**MGT689 – EXAM II**

**All questions refer to the Mount Everest Case (also posted on our Canvas).**

Using theories covered in MGT689 (e.g. theories of motivation, team processes, communication and conflict), analyze the problem and explain why the tragedy occurred (FYI, you do not need to do a case analysis, just respond the questions below):

1. Teams. A. Discuss effective teams as it pertains to the case. B. Consider the idea of groupthink in the case. Provide examples. C. Consider the function of interpersonal trust. Provide examples from the case.

A.

Teams are formed with a great amount of trust, dependency and individuals capabilities to perform as well as support and rely on in achieving the same goal at the end of the day. In the given Case study of the serious tragedy that happened on May 10th of 1996, at Mount Everest was very unfortunate and ultimately can be said as a team failure in its risk management, decision making and having a better team coordination. It is clear to say from the series of events occurred that the team as a whole lacked high altitude climbing expertise and the confidence within its team members to achive the common goal. The team lacked proper training to take proper steps and decisions in case of extreme situations and conditions, coupled with delays, extreme weather conditions and screening of the climbers with their capabilities to climb the Everest. Although Rob Hall’s team had considerable experienced people onboarded, they all had climbed 8000 ft high mountains before the Everest expedition of 1996. Even then in building up an efficient plan for both the team was not possible since members from Scott Fischer’s team were not that experienced but he got onboarded with his friends and adventure enthusiasts. But it sounded like Fischer was more into fame than focusing on the expidition. Fischer was more inclined towards building recognition through the expedition than actually working on the plans and strategically chalking out a path and alternatives in case of failures. Both the teams lacked Strategic direction for their avalanche.

Instead, in the expedition every member in the team was on their own and had a discontent or lost confidence in scaling the mountain as a team. As mentioned in the case study, there were a few individuals who were incompetent to perform in the mountain climbing should have been identified and there should have been proper training for them. Once they qualify for screening procedures, they should have been taken into account for the expedition. Although Scott Fischer claimed he wants to eliminate human error in the expedition he failed to do so himself involving into multiple logistic issues and escorting people bach n forth to the camps, which caused him to exhaust early than expected. At such times he should have taken help from the team members / Sherpas who were appointed. The good weather is just a possibility until you come back home in one piece.

Team effectiveness lies in team enthusiastically and actively participating in the project work group tasks. Sharing their thoughts about other members in the group. At certain point they should open up about their choices, preferences, abilities and thoughts about the team members to build a stronger team. Group of complete strangers to climb makes uneasy situations, no stronger bonds and trust within team members doubts about one another and matter of concerns with their partners in the expedition but remain confident in own abilities. Discontent among the team members about wide not using supplemental oxygen during the summit. Harbouring doubts of oneself reaching top and making it to the summit was raising in acclimatizing activity. Disconnect amoung the climbers as a team. Lack to better coordination in logistics for Fischer caused his exhaustion. Delegation helps at times.

B.

Firstly, Rob Hall the leader on checking out the people at the base camp and knowing his fellow companion raised a concern over having incompetent members onboarded for the avalanche. This caused as the start of groupthink within the individuals of the expedition group. There were intuitions and fact discussions by an experienced climber Boukreev about the readiness and teams ability to conduct this climb, he mentioned a great point of groups lack of ability to make it up for the summit due to improper training and no readiness with their experience, confidence or determination in achieving it. He mentioned, mountain to be prepared for the avalanche instead of people to be prepared for which is quite derisory. It was a matter of concern within the teammembers if they could rely on their respective teammmebrs at extreme times. Fischer tagged along with him few clients who had never spent much time before in high altitudes, they were not prepared to appear in such highly intensive risky adventure to be part of. For example- Sandy Pittman who was a wellknown writer for magazines, she was not considered as high regard by the well accomplished climbers within the group instead she was more known to run for the limelight and viewed her as “grandstanding dilletante”, Fischer’s friend Dale Kruse who was sick of high altitudes created a discomfort in the group. Fischer sounded a bit over-confident about his plan of laying out ‘yellow brick road’ towards the summit. Fischer on various occasion had to face difficulties with the logistics created a large burden on him. There were instances where team saw the exertion of the leaders and that would convey a little demoralization of the overall expedition. Even when Krakauer expressed concern of his own ability to reach summit to Rob Hall the leader, he simply rejected his concern and strained on the fact he could get through such 39 times.Even Hansen who suffered frost bite was encouraged to not give up at this tough situation which was calling of death for that hour. Hansens deteriorating condition was a matter of great concern in Halls’ clients. Boukreev who was the guide climbed without oxygen, if he were with oxygen he could assist the other members in climbing rather than being more self centered in climbing and proving to be of no use to others.

