

IMPROVING YOUR NETWORK, YOUR TEAM AND YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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Leadership

Lesson Description

Recruiting and developing the right team is critical to the success of any business, nonprofit or NGO. Establishing a close network with different perspectives will foster an environment of innovation and cooperation. Working with a diverse set of individuals who both support and challenge management decisions will reduce vulnerabilities in your organizational structure and help you succeed and grow in a global market.

Learning Objectives

1. Learn the benefits of close network relationships.
2. Learn how to examine your leadership team's strengths and weaknesses.
3. Learn the advantages of a diverse demographic organizational structure.

Discussion Questions

1. Think of five people that you call on to give you advice when you're worried or fearful, when you need a clear perspective that may not be pleasant for you to hear, or when you want to celebrate major achievements. This is your close confiding network. Now evaluate how well these five people know each other. Examine their similarities and differences, their backgrounds, education, profession and personal life. Does this set of relationships provide you with the support you need, but lack a range of perspectives to innovate? What insights may be missing from this core network?
2. Professor Fairchild defines hierarchical dominance as a lack of diversity among the top, middle, and front-line staff of a company. Numerical dominance is defined as overrepresentation of a set of perspectives and skills. Discuss the meanings and ramifications of hierarchical and numerical dominance. Take a look at your school or workplace and identify areas where you see these phenomena in the organizational structure. How do these occurrences affect the workings of the organization?

Developmental Actions

1. Develop a list of perspectives or ideals that are missing from your close confiding network. Identify through family, friends and coworkers the individuals that you can meet who may be able to provide these missing perspectives.

About the Video Presenter

Greg Fairchild is the E. Thayer Bigelow associate professor of business administration at the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business. Fairchild serves as an academic director for Darden's Institute for Business in Society (IBiS). He teaches strategic management, entrepreneurship and ethics in Darden's MBA and Executive Education programs. In 2012, Fairchild was named one of the Top Ten Business School Professors in the World by CNN/Fortune and one of the 50 Best Business School Professors by Poets & Quants. Fairchild worked in marketing positions for such industry leaders as Kraft General Foods, Procter & Gamble and Saks Fifth Avenue before embarking on his doctoral studies. In addition to his teaching and research, he is a consultant to corporations, nonprofits and governmental agencies.