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AIU Managing Teams and Individuals

A description of the responsibilities of a being a managing and managing teams and individual's in a small business setting fused with an Informative interview based on being an effective manager.

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A Fusion of team work and management practices. Informative Interview: In Reference to Business management in connection to Managing Employees.

Managing a business whether it's a small business establishment, Corporation or a Mom and Pop store takes a lot of determination and will power. Manager's possess certain skills that make it easy for them to multi-task some of which includes their attention to detail, unique time management skills along with the authority to delegate efficiently. Managing your business is one thing, but managing individuals and teams is quite extraordinary, it requires a substantial amount of coordination, planning and constant supervision.

Successfully managing teams and individuals means that the level of productivity of your business will be drastically increased. Proper management practices enhance a business level of production and its effectiveness to compete in a competitive environment that's flooded with businesses providing identical products and services.

Team work seem to be a growing trend in companies for the last few years, employees have realized that when people work together they tend to bring different ideas to the table and therefore; contribute better to the well being of the company, but on the down side team work can be both advantages and disadvantages in the same scope. Team work can create conflicts and the lines of communication among employees might depreciate to a certain extent.

Authors Bovee, Thill and Schatzman states as follows, "A recent study of 232 organizations across 16 countries and more than eight industries revealed that organizations working teams experience the highest improvement in performance. Creativity is another reason that teams are important. Teams encourage creativity in workers through **Participative Management**-involving employees in the company's decision making" (29).

Figure 1.1 Indicates different aspects of Participative Management fuse with Strategic Planning:



Participative Management and Strategic Planning

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- ◆ “The results (using multiple regression) show that managers’ use of a participative management style and employees’ perceptions of participative strategic planning processes are positively associated with high levels of job satisfaction.”
- ◆ The study also finds that effective supervisory communications in the context of strategic planning processes are positively associated with high levels of job satisfaction.



Participative Management and Strategic Planning

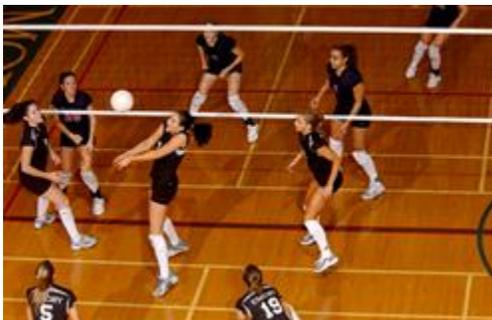
Public Administration Review: Kim Soonhee

- ◆ Study explores the relationship between participative management in the context of strategic planning and job satisfaction in local government agencies. (University of Nevada Department of Public Administration using data from Clark County)

At Kodak, for example, teams has allowed the company to halve the amount of time it takes to move a new product from the drawing board to store shelves” (29). **Figures 2.1** displays different types of teams whether it is an organization or sporting teams, the main idea is that they all work together to achieve a positive end results.



