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Group Formation Sheet**

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Question 01

Do you agree with Jasmine's assessment that Rhett is Machiavellian and a narcissist? Why or why not?

Yes. I agree with Jasmine's opinion of Rhett being both Machiavellian and a narcissist.

According to Christie and Geis (Christie & Geis, 2013), Machiavellianism is a personality trait characterized by manipulateness, lack of empathy, deceitfulness strategic thinking, and a tendency to see other people as resources to achieve one's own goals. When going through the given case study, there are several points that shows Rhett is a Machiavellian.

One reason Rhett can be considered as Machiavellian is, his manipulative behavior. According to the above definition, manipulateness is a main characteristic of a Machiavellian. In the case study, it says that he repeatedly convinces his colleagues to stay out late, without thinking about their personal relationships and the issues they may have to face. According to the given situation, it is clear that he manipulate everyone to join with him or otherwise get bullied by him and his colleagues. This manipulative behavior shows a key Machiavellian trait of using others to serve for his desires.

Another trait of Rhett's that shows he is a Machiavellian is, his lack of sympathy. In the given case study, it is mentioned that, when one of his colleague opened up about his personal problem caused by late night hang outs, Rhett responded by laughing at him rather than giving support and advice. He should have been more concerned about his friend, because Rhett is the one who convince them to hang out in nights. His inability to sympathize indicates another characteristic of a Machiavellian, who disregards others' emotional needs.

Rhett also engage in inappropriate social behavior with multiple female colleagues, while hiding his marriage status. This is an evidence of his willingness to lie and manipulate others to fulfill his own personal interests. By hiding his marriage status and lying about his other personal affairs, he have mislead his female colleagues just to fulfill his own satisfaction. This information shows , the tendency to deceive others to fulfill personal interests, which is a another trait of a Machiavellian. According to the given case, it is understandable that he has a strong informal power over his colleagues, which shows his manipulative influence. Even one of his colleagues feel pressured that not socializing with Rhett could jeopardize his chances for promotion. Another female colleagues also feels the same about her chances for promotion. These situation shows that how much of an

influential power Rhett has to control everything including his upper-level staff. Each of these behaviors, namely manipulateness, lack of empathy, inappropriate relationships, influencing power indicates that Rhett is a Machiavellian.

According to the (Yakeley, 2018), Narcissism is a personality disorder defined by an exaggerated sense of self-importance, a desire for excessive attention and admiration, and an inability to empathize with others. Narcissists often view themselves as superior and indispensable. Rhett's behavior aligns closely with these traits, as seen in his interactions and influence within his company.

One clear indicator of Rhett's narcissism is his charisma and natural leadership skills. As mentioned in the given case, they view him as the "undisputed master of the sale", and he uses this charisma combined with strong product knowledge to exceed quotas repeatedly. This shows, he is a skillful individual at what he does. One trait of a narcissist is that, they are good at what they do. Because of this, they tend to think they are superior than the others. In Rhett's case also we can think in this manner because everyone in the company including sales managers, VP sales, seeks for Rhett's consultants, experience and admire him when it comes to his job. Therefore, Rhett could also be thinking that he is more important, admirable, and superior to the others in the company which makes him a narcissist.

Also in the case, it is mentioned that, Rhett is someone who "drew people to him like a magnet". This indicates that Rhett can make others attracted to him by talking with them. And also his colleagues treat him special and admire him because he makes them feel special. Because of these reasons, Rhett should have the idea of being a superior, more important person among those colleagues. This sense of self-importance and constant admiration by others drives Rhett to be a narcissist.

In the given case, one of Rhett's colleagues refers him and his hang-out friends as "his-pack". This phrase shows those who hang-out in the nights with him are not friends more likely followers of Rhett. This leader-follower dynamic strengthens up Rhett's view of himself as superior, which will increase his narcissist tendencies by making him feel more valued and central to the team's hierarchy.

Each of these behaviors proves that he is also a narcissist.

Question 02

Assuming that Rhett is Machiavellian and a narcissist, what is the most effective way to minimize the damage he can do to other employees?

It is important to put policies, encourage team work that limit Rhett's damaging behavior and maintain the values and benefits for the company while handling the damage of his actions. As a narcissistic and machiavellian personality, Rhett's actions show continuous effects which leads to unproductive relationships at work, lower team morale, and pose ethical and legal issues. Impact from these negative behaviours can be overcome through following set of actions

1. Setting up clear policies and boundaries to improve the organizational boundaries
2. Introducing mentoring/leadership program to enhance team alignment
3. Training employees in conflict resolution through knowledge of emotional intelligence
4. Introducing performance evaluation based on team behaviors through feedback

1. Setting up clear policies and boundaries to improve the organizational boundaries

By introducing specific guidelines on interpersonal relations and working relationships within the organization could prevent negative impact and protect the well-being of their employees. Research shows that setting clear boundaries that prevent favoritism and encourage professional behavior when unofficial power structures gain control. People with high Machiavellianism grow in situations where they can control others with unofficial authority without facing consequences. So HR could intervene if a written code of conduct is established that clearly defines acceptable, appropriate behaviors and communication norms within the employees.

The risks caused by Rhett's behavior can be further mitigated by policies that restrict relationships with direct reports. Policies that guarantee openness and avoid tensions with personal interests can balance the judgmental behavior he exhibits. His relationships have caused discomfort and suspicions among staff members. Concerns of Rhett's influence on promotions and career advancement would also be solved by establishing a confidential complaint structure that would allow staff members to report issues without fear of backlash.

2. Introducing mentoring/leadership program to enhance team alignment

Introducing a mentorship program that promotes openness of the management and align team members with business ideals rather than unofficial power dynamics in order to overcome Rhett's disruptive effect. Although Rhett's industry experience and charisma are valuable for the company, redirecting his influence through official mentorship or leadership programs could lead to a more positive work environment creating productive relationships among the employees. Rhett could be inspired to use his abilities in encouraging others without insulting or diminishing others by taking sides and showing favoritism.

"After controlling for confounding variables (e.g., gender, education, working hours), these researchers found narcissism to be positively related to salary and Machiavellianism to be positively related to leadership position and career satisfaction, whereas psychopathy was negatively related to all outcomes. These findings confirm the darkness of psychopathy but at the same time demonstrate that narcissism and Machiavellianism may have some adaptive value." (McHoskey, 1995)

Based on this research data, we can see that narcissism and machiavellianism can be minimised through leadership programs and improving their job satisfaction through using their skills for mentoring programs. For example, arranging regular feedback meetings with mentors and team members allows constructive criticism and redirection of potentially harmful habits. Additionally, Rhett's competitive personality is given an chance for organizing mentorship programs, which encourage him to be acknowledged for teamwork rather than criticising others.

3. Training employees in conflict resolution through knowledge of emotional intelligence

Considering the negative effects of highly-conflicting personalities that affect team morale, HR could use conflict resolution training to encourage empathy, emotional intelligence, and effective team communication. This would lead to a more flexible work environment by allowing team members to learn how to handle interpersonal conflicts and deal with challenging personalities. Conflict resolution training develops an awareness of how to handle competitive tendencies in a positive way and helps employees set boundaries.

"In addition, EI measures and measures of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy exhibited some significant moderator effects that influence the strength of these links."(Miao et al., 2019)

Rhett will also develop the skills necessary to understand how he affects other people and learn how to use his motivation in ways that encourage constructive connections. This training would be beneficial in encouraging team members to voice concerns constructively, creating a culture of mutual respect and understanding.

4. Introducing Performance Evaluations Based on Team Behaviors Through Feedback

Performance assessments are another useful way for promoting productive interpersonal behavior and discouraging disruptive behavior. Since Rhett's great sales performance contributes to his impact, it is necessary to establish evaluation metrics that consider individual accomplishments into account such as teamwork, diversity, and adherence to business values. This approach aligns with the studies of the impact of narcissist behaviour and machiavellism, which shows performance assessment of employees should consist of situational and task performance in order to discourage ineffective work practices.

By introducing a "peer feedback" factor into the performance assessment, for instance, employees can offer their perspective of each employee on interpersonal contributions and unpleasant actions to promote productive relationships among the coworkers.

"Their distinctiveness became most apparent in our examination of the external correlates, including both self-report and performance measures. Their locations in the five factor space of personality revealed only one commonality across the triad, namely, low agreeableness." (Paulhus & Williams, 2002)

Based on the above research best factor for making people understand their narcissist and machiavellian actions are through well organized performance measurement metrics. So this will inspire Rhett to improve his accomplishments and his impact on team morale. This action could show that his growth within the organization is dependent upon both his sales accomplishments and his ability to maintain pleasant, productive connections with coworkers

Question 03

Assuming that you knew ahead of time that Rhett's personality included the Dark Triad. Would you still hire him for a sales role? Why or why not?

Hiring Rhett for a sales role is inadvisable due to the presence of troubling personality traits that

fall under the "dark triad": machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Individuals who exhibit these traits can temporarily boost performance, particularly in high-stakes, high-pressure roles like sales. However, their long-term impact on team dynamics, company culture, and reputation can be damaging. Here's a closer look at why these traits are problematic for a performance-critical role within the organization:

1. Machiavellianism

According to (Forsyth et al., 2012) The Machiavellian personality is defined by three sets of interrelated values. First is having an avowed belief in the effectiveness of manipulative tactics in dealing with other people. Second, having a cynical view of human nature. Third, having a moral outlook that puts expediency above principle. Individuals with this personality, can yield short-term success in sales due to their skill in "reading" clients and adapting strategies accordingly. However, when unchecked, these tendencies can foster a highly negative work atmosphere.

In Rhett's case, his manipulative behavior is evident in how he interacts with team members. For instance, he often isolates colleagues whom he perceives as less beneficial to his personal agenda, including those who question or challenge his approach. Team members like Malcolm have reported feeling excluded and disempowered, as Rhett seems to form "inner circles" of favored individuals. This favoritism not only damages morale but also creates divisions within the team, fostering an environment where collaboration is undermined. While such manipulation may serve short-term sales goals, it destabilizes the supportive, collaborative culture that the company needs to bring out the best in each individual for high productivity. In this way, transitioning to a new product line will not be overly challenging for the company.

2. Narcissism

Narcissists tend to exaggerate their achievements, avoid criticism, refuse to compromise, and seek relationships only with admiring individuals (W. K. Campbell, 1999). To others, they often appear arrogant, self-promoting, aggressive, and generally less likable (J. Y. Campbell et al., 2008). Narcissists frequently exhibit confidence and charm, which can be highly effective in a sales role. Rhett's charisma helps him succeed in winning clients, boosting his sales numbers, and potentially securing high-value contracts for the company.

3. Psychopathy

Traits associated with psychopathy, such as a lack of empathy and impulsivity, may explain Rhett's irresponsible actions and failure to consider the repercussions of his behavior. While these traits may encourage risk-taking, they can also lead to behaviors that undermine team morale, cohesion, and mutual respect among peers.

While Rhett's superficial charm and manipulative skills may drive immediate sales, the long-term impact on the company would likely be highly damaging. The hostile and divisive environment he fosters could result in higher turnover, as valued employees may leave to escape a negative workplace culture. Additionally, any incidents of perceived harassment, favoritism, or mistreatment could expose the company to legal liabilities, which would be costly both financially and reputationally. His behavior may also erode trust with clients, especially if his impulsive and unempathetic nature influences how he manages client relationships. Inconsistent or transactional interactions with clients can harm the company's reputation, leading to a decrease in repeat business and referrals. If left unchecked, this toxic environment could extend beyond his immediate team, weakening the overall culture and making it challenging to attract and retain talent in the future. For these reasons, it would be beneficial for both the company and its employees to refrain from hiring Rhett, allowing other sales team members the opportunity to grow and develop their skills over time.

Question 04

Based on the above scenario, what is your idea about the level of job satisfaction experienced by Rhett Stark at Vertical Horizon?

Job satisfaction

To analyze Rhett Stark's job satisfaction at Vertical Horizon, we can use key dimensions of job satisfaction that help define the factors influencing an employee's overall contentment. Research indicates that job satisfaction depends on various aspects, such as salary, supervision, and promotion opportunities. As Kahuhira (2018) notes, "Employees are dissatisfied with low salaries, poor supervision, and lack of promotion" (Kahuhira, 2018)

When evaluating Rhett's job satisfaction, it's essential to consider these dimensions, which encom-

pass aspects like the nature of the work, employee pay, opportunities for advancement, supervision, and relationships with coworkers. Rhett's behavior and interactions with his team reveal his level of satisfaction within these areas.

In analyzing Rhett Stark's job satisfaction, we can also consider insights from the Impact of Exchange Variables on Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and Neglect. This study indicates that, "high satisfaction and investment encouraged voice and loyalty, and discouraged exit and neglect." Moreover, it highlights that satisfaction and investment interact, with higher levels of investment strongly promoting voice, especially when satisfaction is high (Rusbult et al., 1988)

So, it is important to apply the Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect (EVLN) framework, which helps interpret Rhett's responses to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction more accurately.

Work Itself

Rhett's job as an outside sales representative might not truly satisfy him, even though he performs well. He consistently meets his sales targets because of his charm and product knowledge, but there are hints that he finds the work dull rather than exciting. His behavior, like staying late at work and then going out to clubs, suggests he might be trying to fill a gap of dissatisfaction. While he meets the expectations of his role, his focus on socializing and influence outside of work might mean that the job itself doesn't provide the excitement he wants. Instead of feeling a strong sense of responsibility for his work, Rhett might be using his informal power to make his job feel more enjoyable and livelier. This could explain why he builds close relationships with coworkers and seeks approval from other indications that, despite his skills, he may not feel truly fulfilled in his role.

Pay

Based on his reputation as an "undisputed master" and high-performing sales representative, it implies that he is well compensated. Also, Rhett's status and informal power within the company may come with additional recognition, and it may further increase his satisfaction with pay and benefits. He likely perceives his payment as fair and reflective of his significant contributions, especially given his key role in supporting the company's product transition. This alignment between his performance and financial rewards may be a source of his job satisfaction.

Promotional Opportunities

Rhett's desire for informal influence suggests he feels his reputation in the company doesn't fully reflect his achievements. Although he's a skilled, experienced sales representative who is often consulted by management, he might feel his efforts aren't recognized with an official title or leadership role. This lack of formal acknowledgment could be a source of frustration. By gathering a following and shaping the team's social activities, Rhett appears to be seeking validation and respect beyond his designated role, and that indicates the desire of him for more recognition and appreciation than his current position provides.

Supervision

In terms of supervision, Rhett seems to receive a lot of support from his manager, which likely makes him feel more satisfied with his job. The manager's approval of Rhett's influence within the team may help him feel valued and recognized. However, this friendly but relaxed management style does not effectively address Rhett's disruptive behavior, showing a lack of control. While this weak oversight allows Rhett to act without limits, the manager's support still likely boosts Rhett's overall satisfaction in his position.

Coworkers

When we consider Rhett's relationship with his coworkers, he seems to build close connections with some team members, mainly through after-work socializing, but his influence also creates division within the team. Some coworkers feel left out, as shown by Malcolm's concerns about being excluded from Rhett's close set of friends. Rhett likely feels satisfied with his relationships because of the status and influence he has over certain team members, rather than promoting true teamwork. His behavior creates an "in-group" dynamic that makes him happy but can make others feel uncomfortable and unwelcome.

Application of the Exit–Voice–Loyalty–Neglect (EVLN) Framework

The Exit–Voice–Loyalty–Neglect (EVLN) model (Hirschman, 1970), is a framework often used to analyse an employee's reaction to dissatisfaction at work. This model reveals the employee responses using four possible actions. In the case of Rhett Stark, his behaviors suggest a low level of job satisfaction, even though he is a high performer and more valuable to the company.

Analyzing his behaviors through the EVLN framework, it indicates his underlying attitudes toward Vertical Horizon.

Neglect: Rhett's disregard for team welfare, such as pressuring colleagues in The entire success of Vertical Horizon depends on Rhett, which proves he surpasses quotas and does well in his job. But his disruptive impact on colleagues, such as pressuring them into doing too many late-night activities and ignoring their personal issues, shows a lack of concern for the team's welfare and the culture of the business. His actions also reveal a lack of accountability, especially when he interacts with female colleagues from his own team, whom he manipulates without considering their career or personal welfare. This implies that he is not entirely committed to the company's principles or his colleagues' well-being, which is indicative of job Neglect (Withey & Cooper, 1989).

Voice: Although Rhett uses "voice," he does it in a negative and selfish way. He ignores the organization's objectives and core values in favor of using his informal power for personal benefit rather than trying to constructively address his dissatisfaction. He needs to establish his social control over the team, which alienates and devalues Malcolm and other staff members who feel excluded because they refuse to participate in Rhett's social activities. This strategy reduces the possibility of a cohesive, inclusive workplace culture by fostering divisions rather than improving the working environment.

Loyalty: According to the EVLN model, true loyalty is alignment with the company's essential principles and a commitment to its success. Even though Rhett has worked for Vertical Horizon for more than eight years, which may indicate that he has a certain amount of commitment to the company, it will not directly indicate his pure loyalty. His behavior compromises the morally upright and encouraging workplace that is vital to the company's culture. Rhett seems to be more devoted to his job and the advantages it affords him than to the business or its goals.

Exit: Rhett hasn't left the company physically. But it appears that he may be somewhat psychologically "checked out" based on his lack of true devotion, disrespect for team unity, and failure to put Vertical Horizon's interests first. If he loses his influence or no longer finds the rewards of his job personally fulfilling, he shows behaviors that may eventually result in turnover. His performance may protect him from immediate consequences. However, his behavior on team spirit and workplace culture can eventually make him or others consider quitting.

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