Article Critique

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Creating Vision and Strategic Direction

Leaders need to create vision and strategic direction to the others in an organization. Different scholars are examining the best way of creating vision and strategic direction. One concept that scholars are examining is the concept of servant leadership. The theory of servant leadership investigates the kind of leadership, whereby the leader serves the other people in an organization, that is, the leader acts as one of the servants. An organization, where leaders practice servant leadership, will, at all times, have a vision and a strategic direction, as the leaders guide the other employees, thus, creating the required enumerated vision culture by the organization. The organization will have a strategic direction to achieve the vision too (Gillet & Cartwright, 2010). Vinod and Sudhakar wrote a paper on servant leadership, the paper’s title is “Servant Leadership: A Unique Art of Leadership”. This paper examines the article that Vinod and Sudhakar wrote; the paper includes a critique of the article.

In the article, Vinod and Sudhakar note that the role of a leader is to create a vision and implement strategy. The writers argue that the traditional way of leadership is ineffective in creating the vision for an organization that requires employees to implement the vision. Traditional leadership, according to the article, involves leadership, where the leader judges and evaluates the others instead of acting as a sense of direction. In the traditional way of leadership, Vinod and Sudhakar note that the leaders were responsible in a bureaucratic manner. In the modern concept of servant leadership, leaders should eliminate the traditional way of leadership of judging the people that the leaders coordinate. The concept of servant leadership involves helping the people, praising and awarding employees to motivate them to follow the organizational vision. A servant leader will, at all times, seek to encourage and see to it that the
other people do their best. The leader will teach and coach people to succeed in whatever they are doing (Sudhakar & Vinod, 2011).

In order to achieve this, a servant leader needs to have a high degree of self-esteem and courage to face reality. The leader will not feel any threat if an employee does a good work in promoting the vision of an organization. The leaders also need to do away with bigoted egos, so that they can guide the employees well. The authors argue that the leaders who portray ego have weaknesses; the leaders try to hide their weaknesses by trying to change their environment (Sudhakar & Vinod, 2011).

The concept of servant leadership can improve on creating vision and a strategic direction in an organization. If leaders can adopt servant leadership, all the other employees will seek to do their best. If the employees do their best, they meet the vision of an organization effectively. As Vinod and Sudhakar put it, the leaders will play a major role in creating this vision and the strategic direction in meeting the vision. If the leaders are to implement this vision, an organization should check their characters (Sudhakar & Vinod, 2011).

A leader with low self-esteem can never help the others improve; instead, he will seek to show his power over the other people in an organization by using bureaucratic methods that consolidate power. If any leader tries to show how powerful he is, many problems will arise in the organization. One such problem is that the workers get down and perform to their minimum requirements just not to cross paths with their leader; thus, inhibiting creativity. The employees do not commit themselves to the work they perform. In this case, the organization will lack a strategic direction of meeting any vision that might be in place. On the other hand, if the leader seeks to serve his people, helping them and encouraging them, the people feel indebted to the
organization. The people will seek to pay the debt by being more productive, which will help achieve the vision of the organization. A manager who listens to his people will also help in creating the organization’s vision. The leader will understand the problems of each person he guides. The leader will, therefore, be able to help the people overcome their problems, whether they relate to work or personal life. If each of the workers eliminates problems, they will boost their work output, which defines the strategic direction in achieving an organization’s vision.

Leading Change

Today’s business world is changing rapidly. The change may be in form of a new threat in the business or an emerging opportunity. If a business is to succeed, it requires timely adaptation of this threats and opportunities (Kotter, 1996). To ensure that there is effective adaptation to the changes in the business world today; leaders need to guide in adapting the changes. In the article “Leading Change: Adapting and Innovating in Uncertain World”, Yukl and Lepsinger explore the concept of leading change. The authors examine ways of leading in adapting change effectively and its importance. This section of the paper looks at the article by Yukl and Lepsinger on leading change.

Yukl and Lepsinger note that companies outshine the others due to many factors. Adaptation to change, efficiency, and human resources, if one keeps all the other factors constant, will determine if a company succeeds, or fails. According to the authors, adaptation includes the changes an organization performs to cope with emerging threats, changes in the market of products and services, changing needs of customers, and exploiting the opportunity that new technology brings. In order to make good decisions in adapting the changes that an organization requires, innovation is paramount. Rapid changes in technology, new threats from
competing companies, and economic and political chaos increase the importance of the ability to adapt change (Lepsinger & Yukl, 2006).

According to the article, an organization needs to embed a culture of adapting change among all the stakeholders. The culture involves values such as flexibility, initiative, continuous improvement, and search of excellence. To achieve the values, leaders need to apply their influence on the culture. Apart from this, leaders can also monitor the environment for the emerging threats and opportunities. Leaders can also perform strategic planning, involving where the organization is at present, where it wants to go and how to get there. Leaders need to put threats and new opportunities as clear as possible to the employees. They should show the importance of adapting change to all the other people in order for them to take it positively. The managers should also encourage innovative thinking by encouraging employees to look at situations with multiple perspectives (Lepsinger & Yukl, 2006).

Yukl and Lepsinger provide a good argument on adapting change. The need for adaptation of change is necessary and crucial for any business to succeed. If an organization takes a culture of adapting change, it will gain an opposing edge to the other competitors. The organization will present the goods and services of the best quality as compared to other competitors because they have the latest technology. The customers will always be satisfied, as the organization meets their needs all the time. The organization is also able to determine the emerging and subsidizing markets, hence, able to get their products to the best markets. Leaders of an organization will need to be in the upfront in making the changes. Employees look upon leaders for direction and inspiration, therefore, a leader who is quick in adapting changes will encourage other employees to overall adaptation of change in an organization.
The article provides practical ways of leading changes in an organization. Flexibility will enable the employees adapt to any changes that the leaders wish to make. Initiative ensures that any worker is ready to suggest any changes that will influence the success of the organization. The desire to succeed causes each employee to seek the way to make the company successful, which means that the workers are ready to adapt any changes that will benefit the company. If employees have the knowledge of the importance of adapting change, it will be easier for the companies to effect the changes. Although the article fails to discuss the challenges that leaders might face in making changes, the ways the article describes of effecting the changes will mean success to any organization that implements them.
References

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