Project Performance Improvement

Practice of effective leader ship on improving the project performancr

Algifaili, Abdulmohsin   11518762

Abstract

This paper will talk about improving leadership practice in an organisation and how this practice affected the project performance. The paper will talk about individual reflection on how departments in the organisation interacted and how the project team failed to reach the specified goals. This paper will also discuss how to improve the leadership practice in the organisation and how the project leadership will improve by applying tools and approaches. Further, the paper will show indicate the results of improving the practice of effective leadership.

Introduction

A leader must have self-confident, intelligence, honesty, strong understanding of others feelings. The leader must lead and guide rather than telling what to do. The leader should be fair in feasibility stage, democratic in designing stage, autocratic in excision. When the project is facing different types of complexities, the members should be trained to have the ability to observe the situation and apply the required knowledge. So what type of knowledge we need to apply and is it going to be effective.

Organization background

SAMEX is a function based organization produce a financial service such as credit cards, charged cards and gift cards, the approach SAMEX succeeds its products is through departments knowledge where every department head is responsible for controlling the knowledge in a functional method. The way the company is managing the knowledge is very slow as every request come from the customer service department follow a procedure of that doesn't include any knowledge building as every member inform other by "how and what' instead of "why".

Project background

SAMEX declared that they want to upgrade all their customers' cards, for example blue cards holders will be promoted to a green card and green card holders to gold card and so forth. The project was about promoting existing customers with higher cards to reach many financial gains. One of the main benefits is to make the customers texture additional value and stimulated to use the service because when you upgrade the card additional services will be obtainable for the customers to use. Secondly, to make the loyal customers trustworthy to SAMEX by allowing the customer texture that they are more prized than before and that's why Amex is promoting them. Third, the amounts available for the customers to use will be increased with every upgrade, so the customers will have more available funds in their cards to use, and that will

increase their ability to spend wherein will increase our prophet by growing customers usage of the package. Finally, by upgrading the cards to higher luxuriant, AMEX will benefit by increasing the annual fee. The project didn't success as the knowledge was not reliable, and SAMEX want to apply a new way to manage the knowledge so the future project succeed.

Observing the practice

Most of the department leaders were involved in this project such as the credit department, marketing department, authorization department, customer service department, the new account department. The credit department is generally the one who analyse the customers' chick their status and the department was involved in the project by providing who will receive an upgrade and how much the amount of every card should be based on their analysis.

The marketing department is responsible of designing and managing the announcement of the promotion campaign to the customers by reaching the customers and selling the idea to them. The authorization department was responsible for giving the authority and securing the accounts to chick if the customer is active using the account, fundamentally they chick if there is any fraud transaction going on. The new accounts, is the department that will register the promoted customers and make sure that they are eligible for the promotion.

The customer service department responsible of responding to customers enquires and providing them with the information regarding the promotion.
The marketing department started the project by sending letters to all the customers and invited them to upgrade their cards. They have sent them a letter congratulating them for the promotion and listed what they will be getting out of the promotion such as the services they will be getting and the extra credit that will be added to the card. All of the customers were told that they have already been accepted for the promotion and they don't need to supply identifications for processing the application except the application itself.

Thousands of customers start calling the customer service department team and inquire about the letters of the promotion. Badly, the customer service teams where not ready to answer the enquiries as they didn't receive training and they didn't know how the promotion works. The customer service department didn't have ability to answer all the calls. As a result, many customers received a poor customer service and a poor feedback.

Other customers directly started sending their applications to the new accounts department so they can issue the new cards, but they haven't receive quick replays as quick as they where expecting from the new accounts department that is because the new account department is progressing slow to check the

eligibility of the customers. And there was a chance of approving or rejecting the applications.

More over, the credit department also involved in slowing down the project to check if the customer got a good credit history so they can be eligible for the new card. Plus, the new account department was receiving more application in a number that is out of its capacity.

The credit department didn't want to start the project now because they needed time to chick the credit history for all the customers and they didn't want to upgrade all the customers, as there are many customers with bad credit history. So, they refused to upgrade many customers whom already got a letter from the marketing department stating that they have been already promoted. The credit department will have to increase the amount of every card as they upgrade it, but the risk will increase especially when the customer has a bad history.

