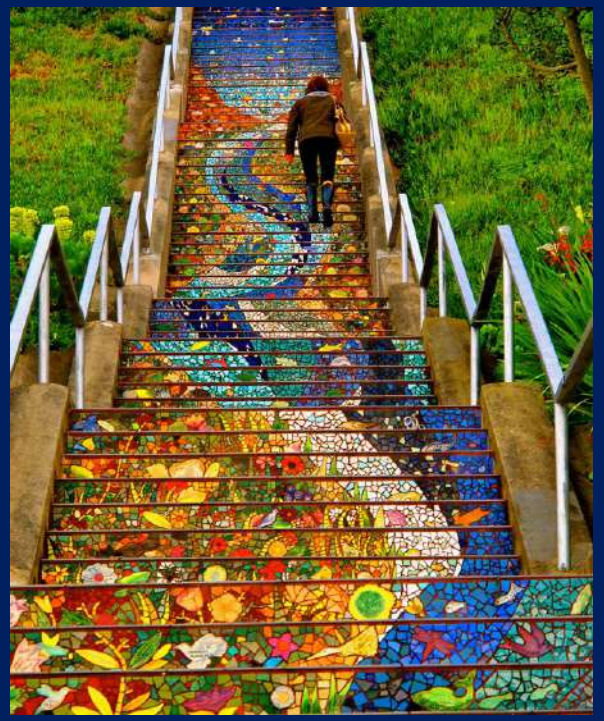
- Beyond Ad-Hoc: The Case for a Systematic Approach

- Ensures consistency and scalability.
- Maximizes return on investment (ROI) in development.
- Aligns leadership development with strategic goals.
- Facilitates measurable improvement.
- Creates a culture of continuous learning.

Comment

Relying on one-off training or informal mentoring isn't enough.

A structured, critical process ensures intentional and impactful development.



Overview of the Critical Process Framework

- Our 5-Phase Leadership Enhancement Framework

- Phase 1: Needs Assessment & Definition
- Phase 2: Design & Development
- Phase 3: Implementation & Delivery
- Phase 4: Evaluation & Feedback
- Phase 5: Continuous Improvement & Integration

Phase 1: Needs Assessment & Definition - Step 1: Strategic Alignment

- Understand organizational vision, mission, and strategic objectives.
- Identify current and future leadership demands.
- Determine the gap between current and desired leadership capabilities.
- Engage senior leadership for buy-in and direction.

- Vision v Mission
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzhJNiQ3vMM

Critical Comment

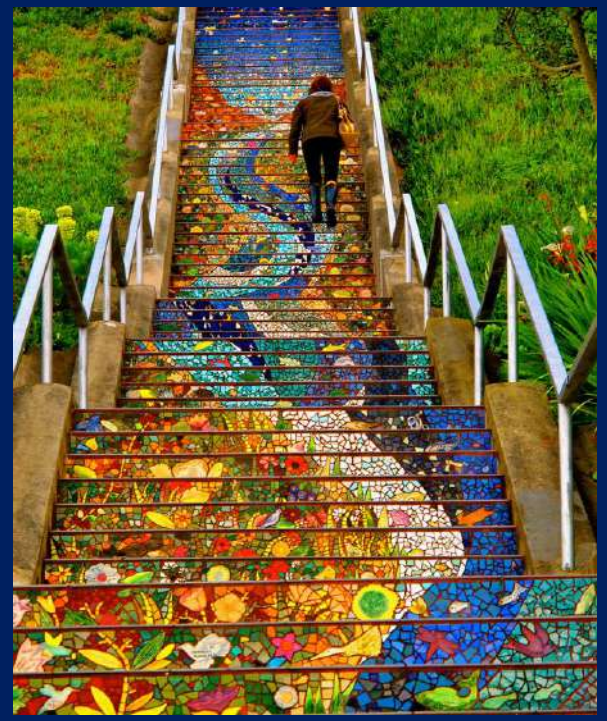
This initial phase is about understanding the "why" and connecting leadership development directly to the organization's overarching strategy.

