Chapter.. 6

Leadership

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6.1 Learning Objectives for this Chapter

Having completed this chapter you will be able to:

- Appreciate the need for effective leadership of projects

- Understand the components of leadership

- Understand the role of motivation and describe some theories about human motivation.

- Describe some approaches to managing conflict

- Understand the importance of appropriate management style

- Be able to describe the team roles defined by Belbin

6.2　Introduction

This chapter continues our examination of the "people" aspects of project management. It looks in particular at some of the leadership issues facing a project manager. While this chapter cannot attempt to cover all topics relevant to leadership, it will introduce some of the principal issues arising when leading project teams.

6.3　The Need for a Leader

In a previous chapter we learned that a project manager should aspire to secure the best possible group of people to deliver the project objectives. We further concluded that the ideal arrangement was to have a "real team" i.e. "…*a small number of people with complementary skills who are equally committed to a common purpose…*"

You may ask why one would need a leader at all if you had such a perfect team! Well, studies of successful teams have shown two main success factors for <u>any</u> type of team:

1. The presence of a mix of personalities and abilities of the team members.

2. **The presence of an accepted and respected team leader who managed the team appropriately**

Therefore the project manager needs also to be a strong leader. The next section explores some of the knowledge and skills required to be a leader.

6.4　What is Leadership?

There are many definitions of leadership (There are also numerous books written on the subject - at least 10,000 of them available from www.amazon.com!)

In the context of project management, I think the most concise definition comes from John Garnett, Director of the Industrial society:

Leadership is achieving results through people

This fits nicely with two of our main project management themes – a *constant focus on the end results* and an awareness *that projects are delivered through people.*

6.5   What does a Leader do?

To help us in breaking down the job of a leader let's take a look at a slightly more detailed definition of leadership:

Leadership: The process of influencing others to accomplish a task or mission by providing purpose, direction and motivation.

How do leaders do this?

1. Having a vision of the goal

2. Having a good plan to achieve it

3. Building a team inspired and committed to achieving the goal

4. Actively motivating and helping your team members to give their best efforts

6.6   Motivation

We have seen that the job of the leader is to inspire her team and influence them to accomplish the objectives. Part of this influence involves helping to ensure that individual team members are motivated.

Motivation is the extent to which an individual is engaged with their roles and responsibilities on the team.

For each individual there may be many such motivational factors: financial, social, personal etc. This is a complex area of psychology, but there are two classic theories about what motivates workers:

- The Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow)

- The Motivator- Hygiene Approach (Herzberg)

6.6.1   Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow did a number of studies of workers in a Californian electronics factory and concluded that there is hierarchy of human needs which drives motivation. This hierarchy is often shown as a pyramid with the more important needs at the top... See the diagram.
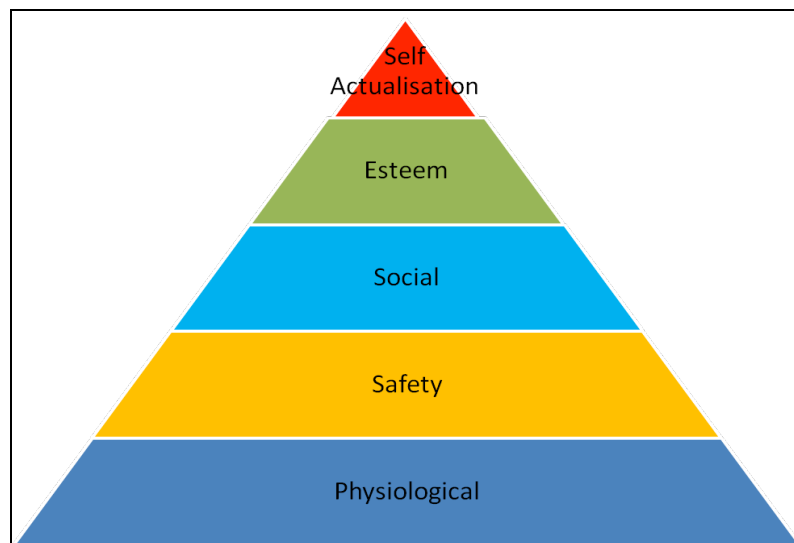
Figure 1 – Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow proposed firstly that a person's needs at any one time influences their behaviour. He also proposed that people always aspire to higher needs, but that they must first satisfy their current level of need. The most basic "starting" needs are shown towards the base of the pyramid. They will not move on to want more at the next higher level until they satisfy some of their current needs. This applies at each level of the pyramid.

