BEST PRACTICES FOR LEADING AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This article introduces best practices for leading an international organization. The paper addresses the problems of the importance of international leadership, the ways of improving international leadership, the relationship between prior intercultural contact and international leadership potential, and the value of international leadership in global negotiation.

KEYWORDS: International Leadership Challenge, Development, Negotiations, Influence

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, with the developing of technology and information systems, international organizations and corporations are growing very fast. Except for the difficulties of the technology requirement, international leadership also becomes one of the most important factors of the success of an international organization. According to Precey and Entrena (2011), "Leadership matters. Leadership that values people matters. The development of leaders who value people matters" (p 70) Leadership in international organizations faces new challenges like different background cultures, conflict between majority and minority, and global negotiations. The fostering process of new international leaders is also important with the global companies expanding background. Today, the need for leaders with international leading skill reaches the highest point in history. According to Lane (2011), "The development of such multinational enterprises requires an academic leader who can balance the requirements of the home country with the demands of the host environment, operate in multiple cultures almost simultaneously, and have the capacity to deal with the ambiguities and challenges associated with start-up ventures" (p. 5). The requirement of the international leader includes different aspects such as acceptance of multicultural background, negotiation skills, and high productivity.

Comprehensive Review of the Scholarly Literature

In the paper "Leadership in International Organizations: Global Leadership Competencies", the author emphasizes that leadership is becoming one of the most important factors in international organizations. However, there are not many pieces of research that have been done in this area. Based on this situation, the main purpose of this paper is trying to compare and contrast the current and future international leadership and presenting the gap between them. After identifying the gap, the proper program for fostering future international leaders can be conducted. The main methodology the author uses in this paper is interviewing 12 current international leaders. The interview questions can be categorized into four areas, which are leadership development, global leadership and culture, international leader and the organization, and leadership development for the future (Thorn, 2012). Based on the answers to these questions, the author tries to solve the international leadership problems. These problems can be listed as what factors influenced the leadership development, why did these leaders choose to lead in a global institution, what motivates them to choose to leave their own national, and what are their lessons to be learned from these international organization leaders (Thorn, 2012). After the analysis of

answers with the related topic, six future challenges as well as opportunities are listed. The first point is matching the international leadership with the fast developing of international event and technology. The second point is leading in the global society with growing complexity. The third point is the gap between world poverty and the rich. The fourth point is being more adaptable in creating and accepting to change. The fifth point is visions of people from different cultures. The last point is realizing the decline of nation-state. These six factors are predicted and agreed by all the interviewed leaders. From these factors, people can understand what the current international leaders are worrying about. Next, the author listed the common factors that will affect the development of leaders. There are five factors, which can be summarized as early international background, family influence, honesty, flexible to environment, and being fair and consistent. These factors are from different aspects of shaping the leadership style. International leaders need to pay attention to these factors and develop them into their leadership style. Only in this way, the international leadership can be successful. At the end of the paper, based on the interview result and the interviewed leader's opinion, the author summarized an international leadership development program. This program focuses on the common success factors of international leadership and helps to solve the future problems of international leadership (Thorn, 2012).

In the paper "Cultural Intelligence and International Leadership Potential: The Importance of Contact for Members of the Majority", Kim and Van develop a model showing the relationship between prior intercultural contact and international leadership potential. The authors demonstrate that via cultural intelligence, prior intercultural contact will effect on international leadership potential, but it is stronger for majorities (Kim & Van, 2012). There are two working adults' samples the authors use for the model. The purpose of this paper is to provide practical ways for managers to implement when they face international leadership. Also, it provides two ways that the theory applies to practice. The first one is the theory gives a complete picture of the potential. The second one is the study provides increasing evidence for the concept. This paper gives a new view of the comparison between majority and minority (Kim &Van, 2012).

In the paper "The Power of the Chair: Formal Leadership in International Cooperation", the author addresses the problem of "multilateral negotiations is a political phenomenon" (Tallberg, 2012, p. 260). There are four points Tallberg made to illustrate the influence of the international leadership on the negotiation. These points are the demand of leadership, the alternative solution, adoption, and the design of chairmanship. With the analysis of these four conditions, Tallberg explains the relationship between leadership and the global negotiation. This paper provides a new theory of the multilateral negotiations, which "develops a coherent argument for the delegation of authority to the chairmanship, the power resources of negotiation chairs, and the influence of formal leaders over outcomes" (Tallberg, 2012, p. 241). With these three points, the author addresses the issue of the global organization negotiation problem. By comparing and contrasting the successful and failed global negotiation problem, the author provides the key factors of the international leadership in global negotiation.

