

## Reflective Thinking Model for Case Analysis

Leadership is crucial in achieving an organization's goals. Leadership can be defined as using communication to positively influence others. To best meet the organization's needs, this influence must result in a beneficial change in the situation for the greater, not individual, good. Influence, or communication that changes another's beliefs, attitudes, values and or behaviors, can be overtly stated as in direct messaging, subtle as in indirect messaging, and unintentionally as in non-messages.

In an organizational setting, influence can be generated through a basis of power. According to French and Raven, there are six bases of power from which people exert influence: reward, coercion, position, charisma information, expertise. Reward is influence gained through the expectation of benefits. Influence through coercion is gained by threats or punishment. Position is influential in that organizational rank determines a chain of command. People are influence through charisma because we all have a general need to be liked and be around those people we find interesting. Expertise is influential since knowledge is essential to complete tasks. Finally, information is influential because there is inherent power in deciding who learns that information.

### **Analyze the Issue**

At Museum of Springfield, each person is operating from their own base of power. Unfortunately these bases are only conflicting with each other, as everyone is using their influence towards their own goals, not for the best interest of the museum.

Elaine Dorsch, the web site designer, is exerting her influence through expertise. She is using her experience of web site design, a skill that is crucial to the exhibit's success, to maintain her artistic freedom. Roger Chilton, the history professor, is also exerting his influence through expertise. His expertise in local history will form the content of the exhibit. But Chilton is focusing on a particular area of interest to him and not considering the feelings of the community. Julia Winger, the corporate liaison, is exerting influence through coercion. The support of Midwestern Industries is central to the funding of the exhibit. Threatening to pull funding from the project jeopardizes both the museum and Midwestern Industries image. Mary Weston, the museum administrator, is exerting her influence through reward and position. She has the power to promote Paul. Her best interests most likely fall within the museum's best interest.

Paul Georgakis is the object of everyone's influence, and at this point does not have much of a basis of power. His personal goals are in the best interest of the museum, as he has the most to gain from a successful exhibit and the most to lose if the project does not get done.

### **Possible solutions**

Several problems need to be addressed. First, the goals of the museum need to more clearly defined. It will be easy for all these competing personal goals to overcome what's in the best interest of the museum. One of the major conflicts so far at the museum is the conflict between pleasing corporate sponsors and presenting a complete and accurate historical account. If the support of Midwestern Industries is most important, then will Chilton cooperate with an abbreviated historical content? Is there another member of the university that would be willing to work around controversial images? If the museum feels stronger about historical accuracy, how much controversy will Winger subject her company to? Is there a way the disturbing images can be displayed to minimize shock value but still tell relevant stories?

Second, the project members need to meet together. There are many ways this can be accomplished: in person, video conferencing, conference call.

Third, Georgakis needs to develop a basis of power that can best motivate members to complete the project on time and in a way which best meets museum goals. He could use his position as media coordinator to assign roles to the project members. He could use his experience with similar projects to influence through expertise. He could use charisma to motivate the members to work towards the better good of the museum.

### **Evaluate alternative solutions**

By choosing to avoid controversy, the museum would keep its current funding, the prospect of working with Midwestern Industries again, and maybe attract more sponsorship. But the museum could lose credibility. If the museum chose to show the disturbing images, they could alienate not only the community, but lose funding for the exhibit before it even opens.

Second, meetings should be arranged with as much interaction as possible. Meeting face-to-face would be the most effective, but also the most expensive and inefficient. Video conferencing would allow for non-verbal feedback, but could also be susceptible to the most technological problems. A conference call would give the least amount of feedback, but is the most efficient and cost-effective.

Third, Georgakis would be best served exerting power through reward or coercion, as the group members are volunteering or taking discounts for their work. They would be best rewarded through the completion of the project. Also, just being a new hire at the museum, he might not be a credible influence through expertise. He does control coordination of the project, so he might gain influence through the use of information. Also, he could motivate the group members through charisma, if he has the personality for it.

### **Best Solution and Implementation**

If the images tell a compelling story that is instrumental in the formation of the community or documents the progress made in the community, then the museum should show them. While the images may be disturbing, they are part of the heritage of the community and worth investigation. If the content is well-written, the community will understand. Also, this provides incentive for Chilton to do thorough job researching and writing the exhibit. Like, Winger said, what's good for the museum will do well for her company. Conversely, pulling funding from the exhibit could harm Midwestern Industries, showing them to be a corporate censor. Therefore it's in the best interest of Winger to work with the museum to create a well-informed exhibit.

The group would best be served through a video conference. At the meeting, individual goals need to be explored and a set of project goals need to be developed by the entire group. By incorporating individual goals that support the museum goals, the group can increase motivation.

Finally, Georgakis would best be served through a combination power basis of charisma and information. He needs to develop charisma to create a cohesive working group, and especially to defuse the situation with Dorsch. By making criticisms that focus specifically on the work and not her artistic talent, the museum will have a unique and creative web site. Also by using the influential power of information, he can further coordinate the goals of the individual members and the museum.