The authorization department didn't have time to investigate the entire requests and transactions in this short period of time. They had a fear of fraud transaction might occur so what they did to secure the cards is they systematically slowed down the transactions on existing users so the card will not have a strong purchase capability. Existing customers start complaining as they received a numbers of declined transactions. Those, customers called the customer service department to chick why the transactions are getting declined, but the customer service department with existing pressure, didn't have the capacity to answers for this kind of technical issues.

The COE announced that he will leaving the company and another COE is on the way in six months time to take the position, the managers are not collaborating with each other as many actions are taken with out consulting each other and that made the problem worst. Now, it is a situation where we don't know who to blame and who is responsible for this entire miss. And that's why; it is obvious that effective leadership is missing in this organisation.

Barriers at the project and organizational levels

As project started there was a clear evidence that the lines of communication are not strong and not open, and the system is highly stubborn and not able for reaction. The Department heads, didn't want to take its way to solve the long line of command and communication and that's why the conflicts arising. As SAMEX is a matrix organizations rated openness and informality of communication lower than the vertically structured firms, for which no logical explanation can be offered . However it is clearly a matter of leadership Consequently, SAMEX, as a matrix organization could not succeed with an inside project that required a great internal communication methodology to avoid the risk of conflict inside the organization and with the customers. To manage the risk it will be required before the implementation to provide a communication plan and training for all those who will be impacted by the change. Subsequently, at periodic intervals continuous improvement reviews will keep the barriers away from the project.

That's why a communication plan must be formed clearly so all the users possibly will deliver the services without interruptions and jamming. In the project the firm decision to proceed with the promotion project without a proper appraisal of the project. Consequently various constraints and risks where unmanaged which took off the project to cataclysm. The organization today need to understand how weak risk management can be a major contributor to project delays, cost overruns, or outright failure. Therefore, SAMEX should stand consistently before incitation of any project and verify its issues and barriers so the projects can process efficiently.

Effective leadership

Leadership improvement

Project managers need to have the ability to be be emotionally engaged, so the project manager need to be able to develop his self and make sure that he gains emotional intelegnce to be able to manage higher project in the future It is important to run tests to identify the personalities so we can create teams that share same interest and personality so the performance within the team get better.

Moreover, to make sure the leadership in the project remain constant towards the objectives, the project manager as the leader of the project, has to be subjective when explaining the ideas. Herminia Ibarra illustrates that, that the leader will lose credibility when he discloses everything he thinks, and feel especially when the idea is not proven. Project managers competences make the main factor of successful project, is not just about tools but it is more about the charismatic character how does he reach the stakeholders and approach the objectives. In comparing Project manager to functional managers the project manager is better at solving problems. The project manager can use many different styles of leadership in every project.

Influence of effective leadership

The project manger as a leader of the project knowledge management in the project will have an influence on how members will react including the other department leaders. SAMEX, the manager didn't care about the power influence, therefore their reaction toward the project was selfishness. The project manager in SAMEX will have to will collaborate with the managers and vision them about how important to work as a team and positively influence each other. To influence the members:

Project manager development

The project manager will need to reflect and know how to improve his ability   In front other organization members, by showing them that he care about improving his self many different knowledge arena.

mentors guidance.

It is clear at this stage that SAMEX will need an outside guidance, the mentor will have a better chance to influence the managers, because the mentor will not interfere with the department manager inters. The mentor will provide guidance to SAMEX mangers on how manage their interests with taking in observance the organizational good as a mandatory.

Maintain connection

It is obvious that effective leadership is all about how to keep connection with the context. SAMEX managers didn't communicate with each other appropriately; as a consequence, the issues evolved and created a complexity the department managers couldn't understand. So to improve the project managers will have to maintain strong connection channels.

Help people understand

The project manger will care more about helping the organisation to understand why the procedure is implemented rather than just to force the users to follow without giving any efforts to educate the users. As a result, SAMEX, has to develop a concept of explaining the reason behind the procedures for all the users. For example, the user will understand the important of smiling when delivering the service and apply it with motivation. Rather than just ordering them to smile!! Without taking efforts to explain the reasons behind this command.

