

**Assignment 4**

**Question** # **4.1**

The company’s product promised to a major customer is running late and there was intense pressure on the production team to deliver the product. The Direction of Production was eventually told by the company President to “deliver or else.” The Director therefore decided to ship the product, even though it had not gone through all its testing procedures. Members on the product team were angry by the uncertainty in the functionality and reliability of the shipped product. The Director however insisted: “We will just have to take that chance.” As the Director of Production, how would you act differently?

*Sampling tests could be done on a few samples: this will be less costly and consumes little or no time.*

**Question** # **4.2**

As advised by the company President, the Sales Department received a set of specific recommendations produced by an outside management firm to reorganize for maximum effectiveness. The Sales Manager has the hunch that several sales staff may disagree with the recommended changes. The Sales Manager himself is also not fully convinced of the merits of all recommendations. But he wants to implement them, at least in part. How should he proceed?

*A selection criterion is needed: these are recommendations from outside not resolutions. These decisions will affect staff and management. Let both parties select the decisions to implement and modify the ones they think to suite their company at time being.*

**Question # 4.7**

The Board of Directors received a proposal from a business partner to set up jointly an assembly plant in a third‐world country. This new plant will assemble final products using key components made by the company. Financial terms are attractive and the future marketing outlook is bright. There is just one problem. This third‐world country is not a democracy, has poor records on human rights, neglects to protect own environment, and does not safeguard workers’ rights. An investment placed by the company would boost this country’s economy and thus the political position of its current dictator. Should the company accept the proposal and why?

*The first thing about business is security, though it’s a non-economic factor. There is no security and coupled with other factors like no democracy, dictatorship, environmental and human friendlessness, is a serious threat to any investment.*

**Question # 4.3 ……………….. (Already Answered in Class)**

**Question # 4.6**

Jerry Lucas is the Division Director. As Branch Chief. Bob Sanford reports to Lucas. Bob Sanford has four section chiefs reporting into him. Bob Sanford is technically competent with extensive experience in solid rocket propulsion, being regarded to be the best expert in this field. He is highly dedicated to work, but inexperienced in managing technical people, as he has been on the job for only two years. Sanford handles his subordinates quite roughly. He reversed section chief’s decision without prior consultation with them. He demands that no information or data be transmitted to persons outside the group without his knowledge and concurrence. He would also bypass his section chiefs to go directly to people and encourage them to come to him directly with problems. Rumors have it that he places spies or informants within the group. As expected, he delegates no decision‐making authority to his section chiefs and regards his section chiefs to be technically incompetent. He creates an atmosphere of fear and suspicion with low group morale. Bob Sanford does not report to Jerry Lucas candidly on project progress and on difficulties encountered. He does not understand his own responsibility of building team‐work, enhance group morale and create employee satisfaction, while achieving the goals of his group. He is lacking the skills and willingness of resolving conflicts within the group. Finally, the section chiefs as a group went in to see Jerry Lucas, complaining about the lack of authority and the oppressive atmosphere in the section. What should Jerry Lucas do?

*Jerry Lucas should talk to Bob over the issue and counsel him. Jerry needs to act like a mentor for Bob and should give Bob tips regarding engineering management; this would include team work tips and leading tips.*

**Question # 4.5**

Marketing needs to submit a proposal to a global customer and called a review meeting next morning. By the time Bill Taylor, Design Manager, was so informed in the late afternoon, all his design staff had left and there was no one available. Bill Taylor decided to work on a proposal himself throughout the night so that he can talk with all his design staff in the next morning, one hour before the Marketing Review meeting. All staff agreed with the proposed design, except Henry King, a senior staff, who is recognized as the most experienced and best designer in the group. His objections were that the current design is too complex and that it would take another week to improve on the design for assuring its functional performance. In order to pacify (quell anger) him, Bill Taylor invited Henry King to come along to the Marketing Review meeting so that he would feel the pressure Marketing is exerting on Design. Unexpectedly, Henry King stood up and re‐iterated all his design objections at the Marketing Review meeting, causing a tremendous embarrassment to Bill Taylor and his boss, Stanley Clark, the Design Director. Bill Taylor became furious. What should Bill Taylor and Stanley Clark do?

