Architecture of Leadership:

Behavioral Integrity and the Role of Strategy, Innovation, and Vision on Both Leaders and Followers

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In the architecture of leadership, organizations continuously seek those in leadership positions who can demonstrate a correlation between good behavior and personality construct (Gautam 2009). Behavioral integrity is centered on how leaders and followers can build relationships by focusing on honesty, trust, respect and being ethical towards meeting both internal and external stakeholder needs. The ethical abilities of leaders and followers determine how they are able to move an organization's strategy and goals into creating innovation and remaining on the competitive edge (Velthouse & Kandogan 2007). The behavioral integrity of leaders towards followers determines the performance level and creativity of followers. The behavioral integrity of followers is strongly based on the relationship they have with their leaders and the way in which leaders motivate and add value to followers by encouraging honest innovation that will add value to the overall strategy of an organization. Today's leaders need to foster good behavior and ethical value to improve the relationship between them and their followers (Hartman 1997). This paper is centered on behavioral integrity and will analyze the role of strategy, innovation, and vision on both leaders and followers.

Keywords: architecture of leadership, behavioral integrity, organizational management

1. Introduction

Behavioral integrity (BI) is the perception that another person, group, or entity lives by his word delivers on promises and enacts the same values he espouses. This construct is more basic than trust or justice, and is typically measured as the perceived pattern of alignment between words and deeds. (Simons, Tomlinson, and Leroy 2011)

Today's leaders must adapt to and meet new challenges, by creating organizational strategies based on a good sense of imagination, show their expertise by developing themselves and others. These leaders must be clear thinkers, who can add value to and gain the trust of followers and other stakeholders in an inclusiveness organizational environment. One in which leaders are ethical, communicate clearly goals and expectations, and one in which leaders understand the dynamic nature of leadership in achieving the organizational strategy (GE Capital 2012). A leader building an organization starts with honestly integrating stakeholder's needs and wants with overall values and goals of an organization.

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Behavioral integrity, along with trust, has garnered much renewed interest in the wake of corporate scandals and financial meltdowns by Wall Street organizations within the last 15 years. In the 21st century competitive environment, organizations are seeking competitive advantage as the competitive landscape has become more crowded. This potentially gives way to more abuse of corporate ethical standards that could degrade competitive advantage. (Warren 2015)

Kimmel (2015) stated that "One of the basic ways that a product form can contribute to success is by serving is by serving as an important means by which a product can get noticed in a cluttered, competitive marketplace." This is similar to a leader's ethical behavior in promoting good organizational strategy, one in which the leader leads by example and exudes such behavior as communicating honestly the overall strategy with followers and taking actions for his or her errors by assuming responsibility (Kimmel 2007). "Behavioral integrity can play a major role in the constructing and getting buy in from key stakeholders for organizational vision, strategies, and innovation that could lead to producing a sustainable competitive advantage" (Warren 2015). Most importantly, the role of strategy on leaders' behavioral integrity has to do with their ability to be good listeners. This attribute allows leaders to keep in mind the different stakeholder needs and incorporate these needs honestly into the overall organizational strategy to remain innovative (Mootee 2009).

2. The Role of Strategy, Innovation, and Vision on Leaders

Innovation is aligned with overall organizational strategy and adds value to the vision of an organization in keeping it on the competitive edge. Sarah Robb O'Hagan, Gatorade president, North America, and global chief marketing officer, sports nutrition, for PepsiCo, stated in an interview with Fast Company in 2012 about how an active imagination can help drive business growth and that "Innovation to me is creating the future. It requires a relentless desire to challenge beliefs around 'what is' and 'what works' in order to provide new solutions to problems" (Hawkes 2012). Integrity and trust are needed in value based organizations to help in moving innovation and creativity forward. Leader's behavioral integrity in aligning behavioral integrity with good innovation can keep them on the competitive edge by building and gaining trust in their clients and stakeholders. These actions will find stakeholders who respect and value the organization based on the ethical standards and integrity that organizational leaders place on building customer support and loyalty.

