

Case Study 2: Forming Dennison

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1. As Bob Anderson and his friends began to launch Dennison, Bob being the President of the company, aimed to achieve a high goal in a practically short term plan. He was aware that building a culture would be the engine to implement the dreamed project effectively. Bob was facing a situation of problem solving and decision making. Building a culture as he suggested is an important factor that influence individual and group problem solving and decision making, as Shockley-Zalabak states that organizational culture includes power and control processes and influences the methods used to bring solutions to problems and make decision. Decision making is defined as the “process of choosing from among general alternatives” (pp. 258-259). Bob does not consider other alternatives and does not see problems coming. He started Dennison with an overwhelming work schedule for the employees, and this created pressure over the employees working about seventy hours a week, seven days a week. The decision method is important in an organizational culture, and Bob method ended up with conflict with his personnel manager. Instead of considering the problem-solving approach, Bob suggested the manager “should look for work elsewhere.” The emerging culture of Dennison is likely to generate the downfall of the company if the problem is not resolved through effective decision making.

2. The company founders had received an investment to set up their organization, and because of their knowledge, experience and expertise, they have set goals that they want to achieve in a timely manner. The success of the company depends on how strong and positive the adopted culture must be. During the first six months of operations, Bob has a good organizational communication with the whole company. However, the interpersonal communication competency has been reduced and the work load is tremendously increased. The founder believes that keeping the employees to work twice more that the required schedule would be an advantage

toward achieving the set goals. He does not consider an evaluation of the outcome of such work load.

Power and control processes in decision making determine the strength of the culture (Shockley-Zalabak, 2015, p. 260). Dennison case was not only to make decision about running the personnel schedule for effectiveness, but to meet the set goal in performance and revenue. Bob saw in the personnel manager an asset because he had worked for a company that had demonstrated positive culture in general. However, Bob did not seek positive culture, but a “strong” culture which could end up with using a few people to work over the reasonable amount of time. If Bob decision is to let the manager go, the conflict would not be resolved. The strength of this view is hard overwork that may end up with gradual resignations.

3. When the personnel manager saw that the employees were overwhelmed, he made notice to Bob. Employees were given deadlines without their “input to assess the reality of the expectation.” The manager’s report to Bob is a warning that the bubble is going to burst, because continuous pressure and stress can be the beginning of the company’s downfall. Bob’s reaction shows that he would not do anything to change the situation. He laughed at the manager with a mocking statement: “he thought he knew more about culture than the man he had hired to build one.” The manager was hired to organize the personnel department and build the culture. The manager was there to execute orders. Bob simply placed the manager in the state of leaving the company. The external consultant would be paid, not to build a culture, but to execute Bob’s orders or organizational culture approach. The external consultant would do the manager’s work.

In this case study, the communication competencies did not flow between Bob and the personnel manager, since the President did not seek conflict resolution.

References:

Shockley-Zalabak, P. S. (2015). *Fundamentals of organizational communication knowledge, sensitivity, skills, values* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.