

# ICT3007: Management of Computer Engineering Projects

## Case Study 1 - Succession Transition and Company Turnaround

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### 1 Part C: Reflection

#### 1.1 1. What did Julie decide to do about the leak of confidential information in Sam's team? Discuss what she should have done? Why?

What was done:

- Julie decided to confront Sam directly about the leak of confidential information in his team.
- She decided not to escalate the issue to the board
- To avoid damaging Sams reputation and her own.

What should have been done and why:

- Julie should have spoken to Sam in private about the leak of confidential information.
- She should have convinced and advised him to discuss this issue with Steve and John possibly at a board meeting.
- Since the leadership dynamic is small and still a family dynamic there shouldn't be reason to not discuss this issue with the board.
- No ones reputation should be damaged if the issue is discussed in a professional mannerr.

#### 1.2 2. What did Sam decide to do about the software bug in Julie's product? Discuss what he should have done? Why?

What did Sam decide to do:

- Sam decided to warn Julie directly
- He made sure to be sincere and respectful in his approach, making sure the situation was explained clearly.
- He would then later discuss the issue with the board, when the bug would be fixed and the time is right.

The group agreed with the actions taken by Sam.

By warning Julie directly, he made sure that she had the opportunity to fix the bug before it became a bigger issue. This act showed how Sam put the business first and is willing to work with Julie, showing good leadership skills.

He tries to ensure that Julie won't feel attacked by his confrontation, by being sincere and respectful. He then plans to discuss the issue with the board, when the bug is fixed and the time is right. This will shine light on both Julie for being able to handle the situation and fix the bug under pressure. As well as Sam for practicing the openness and transparency that he preached during the initial board meeting proposal.

### **1.3 3. What did Steve decide to do about the conflict? Discuss what he should have done? Why?**

#### **1.3.1 What did Steve decide to do:**

Steve took 3 steps to mediate the conflict between Sam and Julie:

- He facilitated a structured discussion to address the grievances of both parties.
- He allocated limited resources to Julie's RnD efforts to support her innovation while ensuring Sam's sales campaigns remain operational.
- He developed a balanced resource-sharing policy to clarify and enforce boundaries for office space, meeting rooms, and personnel allocation.

#### **1.3.2 What should have been done and why:**

While the steps taken by Steve were reasonable, he could have considered taking some additional steps to address the root cause of the conflict with more effect.

- Establish Clear Role Definitions from the Outset, in order to clearly define Sam and Julie's boundaries of authority and responsibility.
- Create a Joint Planning Framework, so that Sam and Julie can work together to develop a shared vision and strategy for the company.
- Address the Underlying Cultural Issue, there might have been competitive pressures, team building activities and meetings could have been used to address this.

These steps are important to include as they help to prevent the issue from happening again, rather than simply solving it when it cropped up.

### **1.4 4. What did John decide to do about monitoring Sam and Julie? Discuss what he should have done? Why?**

What did John do:

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What should have been done and why:

## **2 Post Announcement**

### **2.1 5. Discuss the consequences of the announcement**

The announcement stated that John had created a fake scenario to test Sam and Julie.

#### **Positive Consequences:**

- Through the announcement, Sam and Julie now know how each other would react in similar situations.
- This might bring them to trust each other further.
- John gained the reassurance that Sam and Julie are capable of working together and handling difficult situations.

#### **Negative Consequences:**

- The announcement makes John seem unreliable, not respecting the family values that he preached and enforced.
- Although it might have been intended for good reasons, it evoked a disturbing scene that they had to tackle during operation.
- Steve will see this action from John as unprofessional. There would have been other ways to test their leadership principles, without going behind their back and causing drama.

- Steve might be taken a back from Jonh's actions and might reconsider his position in the company.
- The announcement caused a rift between the family members, which is not desirable in a family business.
- An enviroment of uncertainty has been created, which puts other on edge.
- This issue could trickle down to the employees, causing them to feel uncertain about the company's future and the people managing it.

## 2.2 6. Motivating the staff

- Revise the company's mission and vision statements to inspire and re-align the team with organizational goals.
- Implement effective workload management to better distribute and schedule tasks, reducing burnout.
- Establish a *talent development team* to engage employees in proposing innovative product ideas.
- Organize *team-building activities*, such as dinners, sports events, and other social engagements, to foster camaraderie.
- Enhance the *feedback system* by introducing 360-degree feedback to provide comprehensive and constructive performance insights.
- Increase communication through frequent check-ins with employees to address concerns and improve morale.
- Adopt a *democratic leadership style* to ensure employees feel heard and valued within the organization.
- Encourage Julie to delegate important tasks to her team, promoting involvement and ownership in the decision-making process.

### Why care about retaining the staff?

Sam and Julie should prioritize retaining their staff to ensure continuity, maintain productivity, and avoid the high costs of recruitment and training. Experienced employees hold valuable knowledge that drives innovation and sustains growth, while frequent turnover disrupts morale and team efficiency. Retaining motivated staff fosters a positive reputation, attracts talent, and supports long-term success by keeping the company competitive and aligned with strategic goals.

## 2.3 7. Role Changes and Responsibilities

Option 1: Everyone keeps their current roles and responsibilities.

Advantages:

- If things are going well, they likely will remain that way.
- No need to retrain or rehire.
- No need to change the company structure.

Disadvantages:

- Family might not be comfortable with Steve remaining in such a powerful position.
- Steve likely wants to retire soon.
- Sam and Julie are ambitious and might want to take on more responsibilities.

Option 2: Steve remains on the Boards as a non-executive director. Sam becomes the CEO and Julie becomes the CTO.

Advantages:

- Steve can still be involved in the company, so he can still use his experience to help the company, as well as Sam and Julie.
- Sam and Julie can take on more responsibilities.
- Steve can mentor Sam and Julie.
- Julie can use her technical knowledge to a better extent.
- Sam can use his leadership skills to a better extent.
- Julie can still help Sam with the technical strategy, but Sam now has enough experience and mentorship to make the final decisions.

Disadvantages:

- Julie might be unhappy with the decision.
- Steve might not be able to let go of the company.
- Sam might not be ready to take on the role of CEO.

Option 3: Steve retires, and Sam and Julie jointly take on the role of CEO.

Advantages:

- Sam and Julie can work together to make decisions.
- Sam and Julie can use their skills to make the company more successful.
- Steve can retire and enjoy his retirement.'
- Sam and Julie can learn from each other

Disadvantages:

- Sam and Julie might not be able to work together.
- Steve might not be able to let go of the company.
- Disagreements might halt decision making, making the company less efficient.

We opted for the second option as this would allow Steve to still be involved in the company, while Sam and Julie can take on more responsibilities. Steve can mentor Sam and Julie, and Julie can use her technical knowledge to a better extent. Sam can use his leadership skills to a better extent. Julie can still help Sam with the technical strategy, but Sam now has enough experience and mentorship to make the final decisions.

### 3 References