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Breitt, Starr & Diamond Case Study



New England College

Abstract

Transformational leadership approach would be the best solution for Breitt, Starr & Diamond LLC. The three founders never wanted to be leaders, they wanted to focus on their creative expertise. The four behaviors that define transformational leadership exemplify the culture need at Breitt, Starr & Diamond LLC. The newly hired general manager, Brad Howser followed an authoritarian leadership model. This approach was upsetting with the existing team, as they were not included in paradigm shift of leadership and strategy of the company. Howser's approach to leadership was also transactional in nature. This approach was very efficient financially and was the first to launch internal controls. In the beginning of my own career, I would consider myself a Country Club Manager, as I wanted to please everyone. Over the years, I have to learned to transform into Team Management approach.

Keywords: leadership, culture shifts, paradigms, behaviors

Transformational leadership would be the best approach for the case study of Breitt, Starr & Diamond LLC. The company was formed with the three of them, each bringing their specialized creative expertise. The agency had grown so much that it required hiring of seven new employees to help sustain the growth of the business. The foundation of the business is that of small, creative, open, trustworthy work environment.

“Transformational leaders transform the personal values of followers to support the vision and goals of the organization by fostering an environment where relationships can be formed and by establishing a climate of trust in which visions can be shared” (Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2004). In 1991 it was established by Avolio four primary behaviors that constitute transformational leadership (Avolio, Waldman, & Yammarino, 1991):

1. Idealized influence.
2. Inspirational motivation.
3. Intellectual stimulation.
4. Individualized consideration.

“Leaders are being driven into unfamiliar territory where change remains the only constant” (Sarros & Santora, 2001). This was the exact predicament that Josh, Rachel & Justin found themselves in before deciding to hire Brad Howser, their new General Manager.

Regarding the leadership grid, Howser followed the Authority Compliance (Bateman, Snell, & Konopaske, 2019). This methodology proved to be good for the firm regarding efficiencies, operations and potentially cost savings. Unfortunately, the negative impact upon the firm was the lack of regard, or empathy towards the employees. Two confirmed resignations and one more on the way is a sure tale sign of potentially not the best leadership move.

Transactional leadership would be another methodology that Howser followed. This was show by his actions of keeping to strict schedules, controlling the manner in which supplies were ordered by his custom designed form. All signs of good internal controls, but at what costs?

H. James & Voehl describe the required essentials needed to move forward with a cultural change management (CCM) process:

- Change should be embraced as the all employees' culture and not only the top management's vision or desire.
- Change should be considered in terms of corporate culture and business needs simultaneously.
- The core part of any CCM effort is to have a management transformation strategy.
- People will not change unless and until they are psychologically ready to withdraw from their current daily habits (H. James & Voehl, 2015).

In the case of Breitt, Starr & Diamond, these crucial steps were not taken. Howser was being a good leader, but perhaps was acting in a silo and was not getting the leadership team involved, nor was he getting the team involved. Thus, created a hostile environment between the founders and their employees.

“In becoming a leader, it is essential that you take on the role in ways and practices that you can be comfortable with” (Canning, 2016). These words sit very personally with the author of this case study. In my career, I have been able to mold my leadership style to one that is more effective. In the beginning, I would certainly classify myself as the Country Club Leader (Bateman, Snell, & Konopaske, 2019). As of now, I have been able to transform my style to that of Team Management (Bateman, Snell, & Konopaske, 2019). Per Rego, Pereira Lopes &

Volkman Simpson the Leadership Grid they established would mimic of Bateman et al. The categories I would certainly classify as under Rego et al would be Authentic and Machiavelically Authentic, respectively (Rego, Pereira Lopes, & Volkman Simpson, 2017). Essentially, my style is one that I will get the global strategic picture accomplished, but able to guide the team to get the details delegated appropriately.

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