AN ASSIDUOUS STUDY ON DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Dr. Renita Dubey

Assistant Professor - AICISM
Amity University, Noida

Utparn Dubey

Manager - India Centre for Public Policy,
PGDM – Sustainable Development Practices
Birla Institute Of Management Technology

ABSTRACT

Globalization is the new paradigm, a complex phenomenon, a driver for bringing about a change which has far reaching effects and has an impact on nearly every economy. The need for quality excellence and the desire to think and act from a global perspective is not peculiar to businesses alone. There is no doubt that leadership roles are changing in the new environment with markets emerging and getting global. Several new trends affect the study of leadership. The mantra to any business's competitive advantage is to ensure that uniqueness lasts for a longer time. The need for change and innovation is the need of the hour. We all know that managers provide leadership to organizations. Therefore every organization is influenced by the behavior of subordinates so that they willingly and enthusiastically work towards the achievement of the organizational objectives. Strategic Leaders manage the strategic management process that is designed to help the organization achieve its objectives. Strategic leadership is the ability to lead an organization towards achievement of its objectives. The tasks involved in exercising leadership are typically to anticipate, envision, transform, maintain flexibility and empower others to create strategic change as and when necessary.

In this paper we will focus on the strategic leaders who are charged with the responsibility of managing the strategic management process of an organization. This article can be greatly useful to executives and practitioners who wish to achieve results with the support of human element and right leadership approach

Keywords: Strategic Management, Balanced Scorecard, Benchmarking, Strategic direction, Leadership approach

Introduction:

Role of Strategic Leadership

Owing to the primacy attached to the chief executives, many authors, researchers and practitioners have attempted to study their roles. People define roles for themselves and others based on social learning and reading. People form expectations about the roles that they and others will play. People subtly encourage others to act within the role expectations they have for them.

People will act within the roles they adopt. We all have internal schemas about the role of leaders, based on what we read, discuss and so on. We subtly send these expectations to our leaders, acting as role senders, for example through the balance of decisions we take upon ourselves and the decisions we leave to the leader. Leaders are influenced by these signals, particularly if they are sensitive to the people around them, and will generally conform to these, playing the leadership role that is put upon them by others. Within organizations, there is much formal and informal information about what the leader's role should be, including 'leadership values', culture, training sessions, modeling by senior managers, and so on. These and more (including contextual factors) act to shape expectations and behaviors around leadership. Role conflict can also occur when people have differing expectations of their leaders. It also happens when leaders have different ideas about what they should be doing vs. the expectations that are put upon them.

Objectives of the study:

a.   To study the ways in which leadership capacities can prove to be an approach to sustainable business growth and competitive Advantage.
b.   To study the current professional and personal approaches that may be useful for developing leaders in incubation to almost as transformed, charismatic and thus a maestro.

Research Methodology:

This paper mainly focuses on secondary data and is developed on the basis of references/case studies/adaptations and suitable examples taken from management theorists, practitioners, instructors, research scholars and this paper is thus conceptualized to serve the purpose of this study.

Review of Literature:

The leaders have ethics and diversity at the forefront of their strategic vision, you cannot put e-learning and knowledge management at the forefront of your strategic goals. However, that does not mean you cannot use e-learning and knowledge management technologies to bring about ethical and diversity goals. According to Gary Yukl is Professor of Management and Leadership at the State University of New York leadership is defined as a trait which has phenomenal potential to determine strategic direction and manage the organizational resources portfolio. It should not be confused with *operational effectiveness* — what is good for everybody and what every business should be doing, e.g., performing the same activities your competitors perform, TQM, benchmarking, or being a learning organization (Porter, 1980). Thus, when developing strategies, the goal is to be different from your competitors.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

The analysis can be done with the help of several factors or approaches mentioned below as A,B,C,D and E.

A. The approaches to becoming a leadership maestro:

Style describes how top managers behave in leading organizations; this is done to achieve the desired ends. The style adopted by the strategist relates to the basic leadership functions of leading and motivating. The very importance of leadership style is demonstrated by the fact that several of the leadership theories have been developed on the basis of two or more contrasting styles. It is indeed very clear that for every different leadership styles, there could be an appropriate style in general and style could also be culture specific, that is, there could be a particular style more suited to the western context and a nurturant -task or the entrepreneurial style most suited to the Indian context.

Visioning is the start of any strategic plan. Once your leaders have set the organizational strategic plans, you need to determine how best your department can bring about changes that will support those plans. And while their strategic plan needs to be unique, you need to think along the same lines.

Visioning strategy is best performed using a four-prong approach:

- Internal Audit — where are you now (snapshot)?

- Reading and Research — where can you grow?

- Organization Vision — where is the organization going?

There are four basic functions used within organizations to achieve their visions and goals: Command, Control, Leadership, and Management:

1. Command — forming and imparting visions:

2. Leadership — achieving visions through people:

3. Management — implementing processes for achieving the visions:

4. Control — ensuring resources went where they were supposed to go:

With Control and Management the ultimate goal is efficiency — addressing how well the process was accomplished (form); while with Command and Leadership the ultimate goal is effectiveness— achieving goals and mission (results). Generally, to achieve "form," one must conceptualize "processes"; while to achieve "results," one must conceptualize "tasks."

Thus, command and leadership decide what the organization should be doing, while control and management ensure that the resources used to achieve the results are used efficiently (without waste).

