

Group Ethics

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Group dynamics is the binder that holds organizations together. Without them, there would be chaos within the framework of organized functionality. Within this notion, the question is raised, "Is individual ethics required for a group to be effective?" This paper briefly examines the notion that ethical dilemmas in organizations can undermine the effectiveness of the group. Considering the impact that ethics has on group dynamics, it is essential that this area be addressed.

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"Ethics" constitutes a discipline concerned with moral judgments, the goodness or badness of behavior, the rightness or wrongness of an action." (Ferret and Fraedrich, 1994; MacKinnon, 1995; Shaw, 1991). Individuals make value judgments each and every day of their life. In some instances, those judgments will determine if the decision is/is not ethical within the boundaries of definition. Groups do not, collectively, make ethical decisions. Rather, "groups and organizations are composed of individuals who bring their value systems to bear when making moral judgments." (Holloman, 1991).

Group processes and performance are closely integrated with an individual's moral and ethical foundations. Ethical behaviors such as cheating, lying, and theft are not viewed in the same light as previous generations. Many individuals have a predisposition to exhibit unethical behavior. This is due to their internal value system and what they view as ethical. Groups "exert substantial amounts of influence on a group member's core value system."

Despite the changes in our society, Ethics, integrity, honesty and strong values should remain the cornerstone of corporate and personal behavior. Corporations should create

ethics codes that adequately detail what standards are expected of the employees. Training should be conducted to ensure that group members fully understand what constitutes unethical behavior. Through standards, training, leadership, and group dynamics, ethical behavior of group members may be influenced in positive ways.

Extensive research, over several decades, has provided some good solid answers to individual ethical questions. However, ethical behavior, as it relates to group study, has not been extensively examined. There has been some work done in Germany that studies ethical behavior in business. This work has not been translated in sufficient detail to include in the context of this paper.

Group Leadership Dynamics

The most valuable resource, within a company, is the intellectual and leadership resources that motivate personnel and thereby successfully execute the vision and strategy of the company. Effective group leadership is a dynamic and never ending process. The development and implementation of new perspectives and theories is a continuous process. Driven by technological and social changes, our experiences dictate new directions in group and leadership dynamics. Additionally, effective group leaders must learn the techniques of flushing out the new and most dynamic techniques. It is crucial that this evolution of change be studied, examined, and analyzed for key indicators. By maintaining and understanding these changes, group leaders can evaluate the necessary changes in their approaches to group leadership dynamics. These evaluations may lead to new skills, innovative techniques, and personal competence as a group leader.

Companies are finding it more difficult to predict what attributes effective leaders need. There are certain group leadership attributes that are essential to ensuring top-notch

leaders successfully directing a competitive company. A few of the principles and skills that make an effective group leader include:

1. Communication
2. Judgment
3. Vision
4. Energy.

Conclusions

We are all part of or participate in some type of group dynamics and leadership activity. The way in which we conduct ourselves may ultimately determine the success or failure of that activity. In that context, it is essential that we understand the importance of group dynamics, ethics, integrity and leadership to ensure success in our endeavors. Only through study, understanding, and application of these principles can a group or individual succeed.

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