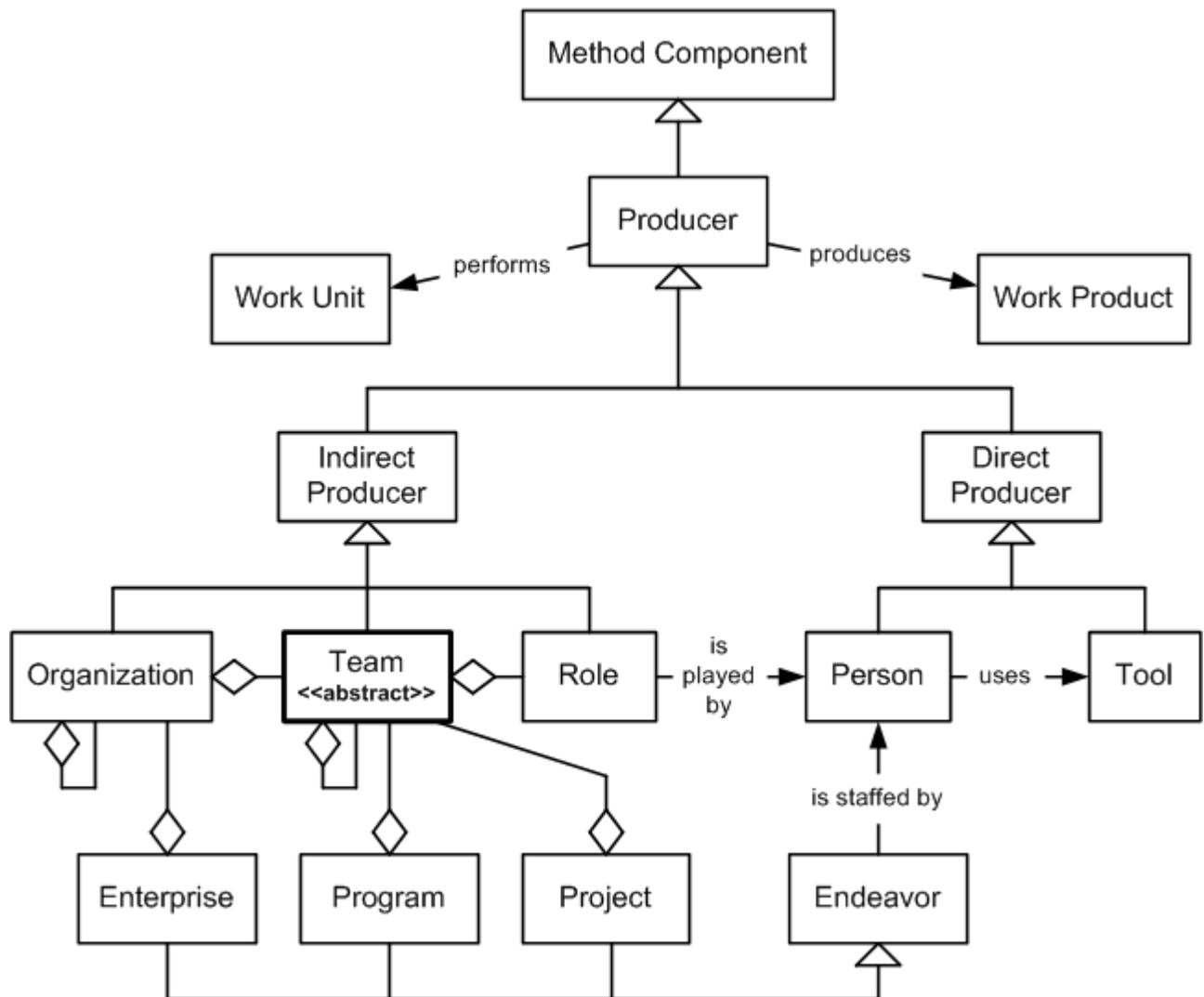
LOYOLA ADVERTISING TEAM



This Volley ball team is working towards a common goal which is winning this game.

As indicated by authors Bovee, Thill and Schatzman indicates that “The type, structure, and composition of the individual teams vary within an organization. Companies can create formal teams that become part of the organization’s structure, or they can establish informal teams, which aren’t part of the formal organization but are formed to solve a problem, work on a specific activity, or encourage employee participation” (29).

Some other important points indicated by the authors stated as follows, “Team members have a shared mission and are collectively responsible for their work. Companies like to hire people who work effectively in teams. Studies show that teams contribute to an organizations performance” (29). Here is an example in **Figure 3.1** of an organizational structure division of employment duties



In connection to managing individuals and teams, effective management is one of the most significant factors, which in this case actually plays a major rule in the productivity aspect

of the company and its employees. This quote taken from the Wall Street Journal states as follows, “Many managers quickly form rigid opinions about employees, and then resist changing those views in spite of evidence that the employees possess talents that weren’t apparent when they were first hired. As employees express interest in different kinds of jobs, they are brushed aside, often becoming frustrated. Those who resign themselves to this end up contributing at a fraction of their potential. Others leave for more satisfying jobs at other companies, costing the company time and money in replacing them” (May 2005, p. B1).

The dilemma between management and employees comprise of many different stages, some employers seem to be under the impression that employees are more productive when they work around the clock and their idea of a productive employee is one who works around the clock with no complaints.

One article in the Baltimore Sun indicated as follows, “The image of the productive employee working long hours chained to their desk is not always the best example of a worker who gets a lot done. Job coaches say that the most efficient employees are those that are organized, get enough rest, and have good working conditions with plenty of breaks to recharge their mind. Carolyn Schur, president of Alert at Work advises taking five-to ten-minute breaks every 90 minutes to get a fresh perspective on the current project. Low-sugar snacks like nuts, fruit, yogurt, or cheese can help to break the work day up into more manageable tasks, which can be motivating” (May 2005, p).

One of the most interesting comments I have read so far came from the same article stated above in the Baltimore Sun which I had to insert within my paper, it reads as follows, “It is important to work with a manager who is a good match. The best match, according to Glen

Mehrtretter, president of People-Fit, is a boss who can help the employee improve. A good manager needs to show how each job fits into the overall big picture of the company. That person should also add and give value”.

Figure 4.1 Displays an office setting environment complete with hard working individuals in a busy corporate environment.



During the last couple years I made many friends along the way, some of which includes successful business owners. I had the opportunity to work for one of my friends during the 2004 summer vacation period. I also used that time to broaden my knowledge in the filed of business

management and develop my skills as a young up and coming business owner and manager. I thought that if I saw management in action then it would broaden my knowledge in the field of business management.

