Designing Visionary Leadership Teams

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ABSTRACT

Nigel Sykes’ 3E’s concept is examined against established theory and recent work in Organizational Behaviour. The possibility that this concept offers a way of developing social synergy in work groups is explored, and considered in the context of socio-technical systems. 3E’s is based on the categorisation of people in the workplace into roles labelled “Envisioners” “Enablers” or “Enactors”. Role theory is explored, and its relevance to organizational success. The importance of the affective component in motivation and decision-making is identified. A research study is reported testing the 3E’s concept which shows that it corresponds with measurable differences of motivational need, personality factors, and decision-making between individuals. The characteristics of successful group decision-making are linked with the 3E’s differentiation. The 3E’s model offers the possibility of improving person-role fit, and thus organisational performance. It proposes an integrated design for the selection and operation of teams, offering a person-role fit, optimal decision-making behaviour, and consequent social synergy.

Keywords: Decision-Making, Motivation, Person-Role Fit, Social Synergy

INTRODUCTION

Leadership teams have been explored extensively, and a number of different schemas have been proposed—including that of Belbin (1982), but also Holland (1985). The main finding of these researchers has been that leadership teams need to contain a diversity of members, with different skills. Collins (2001) reports that successful organizations have balanced leadership teams whose members possess different capabilities, while Miller (1990) shows that unbalanced leadership teams are connected with organisational failures. The inference is that enduring organisational success depends on the ability
of leaders to identify and maintain a
diversity of capabilities within their
teams, thus creating social synergy
(Whitworth, 2009).

While leadership teams traditionally
develop over a period of time, a range of current working practices
preclude the direct personal contact
and relationship-building that normally
precedes and informs appointments into
organisational roles. This includes such
things as online collaborative work
groups or geographically-separated
teams working on short-term projects
for multi-national organisations (e.g.
using enterprise information systems).
The technical aspects of this kind of
work arrangement are usually de-
signed to ensure speed and security of
information, together with customised
databases ensuring efficient system or
project control.

This leaves open how one can as-
ssess people’s fitness for roles. Neglect
of the social aspect (role expectation,
person-role fit) of work groups using
information systems and technology
is a potential cause of problems. The
fact that modern work teams are almost
inevitably socio-technical systems is not
widely appreciated, but 3E’s offers the
possibility of social contextualisation
leading to the “higher level system”
proposed by Whitworth (2009). There
is an obvious problem in attempting
to achieve the social synergy arising
from a credible person-role fit where
technology serves to obstruct traditional
human contact. There is nowadays
extensive use of psychometric systems
as an adjunct to team-building (e.g. the
Myers-Briggs test) in the hope that this
type of analysis and feedback can help
determine the person-role fit within
teams, and accelerate the acceptance of
personality differences between team
members.

Various psychometric tools have
been devised to try and produce mea-
sures of difference between people,
mainly with ambiguous results. As far
as personality factor research goes,
the most confident finding is that the
“Conscientiousness” factor is the only
one that consistently correlates with in-
dividual performance (McCrae & Costa
2006). The reader might be forgiven
for thinking this was (a) a statement of
the obvious, and (b) a good example of
circular reasoning!

This present study is based on the
work of Nigel Sykes1 (Warwick Busi-
ness School, Centre for Small and
Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)).
He has proposed a team structure for
developing organisations which he
argues could represent a critical suc-
cess factor. This proposal implies that
it is possible to establish a “human
psychological process of meaning ex-
change” (Whitworth 2009) as a result
of acknowledging the differing psy-
chologies of people occupying different
organisational roles. (And therefore
differences in their styles of behaviour
and communication).

There is little obvious difference
between the team sizes involved in
developing SMEs, and work groups
with operational autonomy formed
Improving Collaborative Filtering Algorithms: Sentiment-based Approach in Social Network
www.igi-global.com/article/improving-collaborative-filtering-algorithms/170506?camid=4v1a

The Role of Information Technology in Quality Education
www.igi-global.com/chapter/role-information-technology-quality-education/29117?camid=4v1a