

A POWERFUL MANAGERIAL FUNCTION: COACHING

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ÖZET: Bu çalışmanın amacı iş dünyasında ayakta kalabilmenin gereklerinin sürekli değiştiği günümüz dünyasında uzun vadede bunu başaracak işletmelerin, öğrenmeye açık işletmeler olacağını vurgulamaktır. Bu tür işletmeler her kademede çalışan insan gücünün öğrenme yoluyla kendini geliştirebileceği, yenileyebileceği, iş başarısını artırabileceği işletmelerdir. Bu anlamda deşündüğümüzde işletmedeki geleneksel yönetim ve yönetici kavramının dışına çıkmanız gerekmektedir. Günümüz modern işletmelerinde, yönetici klasik işlevleri olan planlama örgütleme, yürütme, uyumlaştırma ve kontrol işlevlerinin dışında, aynı zamanda bir eğitmen gibi de hareket edebilmelidir. Yöneticinin bu işlevini, takımını başarılı kılmak için onlara sürekli yeni oyun kuralları öğreten, taktikler veren, motive etmek suretiyle takım ruhunu ayakta tutmaya çalışan bir futbol ya da basketbol koçunun işleviyle özdeşleştirebiliriz.

Yönetici, işletme yönetiminde işgörenlerine karşı bir koç gibi davranırken, gerçekleştirmesi gereken temel görevleri işgörenleri eğitmek ve onları başarı güdüsü ile donanmış, kendilerine güvenen ve mevcut performanslarının üzerine çıkabilecek nitelikte bireyler haline getirmektir. Tabi ki bu amaçları gerçekleştirebilmek için koçun güvenilir, işgörenler tarafından kabul görmüş ve onların üzerinde işletme amaçlarına bağlılık yaratabilecek nitelikte bir kişi olması ve birtakım bireysel özelliklere sahip olması gerekmektedir.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today world is integrating economies of nations are becoming globalized and foreign investments are taking place in every country. Under such circumstances business enterprises are not competing only with their peers in their own countries, but they are also competing with a large variety of companies scattered all around the world. In short, effective management is a must for the success of the organizations.

We can classify the workforce of a business organization as managerial levels and non-managerial levels. The difference between them is, people working at non managerial levels are only responsible from their particular tasks, whereas managers are accountable not only for their own work but also for the work of other people. In other words as well as being responsible from their own performance they are also responsible from success and failure of their subordinates. If we think in

that sense it won't be wrong to say that besides being planners, organizers, leaders and coordinators, managers also perform coaching function in their organizations[1].

When we use the word "coach" we immediately remember a football or basketball coach. What do these people do? They teach their team players knowledge and skills, provide them tactics, and motivate them in order to be successful in the match. In the same sense, manager being a coach in the organization, transfer skills, knowledge, attitude and values to his subordinates essential both for these people's and the organization's success.

II. COACHING FUNCTION OF THE MANAGER

Coaching is such a process that the manager creates an environment and a relation with his subordinates that fosters success through learning. In order to be successful, first of all people need to discover their potential and then through learning they can achieve the goals which are set at higher levels than they are currently performing. Coaching creates strong, successful subordinates who appreciate themselves and aware of their competencies. At this step we have to make clear some important points with coaching.

First of all coaching is not a momentary action but a process. Throughout this process subordinates learn knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. In other words all these are transferred from coach to the learners. For that reason transformation is very important at the relation between the learner and the coach. This relationship can be at the individual level or at the group level. As the outcome of coaching, subordinates are enabled to accomplish tasks and duties at higher levels than they were doing before. This outcome can be quantitative, like learner can do more of she was doing before, or qualitative, like the learner is enabled to do something different.

Manager-associate relationship has a long-term prospect that includes many faces. One of them is coaching, the others are counseling and mentoring. In other words coaching, counseling, and mentoring are

subroles of a manager. Generally these three roles coincides with each other, but if we analyze them we can still find little differences among these three.

Timespan of coaching is short to intermediate. Coach helps the individual to develop for the current or future job through learning in a productive environment. On the other hand, counseling is a special aspect of the coaching role where the coach deals with attitude and motivational problems of the individual affecting his job. Counselor helps the associate to confront with his problems and with his ineffective behavior, make him accept responsibility for the consequences of his ineffective behaviors and finally make the associate believe that through behavioral change and learning new attitudes he can overcome his job related problems. But while doing all these the counselor also has to analyze the values, goals, and variables that create unsatisfactory personal outcomes.

When compared with coaching and counseling mentoring is a more longer process. Mentoring role of the manager includes dealing with all career growth and personal advancement of the individual. Mentor has to build up friendship with the associate over the long run rather than being a boss to him, and has to deal with his work, family and career related concerns[2;747-748].