C.

All members in the group found it difficult and hard time to build a trustful relationship amongst themselves. It was hardly a matter of trust when there was no bonding among the group members. Boukreev claimed he did not have good relationship because he was not fluent in English, Krakauer too raised a concern about bonding among the teammembers. The clients harboured doubts among themselves and other teammmembers in the group. Half of the population at base camp sounded delusional to assess their own abilities and weigh them against formidable challenges. Acclimatization exercise helped team members to understand their capabilities in the avalanche but failed in bonding together as a team to face further situations.There was overall discontent among the groups about their abilitiy to climb the summit with their fellow team members. The team lacked proper training to take proper steps and decisions in case of extreme situations and conditions, coupled with delays, screening of the climbers with their capabilities to climb the Everest. The businesss to help make amateur climber to make to the summit and make their dreams achieve cost lives of individuals. This was the significant failure in the history of Everest climbing where highest no of people died in a day. As disheartening as it sounds, it could have been avoided with a better preplanning, mental stablness, better coordination and communication and a great deal of risk taking with high mental and physical abilities for the teams. There were various instances where the members within the team lost confidence in other teammemebers and have thought to be on their own in the expedition. They made specific assumptions about their group members especially the lead, David Fischer who was the sole person handling all the logstics of all the individuals and was noted to be exhausted at initial stage itself.As mentioned earlier, the team overall lacked interpersonal trust due to various reasons and occasions in connecting with the team members.

Right Descision making , strategy failure, motivation preparing mindsets is important. Playing with lives is hazardous and can cause serious sideeffects. Downplaying the intuitions . bottlenecks to allow delegates to do their work was delayed to set the rope for las 500 meters to the summit . Lack of Communication within the team deteriorating health of leader, weak leader demoralize the team ability to pursue. Citical error during disorientation and spreading miscommunication or wrong information of unavailability of canisters at the dexcend south . Leaders/ guides too need support from the teammembers. Teammembers need to speak up when needed. End results to decision made or makingabout how and whether to proceed. One predominant root cause of the tragedy cannot be claimed.

1. Communication and conflict. A. Discuss the consequences of candid communication or lack of candid communicatin between team members in the case. Provide an example. B. Consider the impact of perceived status differences between team members in the case. Provide an example. C. Consider the role played by listening, e.g., selective listening in the case. D. Discuss conflict, e.g., constructive conflict, and commitment. Provide an example from the case.
2. There was clear lack of candid Communication within the group members. Firstly, there was lack of confidence among the teammembers about their fellow members capabilities at the base camp itself where various expedition groups that participated showed alarming lack of experience in climbing high altitudes. This created a matter of great concern among the leaders to others rather than having to save themselves in the climb. There were various instances where there was no effective communication within the group members or failed to share on common grounds in discussions. Trust is built on effective communication.

While people were tyring to know each other at the base camp, Krakauer found himself more comfortable talking to Hasnsen than any other members in the expedition group. He mentioned of finding none of the members having enough experience or any of them being a hard core climber to rely on in case of a tragedy up there, he expressed a lot discomfort and hard time in connecting with fellow individuals in the group. In turn several others were unsure of their perception among the members about them, that caused a less of communication and more of distress among the members.

