Bethany Perry DB8/Final Exam

**What expectations did you originally have for this class?**

I did not have any expectations in mind for this class which I think lead me to having an open mind. I was able to come to class willing to learn and take on new approaches to leadership style and employee motivation. I also have not been back to school since I graduated in 2011 with my bachelor’s so I was very nervous about coming back full time and this class made getting back into education very enjoyable and challenging.

**What has really worked well for you in this class? What new “learnings” have you gotten excited about? Why?**

 My favorite thing I learned in this class was the “Pay for Skills Plan” (Weisbord 2012) in the very beginning of this unit. It is an idea that you can allow your employees to decide their responsibilities for the most part and still have a productive work environment. When employees feel trusted by their supervisors, they are more willing to learn new skills. The next lesson I related to was from Weisbord’s chapter about Involving Everyone to Improve the Whole, “If you want a plan implemented, a company reorganized, work redesigned, or many problems solved all at once, get as many key stakeholders as possible in one room and ask them to work on the task together. Reaffirm dignity. Help people find meaning in their lives. Create a productive community in the workplace.” (Weisbord 2012). From previous work experience I know it is important to feel like you are on the same page not only with your coworkers but also with management. When there is a large problem within the daily tasks and you simply get a memo about the “fix” that doesn’t really do anything to help or causes other issues it is hard to feel like you are truly cared about in the workforce.

**What have you learned about yourself through this class? (Dig deep here and identify**

**new insights, ideas, or ways that you look at your talents and abilities).**

 This class came at a time where I was returning to the workforce after being home for nearly eight years. Something this class has helped me identify is that I am a futuristic thinker. The industry I left was the same as when I returned, meaning in eight years there had been no improvements in leadership, technology, or service. I understand that the financial industry is historically very conservative but that does not mean we cannot keep up with our clients and business customers. This class has helped me realize that with leadership education I can help improve not only employee satisfaction but also customer service.

**How can you use the material taught in this class in any of the organizations that you are**

**currently part of? How? Give concrete examples. As you contemplate the future, how do**

**you see the material taught in this class being of use to you?**

 I am currently in retail banking so my influence is low however that does not mean it is not important. I plan to use what we learned in this class to start a leadership development series within my branch. This would include holding weekly motivational meetings with my team and learning about different styles of leadership. I would have my team provide feedback about which style they relate too and which ones would not work for them. I also plan to use some the real-life examples from the book and have them create scenarios in which they would make changes based on their leadership style. It is hard in retail banking to feel like you are important you are often viewed as bottom of the totem pole but in reality, we are the foundation of the bank and the totem pole wouldn’t be standing without us. I think going over some of these things with my team would help us develop a closer working relationship and give everyone a voice.

**Reflect on the material that has been covered. What content or subject matter would be**

**useful to add to this class?**

Though I enjoyed this course greatly there are some areas that I wish were added or substituted for other subject matters. We are living in a society where more people are taking mental health seriously and it would be beneficial to see how these theories, we discuss work with people who have higher emotional intelligence vs those who do not. Every leadership style is different and would require different emotional and educational competencies, but it would be interesting to learn more about how to lead a team with higher or lower emotional intelligence. This is my first semester of the MPS program so maybe this is in another course but learning and building teams globally via remote work. This will be the way of future and it would be incredibly beneficial to help leaders learn how to grow team from all over the world and various cultures. This was thought briefly in my Global Leadership class but I feel a deep dive would be very effective.

**Have you identified additional topics that you plan to learn more about as a result of this**

**class? What are they? Why those topics?**

I have learned that I do not enjoy the management style of leadership as much as I would enjoy doing individual leadership development. For example, maybe someone is happy with where they are in their career, they do not have the desire to “climb the ladder”, and they just want to stay in their current role but develop leadership skills. This idea came to me when I was talking with a friend who works from home and is a mom to three children. Her boss put in for her to get a raise but the director wouldn’t approve the raise unless she transferred to a new position in another department. I can see the benefit of learning from a new group of people and managers however, some people have a lot going on in their personal lives and can only give a percent of themselves to work. If they are doing well enough at work be recognized for a raise by their manger, why would you deny them that simply because they do not want to learn about a whole other department. They could be a leader in their current area, and it would be less turnover and training for that group instead of having associates move around all the time. I want to show leadership and employees the benefits of growing leaders where they are happy. When associates are happy, they are more productive.

**Describe your vision of a learning organization and your role in it.**

 As briefly describe above I would love to develop leaders within their current roles. I would give associates the tools to feel empowered not just in the workplace but also in their personal lives. Through I am not sure what this looks like in the real world I would hope to be teaching an employee development program or a leadership development program.

**References:**

Weisbord, M. R. (2012). Productive Workplaces: Dignity, Meaning and Community in the 21st Century, 25 Year Anniversary. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.