

Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid Assessment

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The relevance of leadership and management in business has been a debate for many years. With numerous research and studies on these topics, scientist and researchers have aimed to find commonalities as well as discrepancies between the two. According to Blake and Mouton (1975), leadership in the past was masked by the tactic of "authority and obedience mentality" where bosses could exercise work or starve authority over their subordinates (p.29). However, as the business world has evolved so has the approach of leadership. Juneja (2018) indicates that the treatment of task orientation and people orientation as two independent dimensions was a major step in leadership studies (para.1). In addition, the managerial grid of Blake and Mouton is an increasingly used theory of leadership effectiveness (Bernardin & Alvares, 1976). Authors Blake and Mouton proposed a graphic portrayal of leadership styles through a managerial grid also known as leadership grid through a technique called grid training (Juneja, 2018). Moreover, this author indicates that this grid depicts two dimensions of leader behavior, concern for people on the (y-axis) and concern for production on the (x-axis). Each dimension ranges from low to high. Therefore, this paper will identify my leadership style as well as my strengths and weaknesses when utilizing the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid Assessment. Furthermore, I will classify specific steps to compensate for deficiencies acknowledged with this tool.

Leadership Self- Assessment Results

The Blake and Mouton Leadership Self-Assessment Tool is comprised of 18 statements about leadership behavior. Bernardin and Alvares (1976) suggest that the managerial grid theory is predicted in the assumption that leadership effectiveness is based on two predilections- concern for people and production (p.84). Furthermore, these authors note that the optimal

strategy for managers is to maximize attitudes and actions reinforcing both concerns. With the Blake and Mouton Assessment, I was instructed to answer the statements provided as truthfully as possible. By utilizing the recommended scale ranging from zero to five, I could rate my behavior based on my selections. Starting with zero, if selected, the response would be never. Moving up the scale to number three, midpoint, the response would be sometimes. Lastly, ending with the number five a response of always would be indicated. Each answer given will specify the extent to which each behavior applies. After completing the survey, I then transfer the responses according to each numbered question into two separate columns outlined “people” and “task”. Once all answers were recorded, I had to multiply each column's total by 0.2. The answer would allow me to determine my leadership style on the grid. While plotting my scores on the grid (vertically and horizontally), I was now able to see where my lines intersect in the leadership dimension area that I most likely operated in. The dimensions where Team Leader, Country Club, Impoverished and Authoritarian.

Identifying Leadership Style

The results of my leadership style indicated that I am a Team Leader. My scores under the column titled “people” was 8.3 and 8.6 in the task column. According to Juneja (2018), a Team Leader is characterized by high (people) and high (task) focus. Based on the theory, this leadership dimension has been termed as the most effective style (para.7). What makes this dimension of leadership compelling in my opinion, is the high concern for both task and people equally. Reason being, the leader feels that empowerment, commitment, trust, and respect are the key elements in creating a team atmosphere which will automatically result in high employee satisfaction and production (Juneja, 2018, para.7). However, with any style or approach, there are positives and negatives.

Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

According to the survey results, Team Leaders are motivated by a high task, high relationship method. The strength of this form of motivation is the leader can understand the significance of professional and organizational development for a common goal. Yukl (2013) states it was widely accepted that leaders must use some task and relations behaviors to be effective, and these two meta-categories influenced most of the early leadership theories (p.50). Hence, being multidimensional in my approach can increase my chances of effectiveness when I focus on what is best for people and business. Another strength of a Team Leader according to the assessment is the leader's ability to strengthen bonds and encourage team members. Yukl (2013) indicates that encouragement is especially important when followers are dependent on the leader for direction and are not intrinsically motivated by the work (p.238). On the other hand, some weaknesses of this leadership approach involve the leader becoming easily stressed and exhausted when trying to fix and perfect every outcome or circumstance. In my personal experience, this has always been an issue until I was able to find a balance. Thus, going above and beyond for the team but not the company or vice versa is another area of weakness.

Steps to Compensate Weaknesses

For leaders who have been identified as a Team Leader, the steps to compensate weaknesses in the areas of imbalance and over exhaustion can be established with stability and allowing team members to utilize their talents. Hence, a leader should not work more diligently in one area and not the other. If the leader's focus expresses concern for people, he or she must put the same amount of energy towards the concern for production. Bernardin and Alvares (1976) suggest that the optimal strategy for managers is to stress both organizational goal setting,

group development and interaction (p. 84). Furthermore, when a leader begins to act with a “me” attitude instead of “we” attitude, then he or she is not utilizing their leadership abilities.

Leaders must encourage as well as allow team members to hone their skills and gifts relieving any additional pressure off the leader. However, this does not suggest that the leader is not held accountable.

Conclusion

Overall the depiction of my leadership style through the grid training or leadership self-assessment allows me to identify areas where I can lead more effectively. Analyzing my strength and weaknesses enables me to examine past mistakes and better prepare for future roles as a leader. The team leader approach emphasizes being concerned highly for people and task. However, understanding limits and boundaries are vital to each leader’s usefulness. Because managers and leaders are results driven, they must be concerned about both people and task. As Blake and Mouton (1976) state the managerial grid assessment helps identify these two concerns and then uses the results to show managers how to get results through people as well as their task.

References

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