

Final Paper

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When we began this class, we introduced ourselves as it officially started our group effort toward a common goal. This format was not anything new, for we have been in many groups throughout our lifetime. What made it interesting for me, there was no one in the group originating from my home the Bahamas or even the Caribbean. It was a petri dish of how globalization exists in the organization today. Different cultures and nationalities are working together to find the best solutions. There are two crucial takeaways from chapter 1, and the first was how do you approach working a team. Working in a group, I had to approach with an open mindset. Each classmate was different in terms of personality, age, gender, nationality, and culture. But what makes each person unique is what makes the class even better as you get a variety of thoughts and opinions. So, it was reinforcing me to be balanced, balancing respect for each team member and their views, and keeping the focus on what is the task at hand. Secondly, the four-way test:

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build Goodwill and better friendships?
4. Will it be Beneficial to all concerned?

I have found it to be a perfect framework of how a group should think and operate. Often groups become a battle of personality instead of ideas. The four-way test is the ideal framework for any group activities; it shifts the attention of an individual's thoughts and puts it back on finding solutions that are most beneficial to the organization. It is vital to have this mindset because we will be continuously placed in groups, whether its home or work, directly and indirectly, and we must be able to navigate through life successfully.

Week two was an example of one of the many complex issues leaders face in the 21st century. How do we balance having ethics and having higher profits- both can exist in unison. The problem brought to attention was should a female employee get a raise because she is the breadwinner in her household. Most persons are aware that on average females make less than their male counterparts for doing the same job. This gap is a clear bias that needs to be corrected. But the suggestion given does not solve the problem; it is like putting pressure on a wound to stop the bleeding, but it does nothing to heal the injury itself. It is a reminder that as a leader, our employees look to us to solve every day long and short-term issues. This week was a reminder that we as leaders are intermediate vessels that are the bridge between employees and owners/stakeholders. It brings to light the many challenges managers have or will face in today's society and the importance of training of employees so they can better interact appropriately with many cultural and individual differences that exist amongst us.

Understanding different personalities and individual differences- this, to me, is the foundation of this class—this class challenges and demands that you go beyond the one or two-sentence discussion and to dig deeper. Everybody needs to have their voice heard, everybody takes a different route to get there, but they all want to be heard. What I remember from this week is to think outside of my box, culture, country, and think bigger. The world we live in has no physical barrier, integration and globalization is the new norm. Each employee is unique and must be engaged with tools and techniques that would stimulate their character. Attitude is something we all have, although many times the word is attached to a negative connotation. Attitude is a learned behavior built up over time that becomes a part of who we are and our personality because it is a learned behavior as leaders; we can teach it. That is where opportunity

meets preparedness and breeds success. We can instill corporate values and beliefs into employees, in turn, developing more efficient staff members.

There could be a class just on attributions alone. Attribution digs into the subject of human behavior to its core, which I find mentally stimulating. To me, it not only asks the question of why but seeks to breakdown the answer. The purpose of the attribution theory to help understand the causes of human behavior, whether it be our own (internal) or someone else behavior(externally). Human behavior is fascinating because everyone is different while there are shared universal qualities; no two persons are the same. As a leader who loves to and believes in the power of observation in all areas of life, attribution is the perfect tool to pair with observation.

Stress and communication were the main themes of this week's discussion; I am so glad we cover these pre- government-mandated shutdowns. If ever, they were essential to know about it is now. Living through my first crisis communication is more than important than ever. I was working at the same job doing the 2008 recession, but it had little to no effect on my employment, but this in 2020 was unfathomable. How do you handle it as one; a leader who is looked upon for guidance and two as a human being with a family who is facing the unknown together? Stress? Distress? Anxiety? They are all real. Whenever I am in doubt, I remind myself to go back to the foundation, which is God, to tackle things to its core. What does stress, anxiety, and distress have in common; they are all internal reactions. What that is telling me is that my view of things or interpretation of events needs to be adjusted. The stimulus/environment will not change unless my mindset changes. This shift applies to the work environment as well as we seek to guide others knowledge brings clarity. As leaders, we can sift through the confusion and provide some sense of stability, and that is so important right now. I learned something

interesting about one of the ways stress works this week (week 12) that was mind-blowing. Triggers as a result of stress, which means when a specific type of stress is received, certain internal triggers are pulled, and repetitive, habitual response is given that most people are unaware that they do. Triggers then become behavior patterns. Whenever you see or hear somebody or something, the mind is trigger to an automated response. This is such an important topic not just for the workplace but even for our schools, colleges, and universities. Stress plays a part in many of the decisions made by individuals.