On the Ninth of November 2004 at approximately 11 AM, I visited Jackie's café, upon my arrival; I surveyed the surrounding area and made my way to the manager's office. The owner of the café Jacqueline Martin was excited to see me and was delighted that I wanted to conduct an interview with her.

Jackie's café is owned by Jacqueline and her brother Cuthbert Martin. After we got comfortable with each other, I proceeded to ask Miss. Martin a few questions patterning to how she became interested in opening her own business. I thought that if we got comfortable with each other the interview would be relaxed.

My first line of questioning broke the ground for further questions and from that point forward, we were captivated by each other. I asked Miss. Martin why she and her brother chose a café and replied as follows, "My brother and I resided in the Virgin Islands for the last couple of years, and while we were there, I managed restaurants and Deli's while my brother cooked in the Kitchen. I got tired of working for other people and so did my brother therefore; we decided to move to the states to open our very own business. I handled the management aspect of the business while my brother handled the kitchen.

After the first line of questioning, I briefly asked her why they had left the Virgin Islands where they had already established a reputation for themselves and their work. She said indicated that "Apart from the need to be our own boss, the economy of the islands was not stable enough for the establishment of their business venture." She stated that "The economy of the Islands is

based on tourism and after September 11th 2001 the tourism industry ceased to generate any funds.” Therefore; “we decided to leave and move to an area that’s not seasonal.”

Upon completion of her explanation, we decided to proceed to the second part of the interview which will be divided into two sections one consisting of introductory and brief history and the second pertaining to information in reference to her business.

My second line of questioning began as follows,

Antoinette: Ms. Martin how did you become a manager?

Ms. Martin: “I attended the University of the Virgin Islands where I obtained a Bachelors Degree in Business Management with a concentration in Management. After obtaining my degree, I moved to New York and attended school to become a pastry chef. I wanted to combine the two things I love the most to enable me to secure a future and career for myself.”

Ms. Martin went into detail about her career as a manager for other business establishments and her own personal business. She told me that at the age of 24 she and her friends opened a bakery, but after a year of operation they shutdown, due to the fact that they underestimated their cost and competitive environment. They were unable to met customers demands and after a while, their customers left and took their business to their competitors. She explained to me that those disappointments were merely just a learning experience for her and encouraged her to gain more experience for future projects. After recording a summary of the information that she gave me we decided to proceed with other questions.

Antoinette: where do you see yourself and your business in 5 years?

Ms. Martin: “Basically I see my business expanding to new areas in state and hopefully with any luck across the greater United States.”

Antoinette: what changes have you experience in your business in the last 2-3 years?

Ms. Martin: “Within the past 2-3 years my business has been fluctuating more than before. On certain occasions business would be blooming or doing extremely good and sometimes my brother and I would barely cover our marginal cost.”

Antoinette: How did the terrorists attack on the United States affect your business?

Ms. Martin: “The terrorist attacks greatly affected our business. We actually began having financial problems soon after the attacks took place.”

Ms. Martin exclaimed that there were days when she and her brother and employees would sit ideally by and reminisce about the past, mainly due to the fact that no one came to the café or visited in weeks. She said that she never gave up hope and thought to herself that eventually this “dry spell” might pass and that her café would be once more filled with happy faces and satisfied customers. She said to me “I told myself that this soon shall pass.” However, lately business is slowly drifting back to normal, but I know that it will take sometime before everything returns to normal.

Antoinette: How do you communicate with your employees?

Ms. Martin: “I have a very good relationship with my employees. This establishment is more like a family affair; nonetheless, I treat each employee with dignity and respect. From 8:00 AM-6:00PM., they are my employees and receive no special treatments, but from 6 PM to bedtime, they are my family members. By separating personal life from work it makes the working environment a better place to work in.”

Antoinette: How do you handle conflicts in your business?

Ms. Martin: “Conflicts in my business are handled on a professional level. If problems arise I make it a point of duty to resolve the problem immediately. I usually keep a brief meeting with my employees and try my uttermost to get to the root of the problem before the other workday begins.”

Antoinette: Do you delegate work teams? If so, what type of team-building training is offered to your employees?

Ms. Martin: “I delegate work teams on a regular basis. My work teams are not as extensive as a major corporation or organization, but I set aside a list of duties that has to be carried out or executed by a group of individuals.” For example, “I would have two employees come in early in the mornings to help my brother prep the food and get the sitting arrangements, floral designs and silverware set ready for the morning shift.”