Phase 1: Needs Assessment & Definition - Step 2: Defining Leadership Model

- Identify core leadership attributes relevant to the organization (e.g., collaboration, innovation, integrity).
- Define key leadership behaviours for different levels (e.g., frontline, middle management, executive).
- Utilize competency frameworks, 360-degree feedback, and performance data.
- Create clear, measurable definitions for each attribute/behaviour.

Comment

This is where we codify what "effective leadership" truly means in our context, making it tangible and measurable.



Phase 2: Design & Development - Step 1: Programme Design: Crafting the Learning Journey

- Tailor learning objectives to address identified gaps.
- Consider various development methods: workshops, coaching, mentoring, action learning, online modules, experiential learning.
- Structure the programme flow and timeline.
- Ensure cultural relevance and inclusivity.

Comment

With our defined leadership model, we now design the learning experiences that will bridge the gaps.

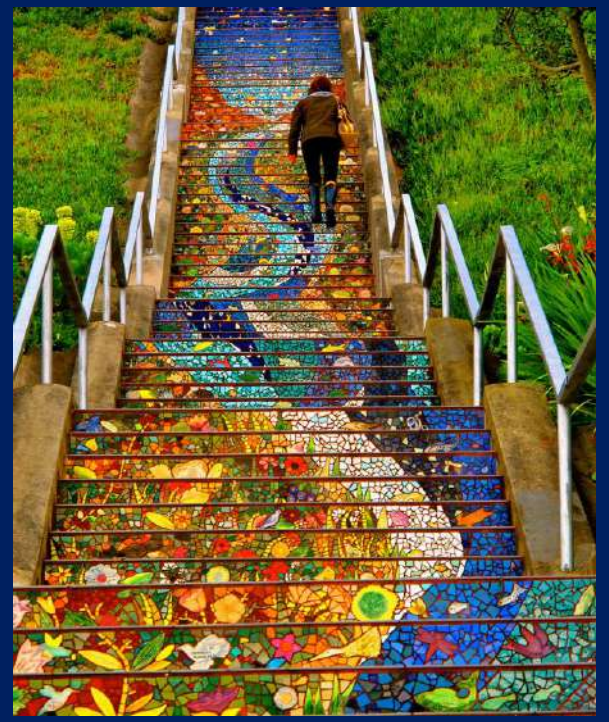
Variety in methods is key.

Phase 2: Design & Development
- Step 2: Content & Resource Creation

- Develop or curate high-quality learning materials (e.g., case studies, role-plays, exercises, readings).Identify and train facilitators, coaches, and mentors.
- Leverage technology for blended learning solutions (LMS, virtual platforms).
- Create assessment tools for progress tracking.

Comment

This step is about assembling all the necessary components for effective delivery, from content to human resources.



Phase 3: Implementation & Delivery - Step 1: Communication & Rollout

- Develop a clear communication plan to explain the programme's purpose and benefits.
- Secure senior leadership endorsement and participation.
- Launch the programme with enthusiasm and clarity.
- Address potential resistance or skepticism proactively.

Comment

A well-designed programme needs a strong launch.

Effective communication and visible leadership support are crucial for buy-in.

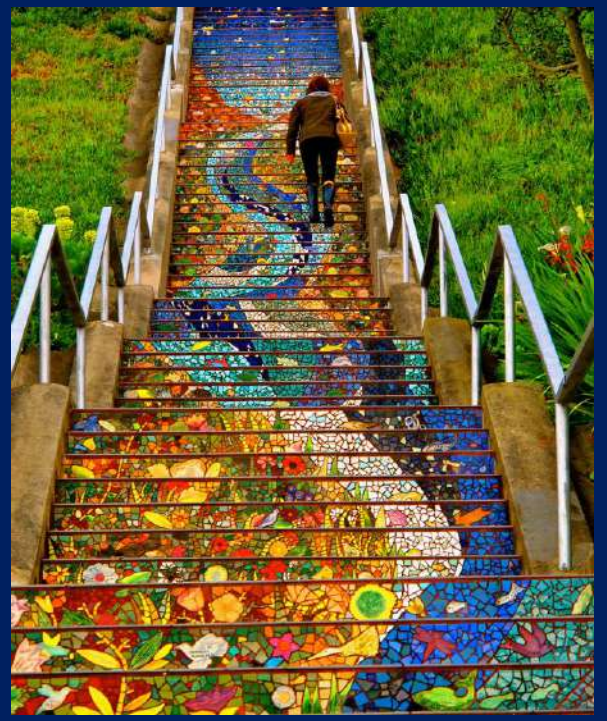
Phase 3: Implementation & Delivery - Step 2: Active Learning & Practice

- Facilitate workshops, coaching sessions, and learning modules.
- Encourage application of new skills in real-world scenarios.
- Provide opportunities for peer learning and feedback.
- Support participants through challenges and setbacks.