Solve problems very quickly

Depending on the tacit knowledge and experience the project manager and members have, effective leadership will provide solution speedier than traditional, and that will encourage the desire in the new users to become more educated and informed. In the project, the team are working in highly intensive environment and it is compulsory   for the project manager to provide the member with the answer. For example, the credit department, manager should find a way to speed up the process rather than rejecting the project and creat conflict among the organisation.

Exchange of ideas

The SAMEX mangers should participate in creating and sharing their ideas without the fear of conflict. However, the project manger as a leader will have to mange the ideas carefully, so it wont irritate the other users, because new ideas might create tensions between members as these idea usually new and will require efforts to give. For example, when the project members in initiation stage where discussing the best marketing approach, some team members where not supportive even if the idea was approachable, because the team fear new ideas that may lead to fail.
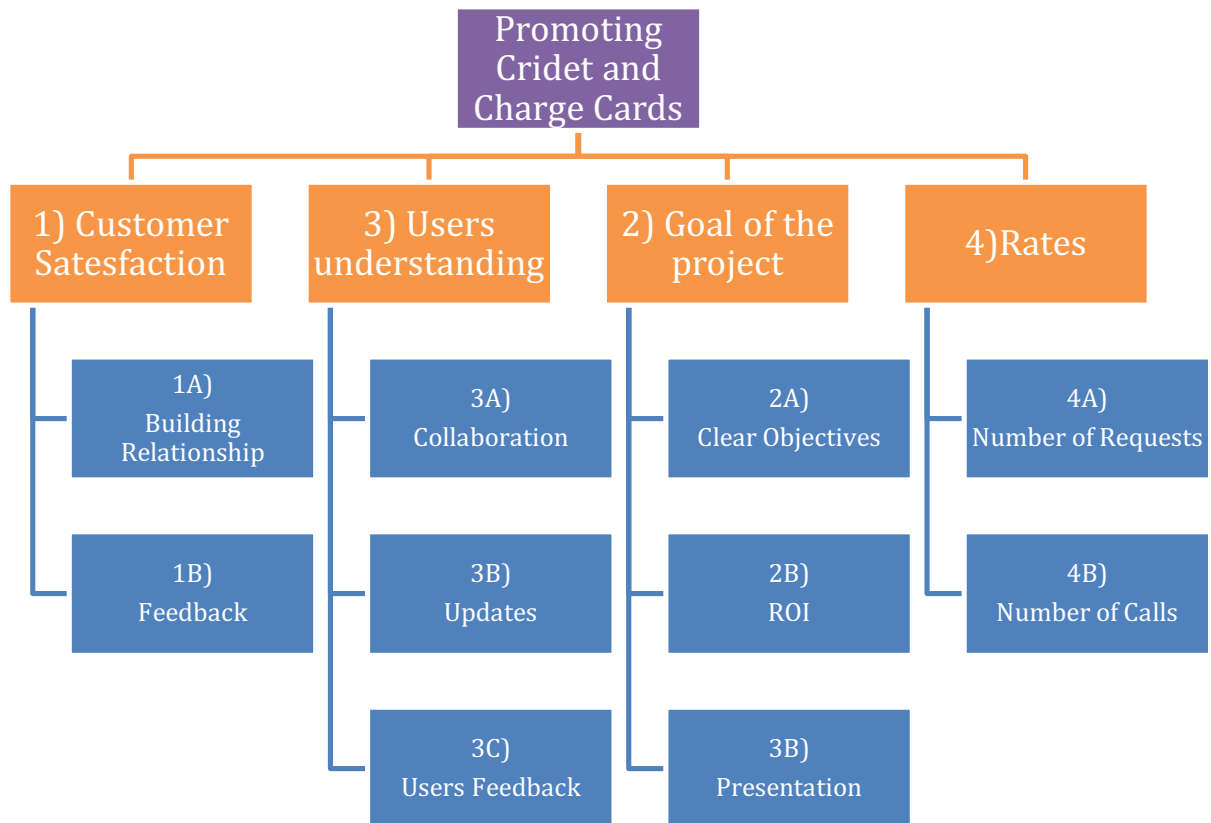
Think outside the box

The project manager will encourage the users to think outside the box and by changing the atmosphere, and brain storming the ideas with team will help the team to explore and accept new concepts applications. The project manager is encouraged to bring the worst-case scenarios and the best case-scenario to the table but with an optimistic approach that enable the member to share their wisdom.