According to Robb O'Hagan, she defines creativity as "a very personal thing and it should mean very different things to different people." In her case, it's the process of "following my instincts and using my imagination to see ideas and solutions that haven't existed before" (Hawkes). To remain on the competitive edge, organizational leaders must encourage innovation to create new products that align with organizational strategy, mission, current, and future goals, build an ethical culture thus adding value to their organization (Deloitte 2009). A leader who bases his or her leadership on creating and encouraging innovation can easily move along followers as they will emulate the positive behaviors of the leader and assist in achieving the overall vision of the organization.

Argandona (2003) posited that a leader's behavior needs not only be aligned with the vision of the organization to continue to move the organization towards achieving its goals, that organizational leaders must have a clear results driven vision. A leader who respects the goals of the organization and does not deviate from its goals can carry the organization vision forward. An organization in which the leader incorporates a value based ethics to the overall vision of the organization can assist in improving their public image, internal and external stakeholder loyalty, leader and follower trust building. Ethics compliance is an ongoing process as it often starts learning and enhancing goals and strategies; it requires innovation to design, and vision to

implement. An ethics based behavioral integrity for both leaders and followers can also foster good relationship between employees, employer and clients, as well as assist in the overall attrition of staff, while helping in increasing value.

3. The Role of Strategy, Innovation, and Vision on Followers

The behavioral integrity of managers as viewed by their followers has a lot to do with overall performance and ways in which leaders can continue to motivate employees to achieve the overall goals or objectives of an organization and creating an organizational culture in which employees or followers are valued, supported, and respected (Rogers and Gagos 2003). Employees or followers who work in environments where the ethical values of leaders do not favor followers can have a detrimental effect on follower's job satisfaction rate, ability to remain innovative and can reduce respect and trust for the leader. The role of behavioral integrity on follower's strategy depends on the role of the leader and how the leader has been able to communicate the strategic goals to followers especially where they have aligned the behavior of the leader towards the employee (David and Rothstein 2006). A follower's behavioral integrity can decline when leaders do not visibly communicate and respect employee's opinions or perspectives. To move the organizational goals forward, employees' attitudes towards the leader affect their overall performance and willingness to remain innovative and creative. Followers are bound to perform the highest and remain innovative when they work in an environment that is nurturing and supportive of their creativity.

Paine (1994) posited that "a management-led commitment to ethical values has contributed to competitiveness, positive work-force morale, as well as solid sustainable relationships with the company's key constituencies. In the end, creating a climate that encourages exemplary conduct may be the best way to discourage damaging misconduct." A knowledge worker can continue to innovate different products and ideas when there is encouragement from leaders of open innovative processes in an organization. Such open innovative process can increase the knowledge based of followers to create products that will be valued by customers. Followers can conform to the innovative ethics when leaders incorporate a culture or climate of support for innovation or creativity; which can be influenced by structure, skills, incentives, ownership, and a good framework for innovation through motivation (Mortara, Napp, Slacik, and Minshall 2009). In moving ahead the vision of an organization, leaders can incorporate a value based ethics in their organization's vision and goals that will assist their followers in understanding retention and attrition issues, employee loyalty to the organization and in the ways in which they can form a trusting relationship with leaders.

4. Conclusion

"Behavioral integrity, along with trust, has garnered much renewed interest in the wake of corporate scandals and financial meltdowns by Wall Street organizations within the last 15 years. In the 21st century competitive environment, organizations are seeking competitive advantage as the competitive landscape has become more crowded. This potentially gives way to more abuse of corporate ethical standards that could degrade competitive advantage" (Warren 2015). Leaders who have a high and ethical standard can lead and align their overall organizational vision by forming honest and trustworthy relationship with their followers. A leader's ability to keep their organization on the competitive edge will encourage followers to be innovative. In moving ahead the vision of an organization, leaders can incorporate a value based ethics in their organization's vision and goals that will assist their followers in understanding retention and attrition issues, employee loyalty

to the organization and in the ways in which they can form a trusting relationship with leaders. Fostering and following a culture of value creation in an organization can be shaped by a leader's ability to be ethical and one in which followers can look up to leaders in achieving an organizations vision. By fostering ethical behavior, leaders can gain stake holder trust and motivate followers to remain loyal, honest, build trust and communicate ideas and challenges of organizational strategy, vision and innovation.

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