Comment

Learning happens by doing.

The emphasis here is on active participation and applying new knowledge to daily leadership challenges.



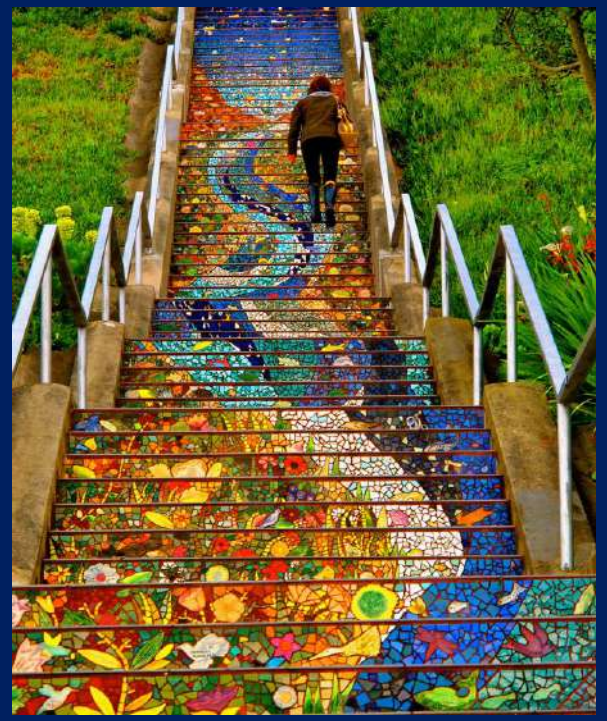
Phase 3: Implementation & Delivery - Step 3: Reinforcement & Support

- Managers reinforce learned behaviours through regular check-ins and feedback.
- Create a supportive environment for practice and experimentation.
- Provide ongoing resources and tools.
- Foster a culture where mistakes are seen as learning opportunities.

Comment

Development isn't a one-time event.

Ongoing reinforcement from managers and a supportive environment are vital for embedding new behaviours.



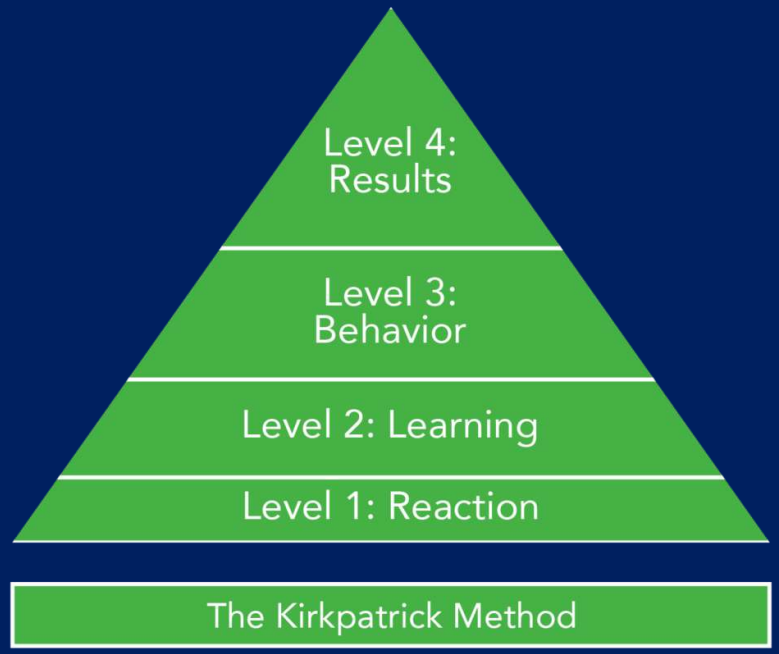
Phase 4: Evaluation & Feedback - Step 1: Defining Metrics

- Evaluation & Feedback – What Success Looks Like

- Reaction: Participant satisfaction and perceived value.
- Learning: Acquisition of new knowledge and skills.
- Behavioural Change: Application of learned behaviours on the job (observable).
- Results: Impact on team performance, retention, innovation, productivity, or other business KPIs.

