Abstract

This report gives the glimpses of the leadership skill required in the organisation for managing the team. Firstly the report will identify the leadership challenges, strengths, assessment of my

leadership skill in the organisation where I am working. Then based on the partner's feedback on the leadership skills will help me to identify the gaps that I have to fill by taking certain measures based on the leadership skills will be identified. The core purpose is identifying and developing the leadership skills to achieve the target.

Organisation:

The organisation where I am working is Aldi, one of the supermarket chains operating globally with presence in 18 countries including Australia. It's one of the best retailers in Australia. The key feature of this chain is the discounted pricing creating enhanced value to people. Aldi outsources their products from the Aussie farmers and manage their deals with the local suppliers.

My Role:

I work as an Area Manager. Looking after 3 stores, managing 40 to 60 staff, issues with the teams, set targets for the stores etc. The functional areas are the leadership skills, business awareness, managerial skills, communication skills, etc.

Challenges in my Role:

My challenges are driving the team to achieve targets, motivating them under high pressures, organising capabilities to define the targets for every store. Aldi is fast moving where long working hours, extreme hard work, difficult goals are there. Time management and interpersonal skills are necessities in my role. The business operations are the most challenging as I have to manage 2 to 3 stores in the concerned area. Managing all the members by providing motivation driven by emotions is the key challenge for me. The top management has a high expectation from the area managers for achieving targets which in turn will lead the organisation to achieve the business goals.

Key stakeholders of my organisation:

In order to understand the level of influence of the stakeholders associated with Aldi, we need to undertake Mendelow's Stakeholder Power and Interest Matrix:
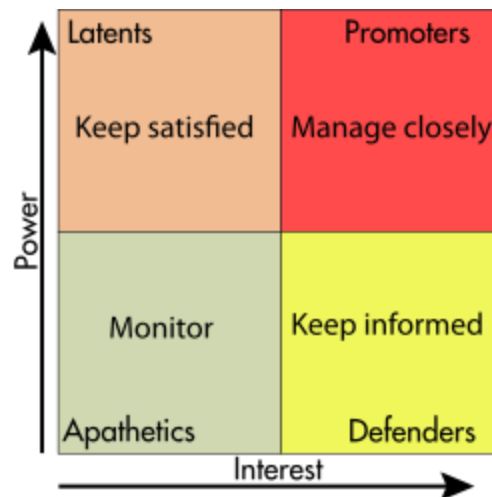
(Source: Dowson & Bassett, 2015)

There are four areas giving the picture of the power and the interest level associated in Aldi. (Anderson, 2012)

a) **Latent:** With high power but they don't have influence in the business. They are the customers. Satisfying them with their requirements will be the ultimate strategy to increase the business turnover.

b) **Promoters:** Promoters are having high power with high interest in Aldi. The management of Aldi has to identify them and associate them in the business. They are the Aussie suppliers, farmers, investors with investment and return powers. (Dowson & Bassett, 2015)

c) **Defenders:** Defenders are the people who have a high interest in the business with low power. Basically they are the employees of Aldi.

d) **Apathetic:** Aldi doesn't consider any individuals with less power and low interest. The management is mainly concern with the targets and the business goals in Australia.

Leadership Challenges:

As IT consultant Tim Bryce writes: All companies have a culture. In order for employees to function and succeed, it is essential they understand and believe in the culture.

As per my role, I have to manage three stores and 40 to 50 staff with one store manager, retail assistant, accountant and shopper's level personnel. Two stores had several issues affecting the target. The Leadership is the function that an employee with the designation of Area manager must have in order to influence his team. It is my leadership skill that is urgently required to motivate the members to give their positive performances and also to identify the solutions for the issues which will boost the morale of the employees and achieve targets. The leadership challenges that I have faced can be classified in the following ways:

a) *Managerial effectiveness* is one of the challenges that involve the time management, thinking of the strategy and developing the ways to achieve it, setting the priority of the tasks etc. Work load is one of the challenge that is very common in my role and for that limited resources are the critical ways that I have to face (Kouzes & Posner, 2012)

b) *Motivate & inspire the teams* to achieve targets. Some few staffs did not have promotion since 5 years and some already got their promotion within 3 years which de-motivate them.

c) *Employee's development* is one of the challenges that I am facing which involves the mentoring, coaching to build their sense of perfection. Building trust among each other is the key challenge in the employee's development.

d) *Encouraging* the team to accept the organisational change is one of the challenges where the forces of the resistance are high. Transformation is one of the challenges for me.

e) *Managing politics* of the internal areas where all employees form their groups and give performances based on their groups. Understanding their behaviour and motives is one of the challenges. (Pheffer, 1992)