Personal View of the Scholarly Literature

In the paper "Leadership in International Organizations: Global Leadership Competencies" there are three outcomes. The first outcome is the analysis of challenges and opportunities of an international organization. We agree with the analysis. International business and organization are an advance step in the business world. Based on the developing of globalization, people do business with the whole world. The appearing of international organizations faces the need for international business transactions. Instead of outsourcing outside markets to other countries' domestic companies, building international organizations can keep the profit inside the company as much as possible. Also, there are a lot of challenges

of international leadership. To overcome barriers in an international organization, companies' management layer needs to adjust them. Change does not always bring the good stuff. Leadership changes can bring disasters to companies, too. We also agree with the second outcome. The listed common factors, which interviewers believe are the most important, are the key points to international organization leadership. Flexibility is the one we agree most. There are a lot of culture styles in different parts of the world. Even in the same country, people may have different cultures. Flexibility in leadership can be understood as respecting the differences and cultures. We agree with the third outcome, too. A leadership-developing program is important to leaders who do not know how to perform in international organizations.

In the paper "Cultural Intelligence and International Leadership Potential: The Importance of Contact for Members of the Majority", Kim and Van analyze leadership based on the majority and minority. We do not agree on this point of view because the majority and minority may not be a factor in some companies. Also, the definition of majority and minority is blurred. People in the same country or a person with the same race do not mean they have the same culture background. Even though we can define it with similarity, the factors and scale of making definition are hard to decide. If we cannot separate majority and minority in this context, any further explanation may cause misunderstanding and inaccuracy. However, if we can find the general method of defining the majority and minority, which is agreed by all the people, we can use Kim and Van's conclusion and use it to adjust international organizations' leadership.

In paper "The Power of the Chair: Formal Leadership in International Cooperation", the author investigates the relationship between leadership and the global negotiation. There are four factors Tallberg listed, which are the demand of leadership, alternative solution, adoption, and the design of chairmanship (Tallberg, 2012). We agree that these factors are important for negotiations. One of the biggest outcomes of leadership is to negotiate and generate the best solution that satisfies most people. The demand for leadership and provide alternative solutions are the preparation of negotiation. When there are conflicts, searching for leadership and finding alternative solutions are important because it shows different parties have the will to solve the problem. This situation is very difficult in an international organization because each member has his/her solutions to the same problem. The culture background will amplify the problem. At this point, leadership and alternative solutions need to be provided as soon as possible to prevent the problem from going deeper and reaching culture level. Next, adoption is like a compromise between different parties. This process needs a lot of international leadership skills. Last but not least, the design of chairmanship should be done with carefulness. This process is the routine of problem-solving.

Personal Experience with Topic Area

As an international student and professor working in America, we experience culture difference all the time. In addition, our current team has employees from different culture backgrounds. Also, we have an offshore team in Singapore and India. Albeit we are not the team leaders, as followers in the team, we still can understand the importance of international leadership. Our boss is from America and his job is to manage all the team members on the same page. He does a great job of international leadership. His leadership style is relational-oriented. In the team, he organizes the meeting of team members in the different area to make sure we can communicate and cooperate with each other. Also, one of our teammates shares the same culture background with us. So when our manager assigns task, he always gives similar task to us so we can discuss. Also, when there is a conflict between teammates, he will not judge who is right or wrong, so none of us will feel bad. Moreover, he respects a different culture. When there is a special festival to our team members, he will congratulate him and give him a break. However, there are also things that can be improved. In order to keep track of task,

he chooses one of the team members from the culture background of the majority to assign tasks. This can help maintain the performance of most of the team members, but the employee from the minority will feel slighted at the distribution of the tasks. This can be solved by having different task distributors in turn. Overall, our manager has great international leadership skill which can maintain the relationship between team members and teamwork productivity.

SUMMARY

In this paper, we list and analyze three different articles about three different aspects of international leadership. These three aspects are current and future factors of successful international leadership, the relationship between prior intercultural contact and international leadership potential, and global negotiation. By analysis of the three articles, we express our dogma. We agree with the first article's three outcomes, which are the common factors of international leadership, future challenge, and leader develop program. We believe all of the three outcomes are important for fostering a great international leader. Second, we have a slightly different opinion about the second article because we believe the international leadership potential also can affect the minority when they have an important role in the team. Third, we believe the success of global negotiation is one of the most important outcomes of great international leadership. After expressing our opinion, we refer to our own manager who leads an international team as an example of an international leader. By analyzing the pro and con leadership skill of our manager, we connect the theory and practical international leadership experience to express our opinion.

Why this Research is Important

This research explains the importance of international leadership with three different aspects. Both current and future international leaders can find useful information about the way to improve international leadership or become an international leader. Also, international organizations can use the international leader-developing program to foster their international leaders. In addition, by recognizing the difference between majority and minority, the company can develop more efficient international leadership to influence most of the employees. Last but not least, understanding the role of international leadership in global negotiation can help international organizations improve the rate of success in global collaboration. In sum, both leaders and organizations can apply this paper to improve their practical international leadership.

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APPENDICES

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