Examples of particular needs at each level are:

- Physiological Needs

  o E.g. Eating, Shelter, Warmth

- Safety & Security

  o E.g. Personal Security, Health

- Social

  o E.g. Friendship, Love, Family

- Esteem

  o E.g. Self Esteem, respect of others

- Self Actualisation/Growth

  o E.g. Learning, Creativity,

6.6.2   Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Psychologist, Frederick Herzberg, proposed another view of motivation. He suggested that there are two sets of factors which influence motivation. There is a set that causes job satisfaction and another distinct set that causes dissatisfaction.
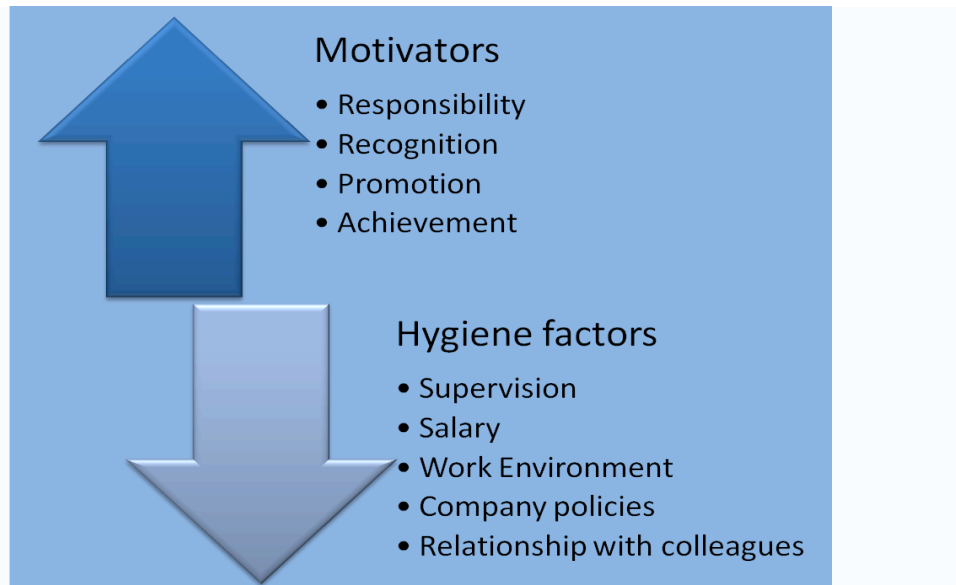

Figure 2 - Herzbergs 2 Factors

His "Two Factor Theory" distinguishes between:

Motivators; which give positive satisfaction

and

Hygiene factors, which, if they exist, do not cause motivation. However dissatisfaction may result if these factors are absent.

It is important to understand how hygiene factors operate. For example - the availability of clean running water in your workplace is not necessarily "motivational" however if the supply were to fail for a length of time, this would be likely to lead to dissatisfaction. Interestingly, Herzberg identified that salary increases can be a motivational factor in the short term. However the increased salary soon becomes the accepted norm. It becomes a hygiene factor in that you are likely to become dissatisfied only if it falls below that of your colleagues.

6.7   Dealing with Conflict

The team's perception of their leader can be influenced greatly by how she acts in times of conflict, particularly when this conflict concerns team members.

