Course Learning Outcomes for Unit III

Upon completion of this unit, students should be able to:

5. Describe team-building activities leaders can incorporate for better managing internal teams and interorganizational alliances.
   5.1 Explain how to diagnose and solve common problems found in teams through the use of team-building activities.
   5.2 Outline the phases of the team-building cycle, including team-building activities as appropriate.

Reading Assignment

Chapter 5: Change: Devising More Effective Ways of Working Together

Please use the Business Source Complete database in the CSU Online Library to read the following article related to team function:


Please use the ABI Inform database in the CSU Online Library to read the following article related to team function:


Unit Lesson

In this unit, we will discuss how to devise effective ways in which teams can work more efficiently together. High-performing teams know what to do to achieve their goals if problems are impeding their performances. They also understand that taking the right corrective action is crucial to team improvement.

Wise leaders are similar to smart coaches who can gather the team at half time, iron out the wrinkles, and proactively tackle the next quarter in a manner that creates a win for everyone on the team. Each player is a true key to the overall success of the group and understands his or her significance to the team, role on the team, and expectations going forward.

The various skills and talents of each team member are interwoven to produce a strong connection that bands the team into one unit bound for excellence. Consequently, many leaders do not realize the importance of team building until a problem is identified.

Some problems that occur in teams include the following:
Many times, team members will demonstrate conformity simply to agree with a leader’s request or to avoid conflict. However, it is also common for a member to resent or resist the leader’s instructions if the member is not fully in agreement with the request. If a team member chooses to overtly resist the leader’s order, a struggle will generally ensue when the leader opts to meet with the team as a whole. For reasons such as this, it is imperative that leaders understand the importance of enhancing team-building activities prior to the existence of a problem. Differences will occur no matter who is on the team; therefore, measures must be established as a precaution to alleviate downtime due to unnecessary determinants of team behaviors (Dyer et al., 2013).

Team building is a meta-competency that should be thought of as an ongoing process instead of a single event. Effective leaders are cognizant of the time it takes to carefully share data, diagnose concerns, and plan actions to conquer team obstacles. In some cases, managers will decide to utilize the skills and expertise of an outside consultant. This is possibly due to the manager not being competently trained in how to properly execute a team-building program. The consultant will work closely with the manager to organize team activities and get the group on the right track. He or she will be honest and sensitive, yet aggressively forthright in making decisions and plans for the future of the team (Dyer et al., 2013).

Ordinarily, the team-building program will follow a cycle of phases that allows the leader and team members to critically assess the root or symptoms of the problem that is stifling the performances of the group. The team-building cycle consists of six stages: problem identification, data gathering, data analysis, action planning, implementation, and evaluation. Each step is critical for team development. For the most part, a team must possess the ability to diagnose its own problems and initiate change, as this is perhaps the most distinguishing feature of high-performing teams (Dyer et al., 2013).

According to Blanchard (2007), “The key to developing people is to catch them doing something right” (p.4). When building teams, leaders must realize the importance of knowing explicitly what particular teams are expected to accomplish and how to motivate them to work together cohesively. Team members must be willing to accept the challenge of working with others, and they must be willing to tackle obstacles as a unified group. Challenges will come; yet, effective leaders understand how to make decisions that will positively affect individual members while producing a win-win situation for the goal in sight.
References
