Self-Study Assignment 2.6: Case Study-Perception Management

Due Monday by 11:59pm   **Points** None   **Available** after Jul 15 at 10am

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🎯 Learning Outcomes Addressed

- Learn how people make decisions.
- Explain the role of internal and external factors and applications in day-to-day decision making.
- Review a variety of common attributional biases.
- Learn about perceptions, how they are formed and what role they play.

This is not a graded assignment and does not count towards programme completion. However, we recommend you complete this assignment to gain a holistic learning experience.

Time: It is estimated that this assignment would require 60 minutes to complete.

Grade Weightage: This is a practice assignment and performance in this assignment does not count towards any of the evaluation component of this course.

Instructions:

- There are no right or wrong answers to this assignment.
- The approach/key pointers to this assignment will be provided at the end of the course.
- We encourage working on these practice assignments to help gain a holistic understanding of the topic.
- You may use the PL's office hours to clarify any doubts you have regarding the assignment.

Evaluation Details: This is a practice assignment and will not be graded.

Case Study

Sharada Raghavan was in a dilemma. She had a real people issue that she had to deal with. There was a potential solution that she was absolutely convinced of. However, she also knew that her team wouldn't accept it easily. She sat in her office, paper and pen in hand, drafting a speech that could perhaps help her convince her team of her decision.

Sharada was a Senior Manager at 'SolveAll Infotech'. The organisation was about 10 years old with an employee base of 100. Eighty percent of the employees had 'niche' development skills that were actively sought after by some of the best firms globally. SolveAll Infotech was run by Vivek Menon, who had quit a very successful career as VP of Development (Global Business Services) to start his venture. Vivek was a well-known and respected IT consultant in the industry. So, when he started SolveAll Infotech, it was not very difficult to source and recruit individuals with niche skills. Many people joined as they wanted to be part of Vivek's vision and firm. Sharada too was Vivek's protégé, so to speak. Vivek was her mentor at the start of her career, and ever since, Sharada had trusted his judgement. So, when Vivek offered her a role as a Project Manager at SolveAll Infotech, she readily agreed. She had wanted to manage teams and grow her technical skills. The role that Vivek offered her offered both. For the past four years, Sharada had managed six projects, managed teams varying from 5 to 10 individuals with varied technical skills and was now managing major accounts in the APAC region. She had a team that trusted her skills and had grown with her.

Things had gone well with the usual challenges for the first three years. Early this year, Sharada had to take on an additional project that was suffering due to the absence of a project manager who had to proceed on leave for three months on health grounds. The client was anxious and Vivek had moved Sharada to the project to resolve the crisis. It was a stretch for Sharada. She was already managing two projects and one more had an adverse impact on the rest of her projects in terms of time as well as the quality of work. She needed help and support. She had worked with Madhavan in her earlier organisation. She knew that Madhavan's skills were good and much appreciated by the customers. He was sharp, effective and efficient in terms of problem-solving and issue resolution. Someone like Madhavan in this project would help her manage the project as well as the time. Sharada also knew that Madhavan wasn't much liked by the rest of the team. The team thought of him as someone who is curt, sarcastic and most often broke the rules. Sharada, nonetheless, decided to hire Madhavan. He was taken for a period of four months for the duration of the project, with clear deliverables shared.   Life wasn't as easy for Sharada from a people standpoint. She had to deal with her team upset about Madhavan's curt answers on various conference calls. He would often dial in late and sometimes forget to do so.   Sharada counselled him, warned and gave written warnings. The behaviour would soon come back. The client, however, loved Madhavan. His ability to complete a task at hand in record time was something that the client favoured. At the end of the project, they appreciated Sharada's work and the fact that she stretched, acknowledged the team for their diligence and specifically, appreciated the problem-solving skills of Madhavan. This didn't go down too well with the team. Madhavan had come in at the final stages of the project and had displayed unacceptable behaviour multiple times, and his skills were being appreciated.

In a week's time, the client came back with another project that promised 'SolveAll Infotech' with an entry into an industry that had longed to be explored. They also insisted that Madhavan to be included as a key resource. Vivek was ecstatic. It was an opportunity that he didn't want to miss out on. Sharada was happy too. However, she warned Vivek about taking on Madhavan for the project. The team would find it demotivating and unacceptable. They were already upset at the client's appreciation to Madhavan and rehiring him would send the wrong message. Vivek heard Sharada out and said, "I trust you, Sharada. You know how to manage people. Madhavan needs to be managed and so does the team. They will listen to you. Convince them."

Sharada wasn't sure what she should do next. She feared that not hiring Madhavan will have an impact on her career. Hiring Madhavan meant that she had to convince the team, and she didn't know where to start. She looked at the blank piece of paper in front of her and wondered what she should do and say.

Problem Statement

Differing Perceptions and Operational Definitions about acceptable behaviour at SolveAll Infotech. What is important for the development of an Organisation? Vivek's focus on Business, Sharada's Insistence on People and their perceptions and Madhavan's technical skills coupled with his problem-solving capability, keep the customer happy. What should one focus on?

Case Questions

Read the case carefully, refer to the module notes and video, complete your readings and do any associated research required before you attempt to answer the questions given below.

1. Explain the events in terms of perceptions and attitudes. Do you think the hierarchy and personality of a person play a role in Perceptions and perception management?
2. What should Sharada do? Should she go with the team and not hire Madhavan for the project or should she go with what her mentor Vivek wants her to do?

Suggested time: 60 minutes

This is not a graded assignment and does not counts towards programme completion.