Comment

The Kirkpatrick Model provides a useful framework for evaluating training effectiveness, moving from basic satisfaction to concrete business impact.



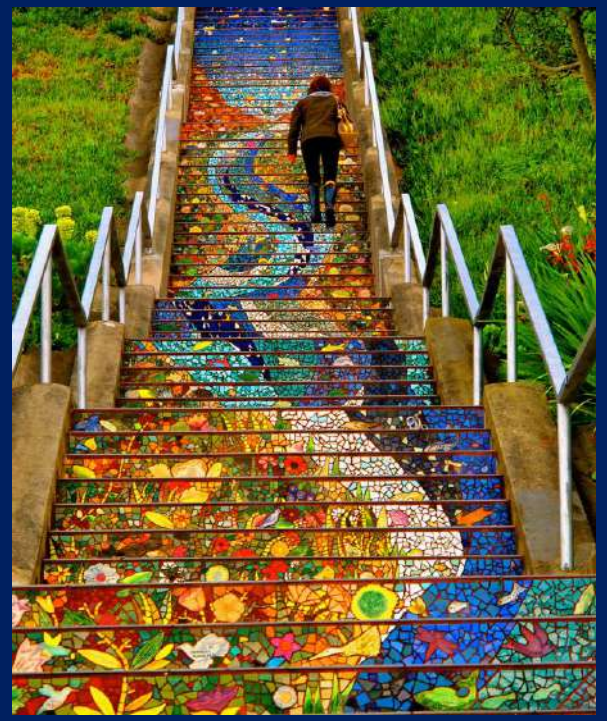
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwRj8msNXB8

Phase 4: Evaluation & Feedback - Step 2: Data Collection Methods

- Surveys (pre/post, satisfaction).360-degree feedback assessments.
- Performance reviews and KPIs.
- Observation and peer feedback.
- Interviews and focus groups.
- Business unit metrics.

Comment

We need a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to get a holistic view of the programme's impact.



Phase 4: Evaluation & Feedback - Step 3: Analysis & Reporting

- Analyze data against pre-defined metrics and objectives.
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement in the programme.
- Prepare clear, concise reports for stakeholders.
- Communicate successes and demonstrate ROI.

Comment

Data without analysis is just numbers. This step turns raw data into actionable insights and demonstrates the value of the investment.

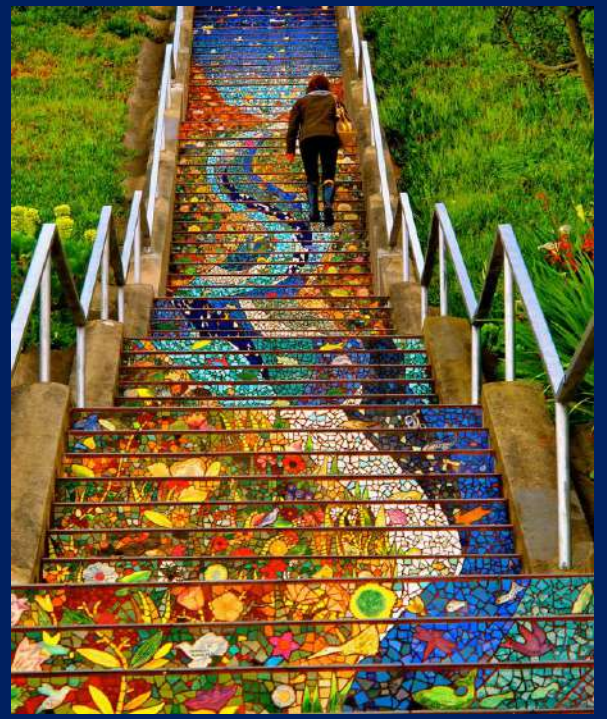
Phase 5: Continuous Improvement & Integration - Step 1: Feedback Loop

- Regularly review evaluation data and stakeholder feedback.
- Hold debriefing sessions with program facilitators and participants.
- Identify what worked well and what needs adjustment.
- Treat the process as an iterative cycle.

