

Everyone's Smart University

Project (Spring 2021)

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Section	Date	Course Code
Master	Thursday 18 / 03 / 2021.	(PMG511)

PROJECT LEADERSHIP

Instructions:

Instructor's Name: **Dr. Sara Adel**

THE IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS ON PROJECT SUCCESS IN **YOUR ORGANIZATION**: A CASE OF YOUR OWN.

Different leadership styles are the key factor in the success of any project. Project Leaders are responsible and accountable for the success/failure of the project. There are numerous responsibilities that are assigned to a Project Leader during the leadership journey.

YOUR MISSION:

Your research/project must provide an overview of information and knowledge in a corporate environment with an underlying theme of **defining leadership styles within applying the hard**

and soft skills for that style needed by the leader to ensure successful project delivery in your organization. (You are required to demonstrate your understanding of the relevant body of works to real-life business research).

Choose one only of the following project leadership skills using the tools that we learned during the project leadership course; starting from identifying and assess the case till executing the project.

- Prioritization (Using tools for Estimation – Scheduling – Tracking – prioritizing stakeholders).
- Team management (Using Team structures – Team development stages – Team needs).
- Embracing Accountability (Using RASCI)
- Conflict resolution (Using the Thomas-Kilmann conflict mode instrument).
- Motivation (Using one theory of motivation – Types of motivators).
- Communication in the project.
- Influencing (Using different sources of LEADER POWER).

What you have to do:

Your project task requires the preparation of a full project proposal that should contain the following components:

- **Introduction:** A detailed statement of the problem, research aim, and objectives that you would like to investigate and discuss. **(2 points)**

- **Literature Review and Conceptual framework:** An analysis of the literature relevant to the research topic that will give you the conceptual basis for conducting your research from the previous studies. **(2 points)**

- **Methodology:** Based on the conceptual framework, research aim(s), and objectives, you need to provide a detailed description of the data collection tools, data sources. **(2 points)**

- **Results and Discussion:** Description about the main findings of a research, outline your thoughts to defend your research and to emphasize the significance of it. **(4 points)**

- **References:** Lists all the resources you've used in your project, and your refereed journal articles as well. **(2 points)**

- **Appendices (If it is available in your study):** Any supplementary material you need to add. (Optional)

]Write the names of the chapters/sections of your research/ project and briefly discuss

what you will write in those chapters/sections [.

Best of luck...

Dr. Sara Adel

- Prioritization (Estimation – Scheduling – Tracking – prioritizing stakeholders).
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Dr. Sara Adel

PROJECT BRIEF INFORMATION AND DETAILS

This is a unique project with a mission to complete the vaccination of 4730 employees within 40 days and with limited resources. Due to the intention of the Ministry of Haj and Umrah, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior Affairs to protect the nation and the spread of Covid-19 within the pilgrims, the mentioned authorities have enforced all residents of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to be vaccinated before they go for Umrah or Haj. This issue has been raised by the governmental officials and entities in our regular meetings. YTC realized that our services will be suspended until we obtain the vaccination for all of our employees. YTC's top management called for an emergency meeting and appointed me as a Project Director for this project. YTC has a total of 4730 employees located in 6 different main regions within Saudi Arabia namely:

- 1.

- 
2. Riyadh
 3. Jeddah
 4. Makkah

5. Dammam
6. Madinah
7. Asser

INTRODUCTION

The project managers in all organizations tend to utilize the best practices in project and project management in their organization to achieve the desired outcomes. However, even with all the success rates and more advanced technologies and techniques become available for the professionals to help improve their team productivity, challenges continue to arise and organizations are facing complexities in setting and achieving their strategic goals. Leadership and leader skills play a major factor in solving those issues. Most of the project failures are due to the lack or weak leadership in the organization.

With the recent availability of the Covid-19 vaccines, Saudi Arabia and many other countries are focusing their efforts on mass vaccination to mitigate the spread of the virus. And part of the Saudi government's effort is the issuance of Covid-19 vaccination mandate for the public transportation sector employees which includes the Yaquot Transportation Corporation (YTC). Though effective vaccines are proven to help stop pandemics, the rapid development of the Covid-19 vaccines caused hesitancy to many people to take the Covid-19 vaccine. With the issued vaccination mandate from the Saudi's Ministry of Health, YTC is faced with the challenge on how to get all the employees vaccinated within the one-month period given by the Authorities which is before start of Shawwal 1, 1442. My role as the Committee President for the YTC company-wide vaccination drive is to deliver the project while ensuring an equitable vaccination program.