After defining the role of the coach in a broad sense we can clearly say that besides his subroles a coach has mainly two major functions:

- Training
- Empowerment

When the coach performs his training functions he acts as a facilitator and as an instructor. First of all he lays out the task to be done in front of the employee and explains its importance for the organization. Then he tries to teach knowledge and skills and demonstrate the actions necessary to perform the task. Then the coach allows the associate to perform the task and during this time he gives instructions and feedback about the performance of the associate and from time to time corrects the mistakes that the associate does. As we see instructing function of the coach is not easy. It is not enough to know how to do the job, because knowing and teaching are quite different things. For that reason the coach has to prepare a training plan concerning the key points.

An effective coach primarily has to define the learning goals. By the goals we mean the needs of the associate that are mutually agreed both by the coach and

the associate. To the degree that the associate is open to the coach about his needs the learning process will achieve its targeted objectives and associate-coach relationship will be successful.

Sometimes the coach's duty is to teach a new competency to his associate. Due to the changes in technology or transfer of the employee from one department to the other the job of the associate may

change requiring him to acquire a new competency. If the coach wants to be successful at teaching new competency(ies) he has to:

- analyze the skills that constitute the competency
- find out deficiencies of the associate concerning this new competency
- show the learner importance of acquiring this new competency for his own and for the company's benefit.

We can say that the associate can acquire a new competency more easily if he is given an opportunity to practice. This practice involves making the associate perform the skills that define the competency. Throughout this practice the coach continuously has to provide corrective feedback to his associate. This feedback focuses on appreciating the right things that the learner does and openly discussing and correcting the things that the learner does wrong. Feedback is very important, because without an accurate feedback learning can not actualize so the chance of success of the learner diminishes. Finally training function of the coach covers follow-up. After the learning period of the associate ends he begins his actual work and at this point follow-up duty of the coach begins. Although the associate acquired the skills to perform the work, from time to time he may come across with obstacles and at these points he must be supported and encouraged.

Second major function of the manager as a coach is empowering his associates. The dictionary meaning of empowerment is giving abilities to do something[3]. When the coach empowers, he helps growth of his employees who couldn't reach the limits of their potential on their job because of fear or self-doubt. In other words, the goals of empowerment are:

1. Helping employees accept responsibility for their actions.

2. Enabling associates control the events, outcomes in their work lives.

3. Motivating employees towards becoming more productive.

4. Encouraging employees to develop self-discipline in their work.

In order to achieve these goals it is essential for the coach to follow some steps.

1. The coach can achieve success in empowering his associate to the degree that he can build up a positive relationship with him. For that reason:

- He has to know the interest of his associate
- He should have at least surface information about the family and hobbies of the associate.
- He should ask his opinion about work-related issues.
- Whenever a problem arises concerning the job of the associate coach should discuss the problem with him and ask for his suggestions.

2. In order to make the employee overcome his performance limitations coach has to find out current behavior of the associate that leads to ineffective performance. For example; employee's low performance can be due to coming late to work most of the time or being shy to express his suggestions in the department meetings.

3. It is not enough for the coach to discover the performance related problems of the individual. Because they can not be solved if the associate don't accept them. At this point the coach's duty is to confront the associate with the consequences of his ineffective behavior.

4. By making the employee judge and understand his behavior coach teaches him to be responsible of his actions. Then at this point it is easy for the coach to take actions to empower the associate. The coach can do certain things to actualize this.

First of all the coach has to communicate his positive expectations of success to the associate by using his communication skills. This is not criticizing the associate but using selective approval for the behaviors to be appreciated and supplying an option to the associate for his ineffective behaviors. It will be also very useful if

the coach gives an opportunity to the associate to express himself in an environment where he is accepted. To serve this purpose the coach has to:

- Notice what is special about each individual.
- Encourage creativity, innovation and initiative.
- Collect ideas from the associate about how to do a job better, improve quality and quantity work.
- Give people freedom to express their ideas about how to improve team's, department's or organization's performance.
- Accept and appreciate that organizational success is the result of individual's contributions

Then of course, second stage is developing and implementing a mutually agreed performance improvement plan.

III. ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL COACH-ASSOCIATE RELATION

Quality relationships are very important in the workplace. These relationships enable all parties (superiors, subordinates, peers) to satisfy their needs in the work environment. Again if we take coach-associate relationships into consideration we can say that for a coach to fulfill his functions successfully he has to build:

- Trust
- Acceptance
- Commitment

on his associates in the organization.