Comment

This phase closes the loop.

It's about taking the lessons learned from evaluation and feeding them back into the process.



Phase 5: Continuous Improvement & Integration - Step 2: Refinement & Adaptation

- Adjust program content, methods, and delivery based on feedback.
- Update leadership models as organizational needs evolve.
- Integrate leadership development into broader talent management systems (e.g., succession planning, performance management).Explore new technologies and best practices.

Comment

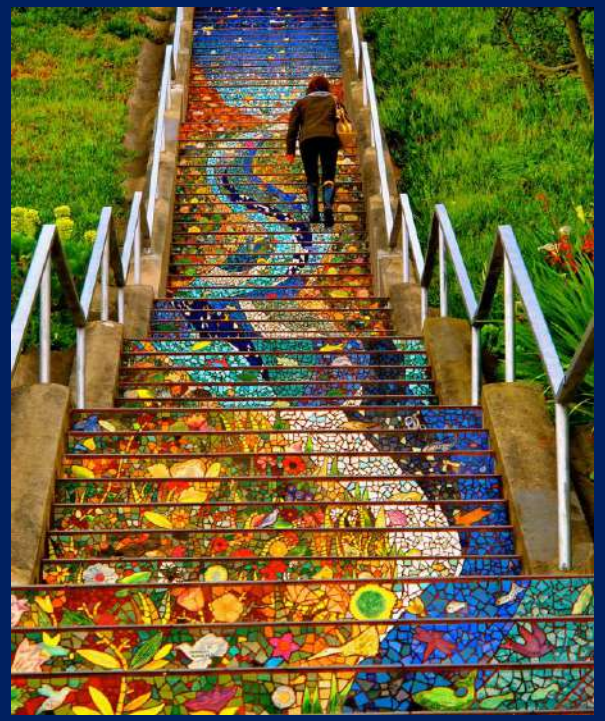
The organizational landscape is dynamic, so our leadership development process must also be adaptable and evolve over time.

Phase 5: Continuous Improvement & Integration - Step 3: Embedding Leadership Culture

- Continuous Improvement & Integration – Weaving Leadership into the Fabric
- Foster a culture where leadership development is continuous and valued.
- Recognize and reward positive leadership behaviours.
- Senior leaders model desired attributes and behaviours.
- Integrate leadership principles into daily operations and decision-making.

Comment

The ultimate goal is to embed leadership excellence into the very DNA of the organization, making it a natural part of how things are done



Key Success Factors for the Process

- Ensuring Success: Critical Enablers

- Senior Leadership Buy-in & Sponsorship: Non-negotiable for success.
- Clear Definition of Leadership: What exactly are we developing?
- One size does not fit all.
- Integration with HR Systems: Link to performance, talent, and succession.
- Commitment to Resources: Time, budget, personnel.
- Culture of Learning & Feedback: Openness to growth.

Comment

These are the pillars that will support the entire process and ensure it delivers real, lasting impact.

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“Leadership development is fundamentally a relational process that unfolds through social interaction.”

(McCauley & Palus, 2020, p. 14).

Tools and Technologies to Support the Process

- Leveraging Modern Tools for Development

- Learning Management Systems (LMS)
- 360-Degree Feedback Platforms
- AI-powered Coaching Tools
- Virtual Collaboration Platforms
- Psychometric Assessments
- Gamification and Microlearning

Comment

Technology can significantly enhance the reach, effectiveness, and scalability of our leadership development efforts.

The Role of HR Professionals

- *Your Role in Shaping Leadership Excellence*

- Strategic Partner: Aligning development with business needs.
- Designer: Crafting impactful programmes.
- Facilitator/Coach: Guiding learning and growth.
- Evaluator: Demonstrating programme effectiveness.
- Culture Architect: Fostering a development-oriented environment.

Comment

As HR professionals, we are central to driving this critical process and building a strong leadership pipeline.