We all are in this together when we understand that teamwork and group work become so more evident. This area is essential. Every person plays a part in the organization and the community. I often tell colleagues and friends that not everyone can be in the back seat of the car being chauffeur around. Someone has to drive the car, make the car, sell the car, clean the car, etc. There are different roles associated with the vehicle, but there is only one car; the same applies to work-life. When we understand how vital our parts are, it develops a deeper appreciation for the role we have. Five stages define how teams are formed. They are forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. In the forming stage, employees meet for the first time unclear of their goals or role. The storming stage is the clashing of individual differences. In the norming stage, the goals and individual tasks are determined and bring clarity and purpose to the group. The performing stage is the execution of determined goals, and adjourning is the ending of the group once its use has been completed. By knowing these stages, a person knows what to expect and will not be caught off guard.

Week 8 power, influence, and authority taught me that influence is truly the best way to gain power. Power is the ability to influence another person's thoughts, behavior, and action.

Unlike a superior at a job who has the right or authority to direct your work, power is less demanding and more guiding and open-handed. As leaders, we often want our employees to go beyond while we stick within the borders of our authority and power. To gain influence is to go beyond the status quo. There is no more significant influencer in our life than the keepers of knowledge that can be teachers, parents, etc. Knowledge creates light in dark places like turning on a switch we illuminate from within and shine outwardly. We become receptors, then reflectors sharing our knowledge/power and indirectly and directly influencing the world around us. Many times, we are being affected and influencing, and we do not even know it.

Week 9 follows with leadership and followership. What stuck the most this week was the Steve Jobs insult response video. How do leaders respond when confronted, especially when they do not have the answer you are looking for? It was a reminder that honesty is still the best policy and that you do not have all the answers, and that is ok. It is essential to face adversity head-on and communicate re-affirming your strength. This week also focuses on defense mechanisms. A defense mechanism is the reaction process of the mind when a person feels confronted or facing conflict. This is important because we will meet individuals who will respond differently to the feeling of being "attacked." Persons are aware of the actions they make but are often unaware of the pattern they create. That is where leaders come in with communication, knowledge, coaching, training, etc. to bring attention to and correct such behavior. We spoke earlier in this paper about stress and triggers. Patterns or behavior patterns is a reaction similar to how a defense mechanism is a reaction. You recognize you have the ability to break and have a monumental impact on someone's life.

Opportunity for all and equity in the workplace are the two takeaways from this week. A job can be defined as work, but the word work means different things to different people based

on age, gender, culture, etc. This chapter focus on the design of work. Leaders are making work adjustments based on employee needs and differences to create a more productive work environment. Diversity is the new norm in a globalize work culture.

Employees might think if you are not treating everyone; equally, you are being unfair or having favorites. That is not the case if you address everyone similarly from equity (giving everyone what they need to be successful) standpoint. This shifts the focus from "what's wrong" to "what do you need to perform at your best" once this is effectively communicated, it can help build a much more productive work environment.

Forces shaping organizations today, I remember thinking should I put the Earth as a force. Most of the class were like technology and globalization and am like what a fragile planet we have. As part of the Bahamas that was hit by Dorian, the second strongest Atlantic hurricane ever that stall for 36 hours with 185 mph winds, I comprehend the extent of the Earth's powers. The coronavirus pandemic has brought further attention to the list. We all have time now to reflect inwardly and analyze our position in the world. We watch stories of decrease pollution and animals taking over towns. It is quite clear that we are not doing enough, or maybe the answer is to do reduce what we are doing. But this has reminded leaders that it is time to think outside of the box. We have relied more on technology than ever before, and when this is over, many organizations will realize that many jobs can be done at home, which leads to company restructuring. Technology, without a doubt, will continue to shape organizational structure, but balance is needed.