This paper aims to explore how leaders can best manage the company-wide employee covid-19 vaccination drive which entails reluctance or rejection from the target audience. Knowing the appropriate leadership style and skills to handle such a time constrained and sensitive project will help Yaquot Transportation Corporation (YTC) plan and manage the project appropriately and timely.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leaders are known since the beginning of time. Skills mostly shown in wars and tough times, when a leader led a nation to its victory. Leaders, in most cases, affect their team, the public or the nation through their motivational skills and their communication skills. And in some other cases, they just led by example.

In order to understand the leadership style and skills needed for the project, it is important to explore the difference between the project leadership and project management. According to Ahmed, Azmi and Masood (2013), leadership and management differ to certain extent, but both cannot function without each other. Leadership is a process which creates change and uncertainty in the organization while management is the process that eradicates the uncertainty and strengthens the organization. According to the authors, the new approach in project management is strategic project leadership which principle is to develop the project managers of the good old days the ability to lead in the most dynamic manner while leading others in the project work.

Due to its complex nature, the definitions of the word “leadership” are as many as the number of researchers working in this department. But the most common identifiable elements are influence, follower and vision (Demirtas and Karaca, 2020).

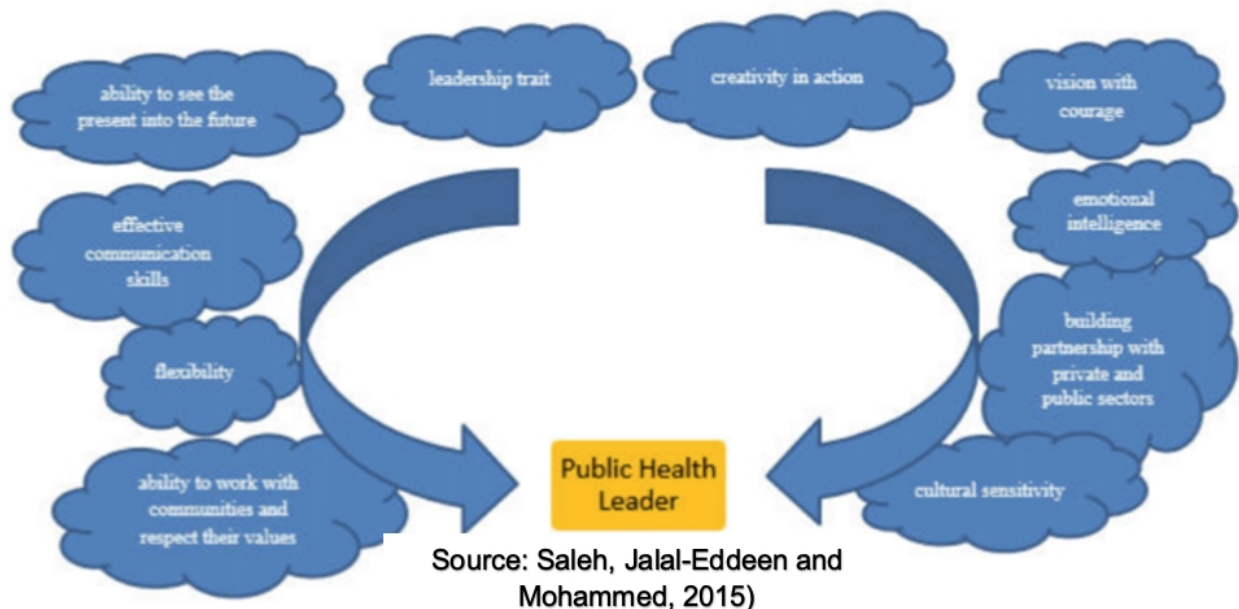
Throughout the history, there were several leadership styles displayed by great leaders:

- Authoritarian / Autocratic leadership which was displayed by Adolf Hitler among others. This leadership style practices high level of authority and control over his team members. The autocratic leadership style is advantageous especially in handling crisis situations when crucial decision needs to be made fast.
- Pacesetter leadership is known as “Do as I do, now” type of leader. This type of leader leads the team by example and often sets high performance, high quality and high pace for their team to follow or exceed. This type of leadership is advantageous when aiming for short-term results but can be counterproductive in the long-run in terms of employee engagement and motivation. An example of this type of leader was the former CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch.
- Transformational leadership style is when the leader inspires followers through effective

communication of vision, create environments of intellectual stimulation and innovation, and serves as a model for the vision. An example for this type of leader is Steve Jobs of Apple, Inc.

- Transactional leadership is the style of leadership displayed by Bill Gates. This style focuses on having a clear chain of command and offers rewards and punishments to motivate the followers.