My Leadership Journey at Aldi Australia:

I have joined Aldi 3 years back as a Store manager where I was responsible to manage a team of 15 to 20 people hardly. After my promotion in the last quarter of 2015 as an Area Manager, the area had increased and now I have to manage a team of 50 to 60 members. So I like to categorise my leadership journey into two phases:

a) **Phase 1:** In the phase 1, the issues that I faced is preparing the rosters of the employees, flexibility options, group conflicts, politics in the groups, decision making process etc. Initially I was unaware of such issues but when these issues rise, I have followed the *participative leadership styles* where I used to involve the team members to sort out the issues. But still there was a group conflict which used to hamper the target. At that point of time I have used the *laissez-faire leadership style* where I have given the power to the members to sort out the issues with their own way.

b) **Phase 2:** In phase 2, my leadership journey was completely changed managing 60 staff. The issues remain the same but now with bigger volume. But at this level I am following the *transformational leadership styles* where I have developed a vision and motivate the team to follow it. The subordinates used to identify the needs or the requirements for the change I am prioritising and execute them properly due to the inspiration that they used to get from me. (Winkler, 2010)

My Current Strength:

The current strength is managing the team effectiveness and based on that, I have set the vision directing the team to follow in order to achieve the organizational targets and also help them to develop their career opportunities. This is the *transformational leader* used to follow by developing a vision and motivating the subordinates to accept the change. Franklin Roosevelt a former president used to consider one of the transformational leaders. The approaches that I used to follow are to identify the target of the organisation as well as an employee and based on that I used to set the vision and create some examples of my hard work which inspires the team. Personality is the key which influences the subordinates to follow me and the vision as well. All staff are aware of my development from a store manager to an Area manager with a span of 3 years due to my hard work, united approach and creating examples like the best store in the quarter. My personality influences the team members to accept the change that I used to develop. For my strength that I possess in my leadership skills, Aldi does not have to spend money rather the top management is happy to observe my skills to manage the team.

My Leadership Assessment:

As per **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** the leadership style that I used to follow can be assessed by considering the ISTJ aspect among other options. ISTJ aspect implies that sincerity, taking reasonable care, hardworking, systematic and realistic are key features and that I possess in my leadership skill. As I consider the organisation targets and an employee's aspiration into one level and then develop a vision that can motivate the employees to give their best. (Grint, 2010)

Partner's Observations, challenges, applications feedbacks:

My partner was working with Independent Grocers of Australia in a same designation. It is also a supermarket chain in Australia and one of the major competitors of Aldi. My partner's feedback to me was to follow & collect input from the team and like to implement in the decision making process to remove the conflicts and increase the employees morale proving the *positive side*. My partner also advised me to adapt the **cultural diversity** by forming the teams who can satisfy the different customers from several cultural backgrounds. My partner has also identified *my personality as a strength* that I hold in Aldi.

Other feedbacks & My Future Development based my partner's feedback & observations:

The other leadership styles that I can follow based on my partner's feedback is the **participative leadership style** where I can identify the issues and ask the teams to participate in a meeting to share their concerns regarding any issues or decisions. After, I can consider all the opinions to find an effective solution. This approach will help me to minimize several conflicts among the teams. (Cummings, MacGregor, Davey, Lee, Wong, Lo, Muise & Stafford, 2010). But I have to remain conscious about the personal interest of the employees which I need to segregate from the negative opinions. I also need to consider the **cultural diversity** to influence the effective leadership. The cultural diversity often creates conflicts among the teams harming the business. But the customers are also from the different cultural background and in order to understand their requirement a cultural diversified team is also required so that Aldi can reach effectively to the customers. From that point of view effective coaching and mentoring is needed to understand their unity which is widely required in their performances (Schein, 2010). I have to ensure that the teams of each store must have the diversity in culture. From this perspective **communication**

skills can be the only way to satisfy the customers coming in the store and the cultural diversified team can be able to fulfil their requirements. Dominance and friendliness factors in the communication are needed to be considered for the appealing of employees. (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010). Thus mentoring and coaching should also include the development of the communication skills to the team. Aligning the *organisation culture* with the practice can only be possible with my leadership skill that must involve the importance of culture. Apart from that based on the strength that is my personality that my partner has identified is the need to be given more focus. I have to set more examples in the organisation which will motivate the team to give their performances required by the organisation. (Jogulu, 2010)

Conclusion

In this report we can able to identify the importance of leadership in the organisation based on the concerned designation as discussed. The report has shown my current strength, challenges and key responsibilities areas. Other than that based on the partner's feedback and ways of managing the team has helped me to address my skills gaps which are required to develop my leadership skills. Here lies the importance of this report.

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