Corporate culture and how do leaders develop it were the topics of week 12. Culture is the way an organization operates and how the persons in it perform, based on their values and beliefs. In the discussion, we spoke about the various way's leaders impact the culture of a

company through setting goals, leading by example, having a vision, etc. Leaders set the framework for culture. As I am writing this, I am listening to the Prime Minister after a complete weekend lockdown had just lifted, announce a new six-day complete lockdown, and every weekend in April complete lockdown as he describes it a curfew, shutdown, and lockdown. While the majority of us do not have the wide-reaching authority and powers of our country leaders, we do have the ability to communicate, influence, and create policies. These are the moments and character traits that define leadership. This class has given us the skills, tools, and resources to be transformative leaders in the 21st century. Reality has taught us that to survive, we must adapt. We must now exemplify a global group mindset that holds each other accountable but understand that we are different, and our mental response in terms of stress and triggers will vary, but we are seeking the same results. We must communicate effectively more than ever, silence leads to assumptions, and at this time, we as leaders must do our best to ensure that we are getting the message out and controlling the narrative.

Midterm break offered an excellent opportunity to step back and reflect on the course so far and evaluate personal performance making any necessary adjustments to improve. We came back in week 13 to explore the topic of home-work conflict, an issue made by more prominent due to the coronavirus. Perhaps the biggest problem that creates a home-work conflict is a lack of time or, better yet, mismanagement of time. We trade our time for financial incentives. Organizing is such a valuable tool and plays a massive part in how effectively we manage our time. As leaders, we must organize not only our employees but also our time and energy to be more proficient and productive. Imbalance of time can affect our relationship, productivity, and our mental and physical health. This conflict affects non-managerial staff as well many who are picking up second shifts or a second job to meet the demands of their life who must decide

between the time at home or paying the bills. These choices produce stress all by itself. We often forget that kids in school deal with home-work conflicts as well. I think it is so important to recognize their conflicts, so they are trained at a young age on how to deal with it effectively.

Apart of dealing with home -work conflicts are handling the stress that comes along with it. How we interpret and handle stress varies from person to person. While there is a space provided for a healthy, reasonable amount of stress, many are overwhelmed and distress. When we talk about stress, it is about the emotional, psychological effect. The behavior patterns and triggers we carry home after we have clocked out. We carry that learned behavior into our homes with our family and kids that are time and financially demanding even though we love them. Balancing relationships (partners, kids, family) and work is a conflict and additional stress by itself. So, this chapter was necessary because to solve a problem; one must know what the problem is. By recognizing the different types of home -work conflict and how to address them, we can better function as adults, and in our family and the many roles we take on in society.

Change is a constant factor in the 21st century even now as we speak organization, and countries are making sweeping changes in the face of a global pandemic. Many individuals in organizations and life resist change, and this week looks at the various reasons a person does. There are two reasons I believe persons resist change, and they are due to a lack of communication and perspective of and about change. This class challenges you not just to state the problem but present solutions. One of the solutions was a rethinking of strategy from business owners and leaders. The psychological aspect of changes to employees has often been overlooked by management. The attitude has been this is the change deal with it, which leads to resistance, which costs the organization money. It cost money because employees are now less productive due to becoming stress about the unknown and employees leave, which creates

vacancies (for which HR has to now advertise and conduct an interview for) and delays and additional work for others. There should be a transition period between when the change is formalized in writing, and when the switch is enacted. Change can present significant new opportunities, but it can also be stressful, and as always, it is up to us leaders to guide everyone through the perceived wilderness and into a better place.

As we enter the last week of class, we are asked to reflect and ponder on what has been the most surprising thing we have learned. It is an opportunity to put the pieces of each week together and look at the picture created. In a class about organizational behavior, it was an opportunity to learn about the various layers of an organization and numerous issues facing the workforce and leaders. One of the lessons learned was the importance of working together as a group. There are many sets of groups, whether it is our family, work, church or academic, etc. We are consistently placed in a group setting in our life, and this class gives you the tool to navigate successfully through it. At its core, it reminds you that you have a voice and that it matters, and that your voice brings value to the table in finding solutions to problems that affect us all. For me, it has been strengthening in terms of knowledge and confidence. Initially, when I started, I was reserved taking everything in as most persons are when they start anything new. Between the assignment and feedback from yourself (Dr. James) and classmates, there was a sense of confirmation. I was on the right track. Everything that was done in the past that lead me to this present in hopes of a better future was aligning. Education corrects the mind, influence, and empowers it. I am better now than when I started. So, I thank you for challenging and empowering me through education to be the best I can be. I am inspired to go into this transformed world and vibrated at a higher frequency.