In this context we would define conflict as *a situation where one party perceives its interests are being opposed or set back by another party*.

Most people will default to a preferred style of handling conflict. Studies have found that there are 5 main styles as per the diagram
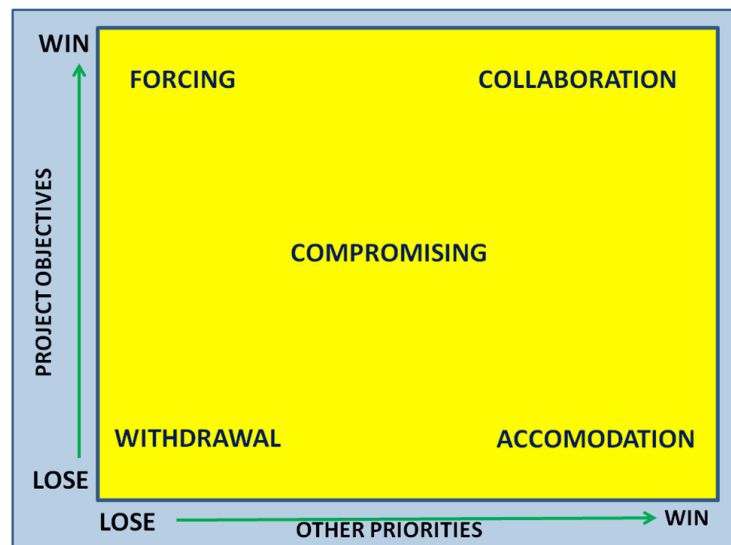

Figure 3 - Approaches to Conflict

1. **The Forcing /Competitive Leader**: Leaders who use a competitive style tend to push their point of view and use their power to achieve their "win" , sometimes at the expense of the views of others. This style may be used legitimately where a quick decision is necessary.

2. **The Collaborative Leader:** This is sometimes called the Confronting approach. The leader tries to encourage co-operation and openness. Useful when the situation is easy to define and understand or when trying to resolve recurring conflicts.

3. **The Compromising Leader:** These leaders will try to find some resolution for all parties involved. Use it when you are getting close to a deadline.

4. **The Accommodating Leader**: This approach involves accommodating the needs of others above the needs of the project. This may be appropriate in certain circumstances but is generally not a favoured approach

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5. **The Withdrawing/Avoiding Leader:** This leader will retreat from the conflict and perhaps delegate it. By doing this the issue can be temporarily parked and may dissipate. This may be appropriate if the issue is of little consequence but otherwise it is a weak approach.

Note that there is no one recommended style of conflict management. Each style has its application in particular scenarios. You should think about your own default approach and be prepared to consider other approaches when necessary.

6.8   Leadership Styles

You should appreciate at this stage of the course that projects are dynamic things and that each phase brings a different focus and a new set of issues. You have also seen that teams evolve in stages as they develop and mature. The project manager needs to be aware of the situation and apply an appropriate leadership style.

When each of us is put into a position of leadership we tend to assume a preferred style. There are a number of methods of classifying leadership style – the method I describe here is one developed by Robert Blake & Jane Mouton and is called the Blake-Mouton Grid.

The grid is based on the results of questionnaire completed by leaders and is designed to test two things;