Solving the problem

In this stage SAMEX department managers, will have to analyse the problem and explore options that will help solving it. We might use methodologies or use a set of tools to building the alternative options. We also have to provide accurate indicators that will make sure that the option adapted is working and there are no risks associated with it or risks might rise in the future. The leader will can analyse the problem by applying tools and application.

Affinity Diagram

```
                        Promoting
                        Cridet and
                       Charge Cards

   1) Customer      3) Users         2) Goal of the      4)Rates
   Satesfaction     understanding    project

   1A)              3A)              2A)                 4A)
   Building         Collaboration    Clear Objectives    Number of Requests
   Relationship

   1B)              3B)              2B)                 4B)
   Feedback         Updates          ROI                 Number of Calls

                    3C)              3B)
                    Users Feedback   Presentation
```

1) Customer Satisfaction
   Our aim is to make customer more satisfied with the product and the
   therefore:
   1A) Relationship
   Build a strong relationship with customers that will bring benefits in
   short and long term.
   2B) Feedback
    Concentrate on customer and analyse what is more priority and focus on.

2) Project Goals
   when we make sure that the goals are clearly defined we will be able to
   clarify processes that all the users will observe easily.
   2A) Clear objectives
   once the goals are defined clearly, the objective can be listed and every
   user will follow.
   2B) Presentation.
   The presentation of the company will be carried during the
   implementation.
   2C) ROI

The project must curry on its value and make sure that the benefits will be achieved.

3) Users Understanding
before starting the project all the users need to understand what are we expecting and what is the purpose of the project and how we are going to deliver the outcome.
3A) Updates
Users need to be updates with the new changes so they can communicate with the customers effectively.
3B) Collaboration
The project manager will have to apply strategies that improves team collaboration and the collaboration is improved then many risks will be minimised.
3C) Users Feedback
Feedback that come from customers are very important, however feedbacks that come from the users are more valuable.

4) Measurable rates
4A) Number of calls
the number of calls received by the call centre during the project will be increased and as a result we will be able to know if the promotion is desirable to the customers or no.
4B) Number of Requests
The number of requests to upgrade the card.

Results of effective leadership practice

The project will succussed as a result of effective leadership and will satisfy the organisational strategy, and reach the organisational objectives and goals. The effort off supporting the team will be reduced as team will have a better capabilities during every stage of the project as a result of, easy technical infrastructure the provide new tools and systems management processes.

The project manager provides effective leadership, the users will communicate easily and the tasks will be accomplished faster. For example we can take the lessons learned in 'SAMEX upgrade project' and abstract the wisdom and provide it to the users. As a result, the users will become more confident as they know what is more critical for them to concentrate on. So, having an effective leadership will reduce the pressure among the organistion and increase confidence.

Also, by prioritizing the information and making sure that only the critical knowledge is delivered, we will be able to reduce the risk of users getting irritated. And SAMEX department manger will become more collaborative and

perform effectively. Additional, effective leadership will support the user to look at the big picture and they will understand that the success of other members will benefit all the organisation reputation.

Conclusion

It is clear that SAMEX leaders didn't have a strong relationship with each other and with the organisation members. Effective leader ship is about relationships, Values, process toward the mean, is about relationship building, sell vision and persuade with logic. However, Applying the practice of effective leadership will improve the quality of customer service. And that will improve the return on the investment. The project manager will provide effective leadership and bring many improvements to the organisation; as members of the organisation will become more enthusiastic to learn more knowledge. Thus, they become more adaptive to face the future with confident and capable innovative ideas. The effective leadership will produce members, who have the ability to engage in different tasks and collaborate according to their improved capabilities. As a result of this effective leadership projects will have a better performance and SAMEX will have a better chance to success in the current future.

References:

Kolb, D.A. 1984, Experiential Learning: experience as the source of learning and development, Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Allison, M. & Kaye, J. 2011, *Strategic planning for nonprofit organizations: A practical guide and workbook*, John Wiley & Sons.