Key Takeaways

Summing It Up: Actionable Insights

- Leadership development must be a strategic, systematic process.
- Define leadership attributes and behaviours clearly and contextually.
- Design comprehensive programmes that blend various methodologies.
- Rigorous evaluation is essential to demonstrate ROI and inform iteration.
- Continuous improvement and cultural integration are vital for sustained impact.

Comment

These are the core messages to remember as you consider implementing or refining your own leadership development initiatives.

Practical Groups Exercise: Discussion

- Q1 Common Challenges to Implement Leadership Development Programmes
- Q2 How do you navigate the roadblocks i.e. how do you overcome them?

Formative Assessment

Common Challenges & How to Overcome Them

- Navigating the Roadblocks

- Challenge: Lack of time/prioritization.
- *Solution: Demonstrate ROI, gain executive advocacy.*

- Challenge: Resistance to change.
- *Solution: Clear communication, involve leaders in design, highlight benefits.*

- Challenge: Measuring impact.
- *Solution: Define clear metrics upfront, use multi-source data.*

- Challenge: Sustaining momentum.
- *Solution: Continuous reinforcement, integration, leadership modeling.*

Comment

Anticipating challenges allows us to proactively plan solutions and keep the process on track.

• Groups Case Study: Application in Practice
• The Transformation Challenge at "InnovateTech Solutions“

- **Background:**

- InnovateTech Solutions (ITS) is a mid-sized technology company specializing in developing custom software and AI solutions for various industries.

- Founded 15 years ago, ITS experienced rapid growth in its early years, largely due to its innovative products and a passionate, but often informal, leadership style.

- In recent years, however, ITS has begun to face significant challenges. Market competition has intensified, employee turnover has steadily increased, and project delivery times are stretching, impacting client satisfaction.

- While the company still boasts talented individuals, a recent internal survey revealed widespread dissatisfaction with leadership across all levels.

Key issues identified include:

- Lack of Clear Vision & Strategy: Employees feel there's no cohesive direction from senior leadership, leading to departmental silos and conflicting priorities.
- Ineffective Communication: Information flows poorly both vertically and horizontally. Decisions are often made without sufficient consultation, and feedback loops are weak.
- Limited Employee Development: Opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression are perceived as scarce, leading to stagnation and a brain drain of promising talent.
- Micromanagement & Lack of Empowerment: Mid-level managers report feeling stifled by senior leadership, while team members feel their autonomy is limited, hindering initiative and creativity.
- Resistance to Change: Despite recognizing the need for improvement, there's a strong resistance to adopting new processes or technologies, largely attributed to a "this is how we've always done it" mindset among some long-tenured leaders.
- Burnout and Low Morale: The constant pressure, coupled with a lack of recognition and support, has led to increased stress and declining morale among the workforce.

- The CEO, Maria Rodriguez, acknowledges that the company's current leadership approach is no longer sustainable.

- She believes that cultivating leadership excellence is not just an HR initiative but a strategic imperative for the company's survival and future growth.

- She has tasked a newly formed "Leadership Transformation Committee" (LTC), comprising HR, operations, and a few senior leaders, with developing a comprehensive plan.

- **Challenge:**

- The LTC's primary challenge is to design and implement a strategic process that effectively enhances leadership attributes and behaviors across all levels of InnovateTech Solutions, fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, and innovation, and ultimately reversing the negative trends observed.

Questions:

1. Analyze the Current State: Based on the case study, identify the key leadership gaps and their direct impact on InnovateTech Solutions. Categorize these gaps (e.g., strategic, operational, cultural, interpersonal).

2. Strategic Objectives: What should be the primary strategic objectives of the "Leadership Transformation Committee" (LTC) for cultivating leadership excellence? how should these objectives align with the company's overall business goals?

3.Proposed Interventions: Outline at least five specific initiatives or programmes that the LTC could implement to address the identified leadership gaps. For each initiative, explain how it would contribute to fostering a culture of growth, collaboration, and innovation.

4.Measuring Success: How can InnovateTech Solutions measure the effectiveness of its leadership development initiatives? What specific metrics or indicators would you recommend?

5.Addressing Resistance: What potential sources of resistance might the LTC encounter during the implementation of its leadership transformation plan? How can the LTC proactively mitigate these challenges?

References

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