We can not talk about an effective coach-associate relationship in the work-place where little or no trust exists. Associates expect predictability from their coaches. When the coach does what he says associates feel safe in the organization and act with confidence in all their actions. Second important dimension of building trust is the degree of openness of the coach to his associates. In order to actualize this the coach has make his associates believe that he is honest with them and not withholding any relevant information from them. Finally associates trust the coaches who are really interested in them as human beings. Individuals can not trust people who continuously criticize and mistreat them[4].

In short for a coach to make his associates believe that he is a trustworthy person he has to[5]:

- Do what he says.
- Support them to express their ideas and feelings in every field.
- Listen them.
- Share and exchange information with them.
- Make them understand that mistake is a natural consequence of human behavior, and the important thing is to learn from mistakes and not repeat them for the second time.

As well as building trust, building acceptance is also very valuable for the establishment of effective coach-associate relationships. Coaches are accepted and appreciated by their subordinate when they;

- Allow their associates freedom of action concerning their work.
- Permit associates to tell about the things they don't like without getting defensive.
- Tolerate characters and opinions different from him.
- Appreciate good work and criticize mistakes without threatening.

Developing trust and acceptance on the associates is a must for a coach. Because when this is actualized associates will:

- Be willing to be cooperative.
- Accept positive feedback and negative criticisms and willing to solve problems.
- Have tendency to try new things and take risks.
- Feel comfortable and express themselves in the team, department meetings.

The third important aspect of associate-coach relationship is commitment. Commitment means that the person values something. In that case the duty of the coach is to create people who values, the organization, the work they are doing, their coach, their superiors, and their subordinates. This is not an easy task for the coach.

First of all, the coach has to create an ideal usually an organizational or departmental goal that everybody believes by heart and work for its achievement. From time to time associates' progress can be very slow. At these times in order not to make them lose their hope coach must encourage them. He can help them to identify with the roles they are expected to fill, show them how they can contribute to the achievement of organizational goals and how important their contributions are for the achievement of these goals[2;116,293,361-362].

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE COACH

The points we have discussed in the previous paragraphs made us realize that coach is the person who has great influence over his associates. At this point we have to answer such a question: Which factors lead him to achieve positive results in coaching?

One of the determinants of success in coaching is the personal effectiveness of the individual. Good coaches see their associates as their equals and accept that associate-coach relationship requires mutual agreement on every field. So while developing learning goals and implementing a learning plan for the associate they don't impose the goals or plans but ask for the suggestions of the associate. Because they are aware that reality is different from perspective of each people and actual truth can only be find by discussing the matters in a deep manner. Another important point that shows the competence of the person as a coach is his ability to understand the limits of the associate's potential. If the coach believes that the associate is able to learn, and share his belief with the associate, then the associate will enjoy from learning will learn more easily and rapidly and he will show every attempt to increase his performance up to the limits of his potential[6]. Besides the above mentioned points we can list the qualifications of a successful coach as follows:

- They respect people and be honest towards them.
- They accept the uniqueness of every individual.
- They are patient, and friendly.
- They are open to suggestions, new ideas and methods.
- They are skillful and have knowledge on the areas they try to improve the performance of their associates.

- They tolerate mistake.
- They have communication skills.
- They have sense of humor.
- They understand every person is different than the other.
- They behave in such a way that the learner can understand and try out the behaviors that the coach shows.
- They are consistent in their manners.
- They state their point of view, ideas and observations clearly.

IV. CONCLUSION

Within the continuously changing and demanding structure of the business life the organizations that will survive in the long run will be the learning organizations. Learning organizations are the ones in which;

- goals, values and structure of the work are clearly defined.
- policies and strategies are formulated in such a way that their implementation will lead to the achievement of organizational goals.
- everybody in the organization is trying to equip and develop himself to deal with the changing demands from the organization; customer demands for new products and better service, competition, technological changes.

In such an organization a manager can not only operate with the traditional management functions but besides these he has also a vital task to accomplish in order to support his associates - Coaching. In other words managers are the people who create the learning organization through performing their coaching function.

Primarily, the coach shape the core values and vision of the organization and then provide leadership to his associates that supports the learning of these values and the vision of the organization. When every member shares the same vision in an organization performance of the individuals in the organization and productivity of the organization will improve rapidly.

- The coach has to see empowerment has an important aspect of his coaching function. Because empowered associates become autonomous, they trust themselves, they are aware of their assets and deficiencies so they are more willing to learn.

- The coach has to support the teamwork through discouraging harmful competition. Because, cooperation and teamwork are essential elements of learning and high performance in the organization.

Finally the coach has to create an environment where associates are supported with the resources they need to learn, and constraints that are hindering good performance are removed.

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