*Bill Taylor and Stanley Clark should not show any negative emotions or interrupt Henry King because such express*

**Question # 4.4**

The Engineering Director of the company is asked to send one engineer abroad to assist in the installation of equipment. There are three qualified candidates, each working for a different manager under the Director. The Director knows that all three engineers will want to go, but their bosses will not, for fear of losing time in doing their own very critical projects. How should the Director make the choice?

*The director should meet with three managers, discuss with them and know the project which is least critical (or ask for their reports on critical projects) and all things being equal, he should send the candidate from that manager’s section. (Reasoned decision, involve managers)*

**Question # 4.8**

What are some of the important characteristics of effective leaders? Which of these characteristics are more difficult than others for engineers to acquire?

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| * Communication. * Integrity * Accountability * Empathy | * Humility. * Resilience * Vision * Influence | * Positivity. * Delegation * Confidence * Positivity |

Clarity purpose, simple desirable future Vision, idea generators, inspirational, conflict resolution, persistence, role models, explore minds, problem solving, not paraltzed by mistakes, have limitations.

…………………………………

The difficult ones are: delegation, resilience

**Question # 4.9**

The plant manager noticed a need for reducing the amount of waste materials which occurred in the production process. A task force was set up, comprising of the plant manager himself and two of his supervisors, to examine the problem. They met for three months and published the task force objectives, and findings on the plant bulletin board regularly. The plant manager found out to his surprise that the workers on the shop floor showed very limited interest in the task force and ignored the bulletin board entirely. At the end of the three‐month period, the task force came up with several excellent recommendations, which require changes in work practices. Most of the workers implemented the recommended changes very reluctantly and some even secretly worked to sabotage the new practices. Eventually, all recommendations were withdrawn. What went wrong? How should the plant manager have handled this case?

❶ **Communication problem**, ❷ **The team composition is bias** –

*they need to effectively communicate the information obtain to the shop floor workers in a way that motivates and convinces them to implement it. Secondly, a member from the shop floor should be in the team formed.*

**Question # 4.10**

The project was running late and the Section Manager thought, it was time for a pep‐talk (talk to make one more courageous or enthusiastic) with his staff. He realized that he was considered to be somewhat of an autocrat by his staff, but this time he thought that he would show them that he was one of the members on the team and that they would work together as one team in order to succeed. The Section Manager thought he made quite a good speech. He pointed out the project is running late and that, if they failed, the customer could cancel the contract. He explained further that as manager, he was responsible for the success of the project and so everyone would be equally to blame for the failure of the project. Unexpectedly, a group of staff came in to see him a few days later, seeking to clarify if they were all under threat of unemployment, should it turn out in the future that they were late and the contract was cancelled by the customer. What went wrong? How would you do differently? (Autocrat = dictator, tyrant, authoritarian, insist on complete obedience from others)

*The talk was a monologue; it was in-fact not a pep-talk, dictative and threatening in nature. The coming of staff days later and the word ‘unexpected’ indicates that manager did not achieve purpose as he though. And the staff is also preparing their plan B in case of the unexpected.*

OR:

*The pep-talk might have been successful, since the staff had the courage to come and see him a few days later. However, since the final decision was taken by manager, he might have dictated a decision that was not feasible to trash the issue at stake.*

*Solution: He should have been motivating as much as possible after the good speech and leave out the threatening phrases and pride in the explanations (… Manager responsible for success,… everyone is to be blamed …). There is power in the tongue. Implement staff decision.*

**Question # 4.11**

A regional sales manager suspected that one of his customers was having some financial troubles. However, he was reluctant to mention it to his boss, because he felt that he could be wrong. He kept quiet for several months, continuing to take large orders from this customer and hoping that this customer could recover from its troubles. Eventually, the customer went bankrupt and defaulted on the payment of several large bills. What went wrong? How would you do differently?

He should have reported the matter to his boss. Through the right channel, the problem could have probably been tackled effectively. We don’t take such chances in business, the company may crumbled and he will lose job as well of even be prosecuted as an accomplice.

**Question # 4.17**

Conflicts between technologists and managers may arise, when the technical professionals (with the skill to make a decisions) have to deal with a manager (who has the right to decide). Why such conflicts often exist in organizations wherein everyone works toward the same common goal?

*Each person has a role to play and how to play it best. Management mostly uses soft skills while technologies use hard skills. Secondly, managers are interested in profits and technologists in standards/specifications - thus points of view may differ at times. An optimal solution is attained that is both cost effective and meets specifications. The conflicts are to forge the company ahead.*

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