Rob Hall at the start of summit expressed strict directions to reach the goal which could be more of Motivation and achievement of the summit than strict directions to follow with law and order. Also at base camp III Hall mentioned the members of their brain cells and body condition deteriorating instead of building up a better motivation among the team member, they were loosing focus to make it up to summit. There were limited radio jockey to communicate within the teammembers, Rob Hall had 3 of those with the leaders and Scott Fischer team also had limited of those to communicate better. Krauker raise this multiple times about greater concern of no connection among the team members, it was a team for name only they were not connected by rope or sense of loyalty in the expedition. They were afterall all on their own.

1. The group had definite imbalance with the number of hard core experienced climbers vs no climbing experienced ones. It was quite tough for each member to rely on one another. They were unsure of their stature and presence as accountable by their fellow companions in the climb. Although they had distictive status differences in case of Language, individual capabilities, previous climbing experience, high altitude survival, facing challenges, risk taking capability, facing extreme conditions, demographics, they lacked a definitive communication to open up share experiences and learn and guide from other individuals as a group. This created great sense of disconnect, and discomfort the among the members in the group. Also healthwise and physically few members suffered gravely and still continued hiking, especially Doug Hansen who was in quite bad condition after getting frost bite but still continued the summit which further led to ill effects of froxzen larynx saying he has put too much into the expedition and wish to give it back with everything he has got but little knowing that it could cost his life. Hansen’s detorirating condition had Halls’ client worried about the situation whereas Fischers were doing fine with good spirits and getting ready for the summit next day. This too created a bit of imbalance in the groups proceedings. All the members in expedition has cross cultural backgrounds and differences and uniqueness of their own. The people had their own assumptions and differences based on above mentioned factors, that caused a barrier in effective communication within the team members.

Fischer considered experience is overrated, lack of climbing and heights experience within teammebers was acknowledged but overlooked the fact. Unforseen circumstances delayed the logistics of oxygen canisters, dealing with Nepali porters caused exhaustive efforts in unnecessary situations. He should have started planning but he didn’t , concersn were raised by the guide for readiness and aility of the tema to climb.

1. Every person on the expedition had a fear and agreat concern about their own lives hence it was obvious they would seek for selective information listening and perceive based on their needs, aspiration background and motivation. Most of the times, extreme emotions play a greater role in effective communicating. Especially in case of Doug Hansen he was more of agonizing over the fact he couldn’t make it upto 300 vertical height last time that kind of forced him to achive this time, as Krakuer mentioned he was hell bent in the summit push! The case study clearly mentions the situations that every member faced and they had to take concious decisions with the position they were into. This was high risk taking and facing situation of ones life and death. Lack of trust, personality clashes, preconceived notion about a particular situation especially by Krakauer and Boukreev right from the start of their expedition frombasecamp till the Camp IV.   
   Also at Camp II where Fischers friend Kruse fell ill and was not able to take it further planned to return. Fischer could not hold up himself and escorted him back which must have definitely detoriarated his condition to more extent than actual. Whereas the guide could have helped him escort which Fischer did not want to leave his friend. He was not ready to listen to the fellow members for right decisions but involved emotionally in the situations.   
    The two Sherpas were expected to rope down the last leg- 500m of the summit which had no support but they were informed Montenegrins troop fixing it for them, which wasn’t the case. But due to the Halls rules they could not really fix up the missing belt with a rope which caused severe issue at the end while making a descent from the summit.This built up a bad reputation of of leader. In this case there were various barriers in effective communication within the team memebrs like selective perception, information overload, emotions, language, silence, communication apprehension, lying which can hardly be detected. There was no acceptance of feedback from the fellow companions which was not good.

It is a matter to great concern when the weather conditions were not that supportive, the goroup should have worked as a team and taken rightfull decision for betterment of all.