According to Saleh, Jalal-Eddeen and Mohammed (2015), vaccination programs require an effective project leader who possesses the skills, the traits, emotional intelligence and that the project leader should be knowledgeable about the cultural norms of the people as the major challenges in these programs are due to the lack of trust and lack of information about the vaccine. The authors also opined that project leaders of immunization programs may have the required technical skills and interpersonal skills but they may lack the conceptual skills and effective communication skills to bridge the knowledge gap of its target audience. A visual representation below was done by the authors to show the essential qualities of a public health leader in a successful immunization campaign:



According to the authors, the best leadership style that best fit the attributes shown in the figure above are the transformational and transactional leadership styles.

Khumbchandani et al. (2021) opined that vaccination reluctance is not a novel reaction, it has been evident during the measles outbreak in the U.S. before the Covid-19 pandemic broke out and that effective communication on the vaccine safety and efficacy remains the important aspect for all strategies, along with the right leadership style, to ensure an impartial mass vaccination program.

According to Apa.Org (2020), communication is vital for the success in any vaccination programs but is not the only determining factor for vaccine reluctance, although the lack or ineffective communication may cause vaccine hesitancy. The article also mentioned that a research has demonstrated that building the trust through effective and respectful communication can influence the peoples' uptake in the vaccination.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

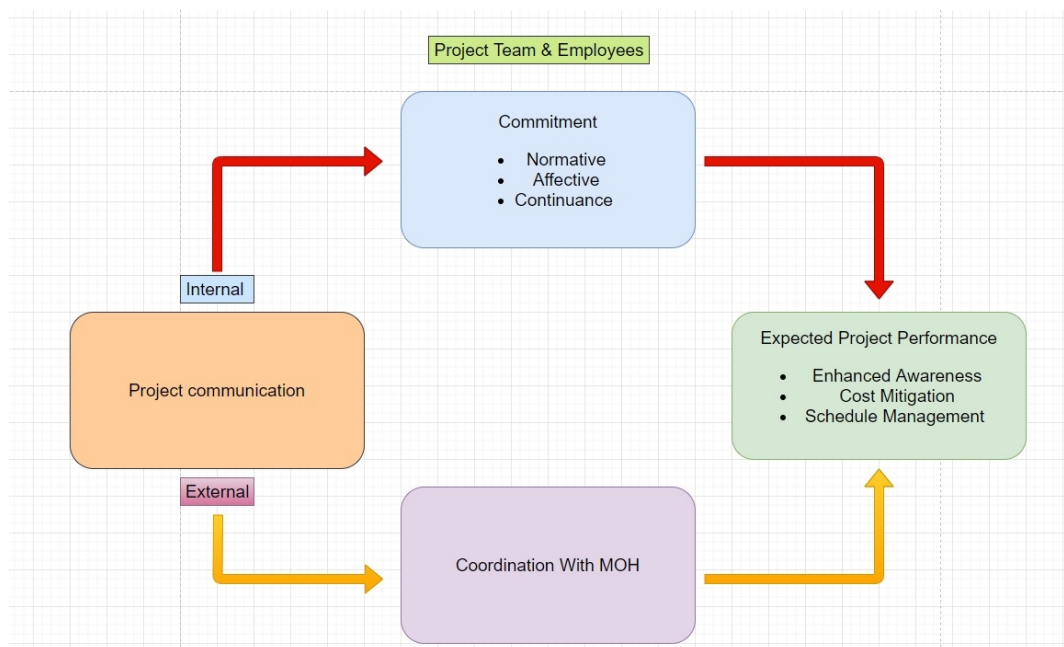


Fig. 1 – Conceptual Framework

Both the internal and external communication contributes to the success of the project as it influences the commitment of the stakeholders which consequently influences the performance of the project.

METHODOLOGY

As the Covid-19 vaccination is an unprecedented event, there were no published studies yet on the leadership and effective communication strategies in addressing the vaccination hesitancy particularly for the Covid-19 vaccine. To explore the leadership style and skills that may best manage the vaccine reluctance or rejection of the YTC employees, this paper used methodologies such as research design, study population and data sources.

Research Design

The study conducted a survey among the study population to draw inferences on their perception of effective project communication.

Study Population and Data Collection Tool

The study population comprised of the 2,000 random employees from various sectors who were sent questionnaires through SMS messages relating to effective project communication.

Data Sources

Primary data and secondary data were sourced for this study. Primary data were sourced from the respondents in the study population to understand their views on effective communication while the secondary data were obtained from published journals and literature studies relating to project leadership and communication, and articles relating to the vaccination programs for previous life-threatening diseases such as measles, influenza vaccines and etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

SURVEY RESULTS			
What is your:		Count	Percentage
Preferred communication language	English	276	13.8%
	Arabic	565	28.2%
	Native language	1159	58.0%

TOTAL		2000	100%
Preferred communication channel	Email	263	13.2%
	SMS	1332	66.6%
	Face-to-face	405	20.2%
TOTAL		2000	100%
Preferred awareness & Education channel			
Seminars/workshops		1369	68.4%
Posters/newsletters		29	1.5%
Toolbox talks		388	19.4%
Townhall talks		214	10.7%
TOTAL		2000	100%

Source: Primary Data

Fig. 2 – Survey Results

Results

The results in the above survey indicate that most of the YTC employees preferred the communication to be in their native language (58%) which is expected considering the diversity of the company's workforce. The survey also indicates that the 66.6% of the employees prefer to receive communication through SMS and mostly preferred to attend seminars/workshops for any awareness and education programs.