B. The Tasks of Strategic Leaders

The phenomenon of leadership has been studied and extensively researched by me for a couple of years in various organizations besides management studies, subjecting my MBA Students to the various exercises on Leadership behavior and styles. What I have come across is leadership is the tasks that strategic leaders are called upon to perform. here are number of tasks to be performed namely:

a. Determining strategic decision which is one of the most crucial tasks of a strategic leader which is to provide a sense of direction to the organization. The strategic decision and the direction is concerned with the future shape of the organization.

b. Effectively managing the organizational resources portfolio which explains that strategic leaders manage effectively, the portfolio of the organizational resources. Such a portfolio includes financial capital, human capital; social capital and organizational capital. They do this by exploiting and maintaining the core competencies and developing the human and social capital of the organization.

c. Sustaining the organizational culture in which the organizational or the corporate culture of an organization is an important factor in achieving the strategic success and maintain the Balanced Scorecard.

d. Emphasizing on ethical practices that is strategic leaders emphasize on ethical practices in word and deed when the strategies are being implemented.

e. Establishing balanced organizational controls in which the strategic leaders use a combination of financial and non-financial controls to help the organization. Your thinking skills can be considered directional skills because they set the direction for your organization. They provide vision, purpose, and goal definition. These are your eyes and ears to the future, allowing you to recognize the need for change, when to make it, how to implement it, and how to manage it. You find vision by reaching for any available reason to change, grow, and improve. Just as you perform preventive maintenance on your car, you must perform preventive maintenance on your organization. Do NOT believe in the old adage, *"If it isn't broken, don't fix it,"* for the people who do, go broke! Treat every project as a change effort.

C. Authentic Leadership in the scenario of change:

Today's business leaders need to be harbingers of change and hence rejuvenators of organizations. Leaders in order to strategically orient themselves need to follow the following process:

*   Leaders need to analyze the political implications of any changes that happen in the environment and position themselves appropriately.
*   For any change that is taken into consideration a leader needs to go by the time.
*   Analyze and monitor communication tool which is used in a manner that any change is well monitored and the employees well informed.
*   Identify new skills and talent that can help organization retool itself towards sustainable business growth.
*   Steps have to be taken to find out how much these changes are been understood and well accepted, more so in case of grass root worker.
*   With rapid changes in the environment there can be a probability of Conflict although it is a normal phenomenon in organizations. A leader needs to be highly proactive, assertive, reactive aggressive and should be more than welcome to respond to negative comments and situations.
*   The challenge of the leader is to blend the perspectives, uncover the buried issues, inspires innovation and develop well managed conflict resolution strategies.

D. Developing Strategic Leadership

Like any personnel, strategists too have to be developed before they can take up the onerous responsibilities of the strategy formulation and implementation. One of the responsibilities of the board of directors and top management of an organization is to oversee the development of strategies. The different ways in which the strategic leaders are developed vary across organizations. Three issues can be addressed:

The choice of future strategists-Choosing the future strategic leaders is a matter of great concerns for organizations today. Succession Planning and Career Planning and Development is another medium to develop strategic Leadership. Leading is a very human activity -- we're all humans and most of us have strong feelings and beliefs about leadership.

As a result of the above driving forces, organizations were required to adopt a "new paradigm," or view on the world, to be more sensitive, flexible and adaptable to the demands and expectations of stakeholder demands. Many organizations have abandoned or are abandoning the traditional top-down, rigid and hierarchical structures to more "organic" and fluid forms.

Today's leaders and/or managers must deal with continual, rapid change. Managers faced with a major decision can no longer refer back to an earlier developed plan for direction. Management techniques must continually notice changes in the environment and organization, assess this change and manage change. Managing change does not mean controlling it, rather understanding it, adapting to it where necessary and guiding it when possible.

E. Leadership Development

Simply put, leadership development is an effort (hopefully, planned in nature) that enhances the learner's capacity to lead oneself, other individuals, groups and organizations. Researchers from Piaget onwards have identified that children pass through distinct stages of development on their journey to adulthood. As part of this evolving process they develop abilities that fundamentally expand their understanding of, and relationship to, the world.

It is very important to develop a look of leadership. In order to have an effective leadership development the art of planning should evolve a strategic direction to the organization. Indeed solid and ground strategies are the requirement but it is very important to develop the right attitude and vigor. The following are the approaches to create and develop transformational leadership:

- Project a positive image
- Speak always with authority
- Be a mentor with no hypnotic influence
- Be a good listener
- Create a receptive listening environment
- Leaders should have good body language
- Coach people to make progress

Key Findings

- Leadership skills and capacities can be developed and learned through practice and self confidence

- Emotional intelligence is a key factor for effective leadership

- Systems thinking and dialogical abilities are key to deal with the current complexities
- In order to sustain leadership effectiveness and continuous change, leaders need to renew their own energy and the one of others around them

Conclusion & Recommendation

This paper concludes with the fact that choosing future leaders (strategic) is indeed a matter of urgent importance since in India there is a difference in the policies and practices with regard to developing strategic leaders due to the presence of different functional areas as such there is a requirement

that the talented individuals should be groomed well before to take top positions. "Self Development" is the ultimate truth in the science of management which is the most significant factor ignored very conspicuously by the management. This study does not give the total idea on developing a strategic leader but gives an insight ,a highlight as to how a leader can strategically orient himself to transform not only himself but the organization as a whole.

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