1. Constructive Conflict, commitment, example for the case

At Camp IV where everyone saw the deteriorating condition of Fischer they raised it with him and asked him to descend from Camp IV instead he convinced the expedition leaders to let him stay which was not a wise decision.

Rob hall tried to send himto Camp IV but Fischer did not yield even when his one eye was completelyblurred and barely could see himself. Everybody could observe Fischer was trying to ascend with great difficulty. So here instead o constructive conflict of looking of detoreriarating health condition Fischer tend to pursue the summit despite the fact he was not in a condition to make it up there or rather descend safely in such situation. He risked his life and this is a perfect example where there could have been better convincing ability for constructive conflict to save a life instead of losing!

1. Consider what are the lessons for business leaders/ managers/ team members from your analysis of this tragedy?From your own experiences, can you identify a situation where some of the factors you describe, e.g., in the previous questions contributed to an organization’s failure? How might you take corrective action to prevent that situation from occurring again?

Lessons for Business leaders—

* Strategic thinking is important
* Not loosing your alm in extreme situations
* Focus on goal is more important
* Team Motivation
* Readiness with a fallback plan in case of Plan A failure

Managers –

* Boukreev expressed rightly about the overall procedure and things happening incorrectly
* There was a discontent was raised at the start by Rob Hall which was rightfull intuition. Ignoring intuition will only hurt later, hence it is necessary to take actions as you see something is not right or needs to be corrected.
* Speaking out the truth will contribute to betterment at the right time
* Should never step back from expressing the rightful thoughts or ones intuition about the situation.

Team members—

* Should keep goalfocused in their mind
* Should follow the leaders instruction
* Follow their path to achieve success
* If you cannot lead or run for yourself just follow what is sexpected to do that should help long term

Corrective actions to avoid such situation in current case-

1. Train the team no matter how experienced or distinguished achievements are done by individual. Build the team with initial engagement bringing them closer, build trust among the team emmebers which is very important in expeditions. Make frequent communications happen within the team members. Builinding up a stronger strategy and Plan A, Plan B in case of the situation detoriarates. Have proper backup plans ready. Mountaineering needs to have a great deal of risk taking abilitiy to achieve the goal hence it was more logical to have risk management ability as topmost priority with the leaders.

2. Keeping the teams motivated with success stories, strategies with proper direction and empowerment to achieve the goal of making it up to the summit.Keeping the enthusiasm and excitement on all the time until it is achieved.

3. Improving Physcial Strength and mental strength of the individuals joining in the camp since they should be stable when taking decisions at risky situations for themselves as well as others.

4. Improvements in team building activity better communication avoiding demographic difference s focus more on the goal than the previous achievements.

5. Having better equipments the walkie talkie, radio speakers which can be more in number for each individual since each life is important.

6. As the teams were equipped with experienced individual there should have been some delegeation of team leader responsibilities to toehers that could not only build trust of carrying out activity but also a sense of responsibility among the team members as a team which is very important.

Some incidents on same lines as the expedition case study can be accounted for few product failures in the organisationwhich can be called out specifically where -   
- there was little or no team communication

- any major failures were not addressed to the managers on timely basis

- the individuals in the team were loaded with lots of work at the same time when the deadlines are closer, it becomes difficult for them to track the bugs and keep resolving the issues to deliver a bug free product  
- End goal of bug free product delivery should be priority.

In order to avoid such situation to occur again-

- I would set a single goal instead of multiple parallel goals and work towards achieving the single goal at a time. Focused and determined.

-Have a delegration of work that creates sense of responsibility within the team.

- If goal set is agreeable to all the team members chalk out the plan with a schedule to deliver it within said or given timeline after discussiona and brainstorming with the team members.

- We need to keep the team motivated and encouraged to keep on working towards common achievable goal.  
- The teammembers should also follow the leaders instruction and focus on what they do one at a time  
- instead of spending time for multiple projects they really need to focus on what could work best.  
- Moral bonding , right facts information transmission avoiding false or rumors to spread creating apprehension among the individuals in the group.