A) The leaders concern for People

B) The leaders concern for Production

Scores for both A and B are calculated on scale of 1 to 9 and the combined result places an individual within a grid similar to the one below.
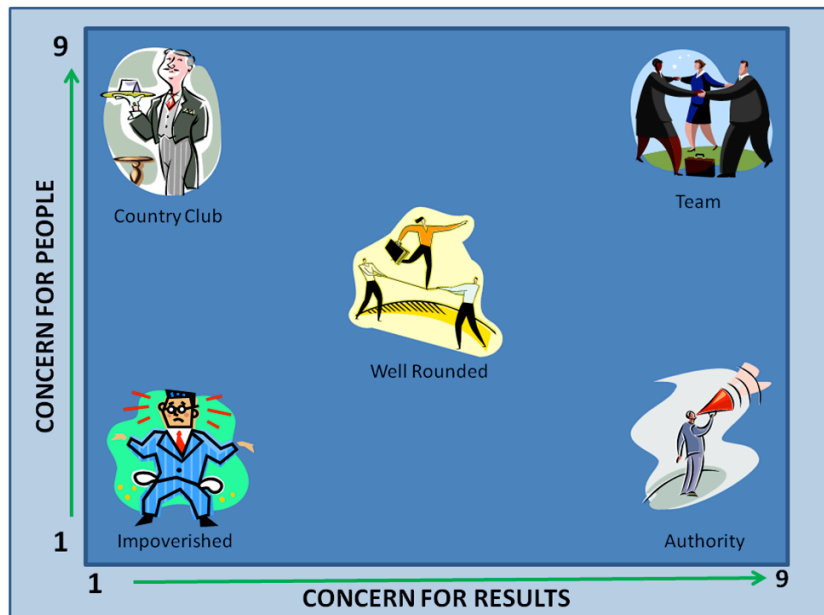
Figure 4 - Blake & Mouton's Leadership Grid

The five extremes of styles shown on the grid are:

1) Country Club Management –Concern for people is high and concern for production is low. Avoidance of conflict and attention to peoples needs take priority over production. Atmosphere is relaxed but not necessarily the most productive.

2) Impoverished Management – Concern for both people and production is low. Managers in this mode are concerned with maintaining the status quo. Apathy and indifference are apparent so production is low.

3) Well rounded (Middle of the road) Management – Positive push for results but not at the risk of complete disregard for morale. Results can be acceptable.

4) Authority or Task management – There is high concern for production and low concern for people. The manager's job is to ensure work is completed with minimal interference from human factors.

5) Team management –There is high concern for both people and production. Maximum production is obtained from a set of people committed to the required tasks.

It is important for a project manager to be aware of their own default style. It would not be uncommon for a manager to believe themselves to be entirely within the "Well rounded "or "Team manager" positions in the grid. However they may be likely to demonstrate inappropriate use of other styles.

6.9   Team Makeup - Belbin Roles

In section one of this chapter we learned that a significant factor in team success was:

"..the presence of a mix of personalities and abilities of the team members"

As leader of the team the project manager must be aware of this mix. Obviously this should be considered first when planning and building a new team. However awareness of this mix is also useful when leading and motivating an existing team.

Meredith Belbin identified 9 team roles as follows:

Role	Behaviours
Coordinator	*Tries to establish the goals and agenda of the group. Sums up the feelings and accomplishments of the group. Acts as a chairperson.*
Team Worker	*Diplomatic, mild, encourages cooperation.*
Resource Investigator	*Explores outside opportunities, extrovert, makes contacts*
Plant	*Presents new ideas and approaches. Tends to be intelligent and introverted*
Monitor-Evaluator	*Analyses the options. Sober and strategic*
Shaper	*Challenges the team to improve. Loves pressure*
Implementer	*Puts ideas into action. Reliable & efficient*
Completer Finisher	*Ensures thorough, timely completion., Searches out errors, Conscientious and anxious*
Specialist	*Provides specialized skills. Single minded, dedicated*

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This model can help to understand team dynamics but it should not be used as the sole basis for making decisions about the team.

6.10   Final thoughts on leadership…

"It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit." (President Harry S Truman)

"A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline." (Harvey Mackay)

"The most important thing in life is not to capitalise on your successes - any fool can do that. The really important thing is to profit from your mistakes." (William Bolitho, from 'Twelve against the Gods')

"I praise loudly. I blame softly." (Catherine the Great, 1729-1796.)

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References & Resources

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www.mindtools.com - The free section on this site contains some useful information, techniques and templates on leadership and other management issues

Student Notes