

Week Two Homework Assignment

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1. Based on the skills approach, how would you assess Dr. Wood's leadership and his relationship to the members of the Elder Care Project team? Will the project be successful?
 - 1.1. Based on the skills approach, Dr. Wood has the technical skills and the conceptual skills to lead the members of the Elder Care Project. He is, however, lacking the human skills. Dr. Wood has the technical skills because he has the knowledge and is known throughout the country as the foremost scholar in this area of health education research. He has the conceptual skills because he is able to come up with ideas to fill in the blanks of what they members are missing but he does not have the human skills. He does not know how to successfully communicate with his members. Dr. Wood does not have the ability to work effectively as a team member or to build a cooperative effort within the team he leads (Katz, 2009). I think the only two reasons this project will be successful is because Dr. Woods is putting in the long hours himself, as well as it is a government contract and those are hard to get out of.
2. Does Dr. Wood have the skills necessary to be an effective leader of this research team?
 - 2.1. Since the skills approach takes a leader-centered perspective on leadership where skills and abilities can be learned and developed (Northouse, 2015), Dr. Wood would need to learn or develop human skills to be an effective leader. Human skills are skills that need to always be applied. Human skills are a vital part of everything a leader does and are needed in all management levels, top management, middle management, and supervisory management (Northouse, 2015). Human skill is the ability to get along with others as you complete your work. If Dr Wood is unable to get along with others, regardless of his knowledge on the subject, technical skill, or his ability to work with ideas or concepts,

conceptual skill, he will not be successful because no one will want to work with him or be his “follower.”

3. The skills model describes three important competencies for leaders: problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge. If you were to coach Dr. Wood using this model, what competencies would you address with him? What changes would you suggest that he make in his leadership?

- 3.1. According to Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, et al. (2000), problem-solving skills are a leader’s creative ability to solve new and unusual, ill-defined organizational problems (Northouse, 2015). I would first let Dr. Wood know that he is doing a good job in this area by finding money for the pamphlets when they are underbudget and for picking up with slack himself with the day-to-day tasks. I would then ask him to compare his past projects to this one, to see if he has the same issues of underfunding and a burnt-out staff who is lacking time and energy to complete all the tasks needed to be done.

In addition to problem-solving skills, effective leadership performance requires social judgment skills. In general, social judgment skills are the capacity to understand people and social systems (Northouse, 2015). I would then ask Dr. Wood to think back to when he was a research assistant, how did his leaders speak to him and how did that make him feel. I would suggest he record himself and then play back his recording of how he speaks with the members of the Elder Care Project. I would suggest that try to lift up the members instead of tearing them down to see if that makes a change in how burnt out they feel or how much work they are able to complete. I would also tell him to put himself in their shoes to try to be understanding of how they might be feeling.

The third aspect of competencies is knowledge. Knowledge is inextricably related to the application and implementation of problem-solving skills in organizations (Northouse, 2015). I do not think this is something I would need to cover with Dr. Wood because is already known as the foremost scholar in this area of health education research.

I would suggest he takes some time to learn about what it means to be a great leader, to think about all of the leaders he has had in the past and compare them. Hopefully this will help him realize that his leadership skills could use improvement and that just because he knows all the information does not mean people will want to work with him.

4.

References

Katz, R. L. (2009). *Skills of an Effective Administrator*. United States: Harvard Business Review Press.

Northouse, P. G. (2015). *Leadership: Theory and practice (7th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage