

Interviewer: Namrata Malkani

Interviewee: Narendra Madnani

Answer the following questions on the basis of information gathered by interviewing a technical manager and your understanding of principles and practices of management.

Q1. Analyse the strategies adopted by the manager (for each team member).

My interviewee refrained from giving specific accounts of members who were challenging to manage but he gave a general account of some problems encountered while dealing with team members and some specific situations too.

1. **Dealing with team members who are more senior to you:** He was dealing with issues with 2 senior members of the team, as a newly appointed program manager in Netherlands. When a technology architect and a principal consultant weren't ready to work in accordance to project requirements, he first tried what was ideally suitable: understand their views and concerns, communicate his side, have one-on-one meetings, make them feel valued and included, among other things. But when it still didn't work as per the project demand, he brought the issue to his own supervisor, a very senior person, who helped him tactically re-distribute the work of these two members over months, among the team to get the project completed in time. This worked out very well in the long run.
2. **The unwilling worker:** As a team lead, he had a group member who wouldn't show up for days, to work on a project and would text to the team a new excuse every time. He was unwilling to learn and inattentive. Later on it was discovered that he was coming to the office campus, just not showing up for actual work. He was finally reported to the HR and dismissed from that project. While it is essential to work out with team members one-on-one, understand if they are facing any problems and give help, if someone doesn't respond to all that at all and continues the tardiness, strict action is taken by the manager.
3. **People wanting too much, too soon:** A team member who demands rewards such as onsite assignment (client location (like US) work), raise, promotions, etc, very quickly after little experience and putting in few

efforts. He as manager has to make them understand why it is not feasible. Sometimes they understand, sometimes they continue to persist, interfere with upper management, take it personally and affect work badly. In those cases, he reflects this issue in their appraisal rating. If the problem remains, it is essential to move them out of the project for the sake of team and work.

4. **Lack of accountability:** A general issue faced by managers everywhere including my interviewee. There are few people in the team, around 1 in 10, who are not ready to commit to work, needlessly make issues out of things, blame fellow teammates, etc. As such manager sits them down and talk. Keep a track of them more closely, evaluate their progress and not just based on perception, using scientific tools that allow to do that in a definite manner. So, after all this, some people realize and they improve. If that fails, he, as a manager involves the performance improvement department. This makes sense.

Q2. Give your recommendations (for each case).

1. It is common in technical organizations that there are people with decades worth of technical skills and experience like principal consultants, technology architects, process specialists. But they are not in a managerial position because that demands a different skill set, and in certain projects a person with less seniority than them is made project manager and has to assign work to people, track the progress and take actions when the deadlines or the quality are not sufficiently met. Some of these senior people don't feel good about it because of various personal and professional reasons. But the end goal of an organization is to ensure that the objective of a project is sufficiently met and the numerous stake holders are satisfied. In case of a manager facing trouble getting work out of such people in the team, the steps taken by Narendra and his supervisor ultimately were practical and in the right direction.
 - a. Ensuring the completion of task within deadline was utmost priority, and to prevent tarnishing their relationship with the technology architect and consultant, they tried to deal first by discussions and objective clarification, but later on let them continue in a way those two felt right and re-distributing the work these senior team members didn't consider important among the rest of the people.

- b. This shows managerial and planning skills on Narendra and his supervisor's part and in my recommendation, these are the ideal steps.
- 2. In my understanding, the way to deal with an uninvolved team member is talking to them, and letting them know that that you come to offer them help, rather than reprimanding or not dealing with them at all and just redistributing their work. But there is a limit to which one can motivate and talk to an employee, especially when they keep up the tardiness and not even show up to the workplace to communicate. As such the goal of a team is to achieve a certain deadline, fulfil the objective of a project, and that should be utmost priority. In the face of piling work, when help can be taken from another department to deal with such employee, it is ideal. In my recommendation, ultimately reporting the employee to HR and letting them deal with it was best, as now, with a good reason, the manager has the right to employ a new person in the team.
- 3. Dealing with an employ who is shrugging work and responsibility out of spite will be a little different than previous case. Reflecting their behaviour in appraisal ratings work because they are a generally ambitious person (as noticeable by their desire for rewards) and would certainly care about their report card. In case of a final course of action when nothing works, in my recommendation, giving the employee the chance to change team instead of letting them leave the organization would be a better solution as they were an asset to begin with.
- 4. Narendra has stressed on the fact that management is 'scientific process + art'. In order to evaluate the performance of each person, there are exact scientific metrics. I believe, that evaluating a person who shows lack of accountability by their attitude should not be just person perception but making use of these tools. In my recommendation, sometimes a person may take time to understand their work and interact with others. As such leisurely team-connect meets and creating a general atmosphere of helpfulness can help a beginner. In case of no improvement, performance improvement department can be helpful.

Narendra has talked about being sympathetic, and knowing and acknowledging what challenges his subordinates face. In his handling of people issues and tips of effective people and technical management, I could easily

draw parallels to my understanding of principles and practices of management. Such as the 8 steps of Planning and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y of Motivation.