Discussions

Communication is often complex for organizations with diversified workforce. Various communication interventions such as printed materials, electronic messages or townhall talks may be used to inform, create awareness and education about the program, its goals and objectives, and get the employee buy-in but it is important to acknowledge that communication strategies need to be conveyed in a language that is understood by the recipient. As shown in the conceptual framework (Fig. 1), internal and external communication influence the stakeholders'

commitment and project performance thus, communication strategies shall include both.

Internal Communication Plan

- As a Committee President, I will schedule meeting with all those involved in the creation of the policy such as the leadership team, human resources and risk management team which includes the legal and regulatory department. The meeting shall tackle up the 5Ws and the H in the project plan.
 - WHO are included in the Covid-19 vaccination policy?
 - WHO are exempted from the Covid-19 vaccination policy and WHAT are the criteria for exemption?
 - WHAT reports and documentations are required from those who claimed to have taken the vaccine and those opting not to take the vaccine?
 - WHEN do the employees need to take the vaccine?
 - WHEN is the government mandate due?
 - WHERE shall we conduct the employee vaccination?
 - WHY do we need to comply with the government mandate? WHAT are the implications on the company if we fail to do so?
 - HOW are we going to inform the employees?
 - HOW do we create education and awareness among the employees?
- Establish a two-way communication
 - Conduct a company-wide survey to assess employees' knowledge and confidence about the Covid-19 vaccine to help establish the consequent strategies.
 - Create a means for employees to ask questions about the vaccination program.
 - Maintain an ongoing communication with the employees throughout the implementation of the plan to keep the employees engaged and be able to address potential issues regarding the vaccination plan.
- Conduct regular meetings with the project team members
 - Provide updates on project progress
 - Discuss identified issues and risks and formulate solutions

External Communication Plan

- Gather information on guidelines and legal framework on the employee vaccination mandate from the Ministry of Health
- Area managers shall coordinate with Ministry of Health in their area for vaccination schedule

YTC Vaccination Drive Communication Management Plan					
Description	Frequency	Method	Audience	Goal	Owner
Project Team Meeting	Daily	Web conference	Project Team	Initial meeting: Creation of vaccination policy Succeeding meetings: project progress updates	Committee President
Vaccination drive information dissemination	At the beginning of project	SMS	All employees	Inform all YTC employees about the vaccination drive as mandated by MOH	HR
Workshop schedule notifications	One week prior to schedule	SMS / Email / intranet notifications	All employees	To ensure an equitable vaccination program	Committee President / IT team
Awareness and education workshops	7 sessions throughout the project	ZOOM/ Classroom	All employees	To ensure an equitable vaccination program	Committee President
Coordinate with MOH	Throughout the project duration	Phone calls / emails	MOH staff	To secure vaccination schedule	Branch Managers
Vaccination schedule	As soon as secured	SMS / emails	Project Team / Concerned employees	Inform concerned employee of	Branch Managers

				vaccination schedule	
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CONCLUSION

The plan above was used in the company-wide vaccination project of YTC which I headed as the Committee President. The same project I based on in the risk and advanced project management projects.

There were so many lessons learned at the end of the project execution which were listed down to be used in future similar projects (May Allah prevent any pandemic from happening in the future). I have faced so many challenges throughout the project and I used my previous experiences and leadership skills to overcome all of those obstacles.

In my point of view in such a unique project in which there has never been any known leadership style appropriate in executing this type of project, clear vision and mission were the best motivator and driver that made us succeed and complete this project with 100% vaccinated employees within schedule and budget.

Effective communication and clear goals were the key to our project success as all of my team were on a clear path as to what we need to accomplish and when we need to accomplish them. We have strictly adhered to our planned schedule and enhanced our two-way communication system to easily address any employee concerns and vaccine hesitancy, consequently we were able to build up knowledge and confidence in the vaccine uptake among the employees.

I made sure to celebrate each achievement and keep the team in the loop on the project progress and remind them what still needed to be accomplished.

I also used the power of the top management by involving them in each step and made them part of the process which drove the team to do their best effort and also let the top management

facilitate the process and provide all the needed resources on the needed time.

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