Authors Bovee, Thill and Schatzman list a check list for developing an effective team and it reads as follows (34)

A. Build a sense of fairness in decision making

1. Encourage debate and disagreement without fear of reprisal.
2. Allow members to communicate openly and honestly.
3. Consider all proposals.
4. Build consensus by allowing team members to examine, compare, and reconcile differences.
5. Avoid quick votes
6. Keep everyone informed.
7. Present all the facts

B. Select team members wisely

1. Involve stakeholders.
2. Limit size to no more than 12 to 15 members.
3. Select members with a diversity of views.
4. Select creative thinkers.

C. Make working in teams a top management priority

8. Recognize and reward individual and group performance.
9. Provide ample training opportunities for employees to develop interpersonal, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.
10. Allow enough time for the team to develop and learn how to work together.

D. Manage Conflict constructively

1. Share leadership
2. Encourage equal participation.
3. Discuss disagreements
4. Don't let things get out of hand

E. Stay on track

1. Make sure everyone understand the team's purpose
2. Communicate what is expected of team members
3. Don't deviate from the core assignment.
4. Develop and adhere to a schedule.
5. Develop rules and obey norms.

Antoinette: What work habits are valued by your business?

Ms. Martin: “I appreciate people who show up for work, take their work seriously and individuals who perform to the best of their abilities. As long as my customers are satisfied with their service and my employees are in tune with their surroundings I am contented and don’t demand a lot.”

Antoinette: Does your business offer training for employees? If so, can you briefly describe the training procedures?

Ms. Martin: “My employees receive training, but it’s based on the skills that they need to perform the job at hand. I train my wait staff, prep assistance and cashiers, but apart from that my employees are mainly temporary workers such as college students.

Antoinette: How do you handle employee discipline?

Ms. Martin: “To be honest, I have not been in a position where I had to implement drastic measures in order to discipline my employees. If any step has to be taken and discipline instilled, I would give that employee a leave of absence with pay and ask him/her to return when they found a way to calm their self down.”

Antoinette: How do you manage stress in your work?

Ms. Martin: “I basically encounter stress everyday, but I manage to overcome this problem by focusing on my goals. I have learned that the road to success is not paved with gold, but rocky and long. If success is what I desire then these stressful moments serve as an alarm clock that reminds me to work harder and concentrate on the work at hand.”

Figure 5.1: Shows people in different stressed out situations



This woman looks like she is screaming and her head is aching with frustration.

Most people when they are relaxed they tend to do something to calm their nerves like smoking.



Antoinette: How do you manage stress in your personal life?

Ms. Martin: “I exercise in the morning before I come to work and after work I go back to the gym. I find it very relaxing and soothing. Sometimes I meditate and at other times I take long walks or just drive around in my car until I feel I have calmed my nerves.”

Antoinette: What advice could you give me as I begin/ continue exploring and planning to work in the business world?

Ms. Martin: “First of all the business world is both challenging and competitive. I think that as long as you maintain a positive attitude and focus on the goals you want to achieve than you should have absolutely no problems fitting in. Be aware that is the real world and people will take advantage of you if they have to. Keep your eyes and your ears open at all times and choose your path wisely.”

Antoinette: Thank you, for taking time off from your busy schedule to conduct this interview with me.

Ms. Martin: “You are welcome.”

Upon completion of the interview, my view of business ownership has broadened and I realized to myself that I need to gain some management experience in the United States before I decide to go back home and embark on my own business venture.

Working in teams has not always been something that I was interested in, I thought that people working in teams never get the credit that they deserve. I worked in teams before, and I ended up doing all the work. I thought that team work was a waste of time and it was basically a relax time for employees would did not actually contribute to the company in their individualized work.

Upon completion of this research I realize that team work is actually vital for improvement. Every one brings his/her unique skills and ideas to the table and in their own way contribute significantly to the growth of the company and their individual department. Employees get an opportunity to get acquainted with their co-workers and work towards a common goal. Setting goals can have its advantages in team work; if there is no order then there is no actual grounds for an effective team development.

I was grateful to have been granted the opportunity by Ms. Martin to observe her management styles and practices; it gave me an opportunity to see management in action and the constant work that is needed to run an effective and productive business establishment. Although this research focused a lot on team work, it also contains important facts about being an effective manager and the different technique's required to keep your employees motivated at all times.

It is easy to delegate authority, but it is quite another to follow through on every single aspect. Without proper coordination and time management skills employers would have a very difficult time keeping their employees at bay.

In the restaurant business there is many up's and downs and people in that particular industry rely highly on tourism. In places like the Caribbean and certain parts of the United States located on the coast, being in this particular industry can at times be very frustrating due to the intrusion of Mother Nature during certain times of the year.

I learned that an effective business is simply the enormous effort set forth by the owner and manager and the manner in which they tend to keep their business afloat even when things seem to be going wrong and the economy is suffering.

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