1. From a motivation perspective, A. Pick a motivation model we discussed and apply it to one of the indiviudals in the case. B. What kind of individuals would aspire to have such goals (e.g., reach the summit of the highest mountain)? C. Might there be, and what might be the similarities with business leaders/ managers? Consider the qualities of Hall and Fischer. Are these the same attributes required to lead/ manage an effective project team in business situations?
2. Motivation Model- Goal setting theory applied to individual - Scott Fischer.

In the case study, Scott Fischer was one of the individuals having extensive and reputed experience in climbing high altitude mountain. In Goal setting theory the individual is driven and motivated until the goal is aciveed by any means it is as important as an individual or a group in this case to achieve what they were to make the best use of resources and climb at the top.

A defined Goal influence peoples beliefs about their ability to perform a task, it motivates the people to perform better than their current capacity to perform that requires to succeed at the goal. The Goal should be SMART i.e. Specific Measurable Achievable Relatable and Time bound. In this case it covers all the aspect of the mountain climbing, where Fischer prepared a good mindset in his group of individuals who were in good spirits when at Camp IV as compared to Hall’s clients. Also, Majority of Scott Fischers team members were able to make it up to the top and were also able descend from the summit that means they were in good spirits to have it all.

Group based goals are more effective than collectivitist or individualist cultures. While setting goals all the members in the group should be also involved, this will help in accepting and commiting them to achieve the goal.

Hence we can say that Scott Fischer was much better leader than Rob Hall nevertheless Rob Hall also had his best set up in making it to the Summit but the team members were more concerned about their team members health who were not in a good shape and that deduced the morale of Rob Halls group individuals.

1. Kind of individual who aspire to have such goals.

A leader or a group who is able to work towards the common goal along with the team members and having good spirit in achieving the same should be considered as the perfect example or way to follow this Motivation Goals. Goals influence people belief for their ability to perform task. This is because people compare their present capacity to perform with that required to succeed

in the goals. It has curvilinear relationship with the performance. Hence it should be best

1. Considering the qualities of Hall and Fischer, There were at times much good as a leader but should have also considered the other part of the story where they need to re-consider their decision based on physical and mental capacity of the individual.

1. Lateral communications, which was goo din case of the leaders of this expedition and this helps in business projects too to provide instructions communicate policies and procedures feedbacks. Also help each ther in times of crises or emergencies

2. Explain why decision was made, if there are any particular decisions made in the expedition those need to be communicated effectively with reasons to the members because it might cause them to prepare accordingly for next steps. There were times when the time bound was not followed by the group leader Rob Hall, he should have been firm on his time scale but at times if at all it was changed he did not communicate well with the team members.

1. Sharing with superiors, transmit information effectively and efficiently. Communication is key to have all on one page in the
2. Sharing ideas, communicating concerns information , suggestions to the higher levels confronting situations and expressing oneself than remaining silent, constructive ideas for improvement should be discussed within the teammembers
3. Communication for relationship development sharing likes and dislikes or discussing situations maintaining agreements, disclosure of oneself and building up a trust based on experience or revelation of oneself.
4. Right Descision making , strategy failure, motivation preparing mindsets is important. Playing with lives is hazardous and can cause serious sideeffects. Downplaying the intuitions . bottlenecks to allow delegates to do their work was delayed to set the rope for las 500 meters to the summit . Lack of Communication within the team deteriorating health of leader, weak leader demoralize the team ability to pursue. Citical error during disorientation and spreading miscommunication or wrong information of unavailability of canisters at the descend south . Leaders/ guides too need support from the teammembers. Teammembers need to speak up when needed. End results to decision made or making about how and whether to proceed. One predominant root cause of the tragedy cannot be claimed. Similarly there are different situation in business projects which one has to face and cannot be concluded on a single root cause for all.