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HP's Political Battle

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HP's Political Battle

Companies in the past have been faced with several operational as well as human resource challenges. In this case, the paper will go into detail about the organizational and individual factors leading to intense political behavior in HP, the political behaviors exhibited and whether the leaks to the press were ethical.

Question 1

Different individuals and various organizations have diverse ambitions and goals to achieve, which contributes to the occurrence of political battles in the company. These political issues occur due to different factors which can be either organizational or individual.

Organizational factors are those that exist according to the setting of the organization, whereas individual factors exist due to human beings' aspirations and ambitions. Hence, the historical records of the political behavior occurrence in HP Company were the most intense compared to other big companies in the United States. Mainly, the political issues came from both organizational and individual factors.

Starting with individual factors, the greed for power was one of the factors that led to political behavior in the HP Company. Dunn, the CEO of that time had the capability of holding the company as the only individual who had the power to do so. Therefore, she used to control people by knowing how they view her and what they thought of the company privately. Dunn found out that she was not loved by people in the company prompting her to hire investigators to find out every information the employees had about her and what they thought of her leading the company. The investigators would act as normal employees in the organization, ask other employees questions and their perspective on the CEO and the company in general. They used the method of pretesting, where the investigators would conduct order to gain information from

other employees (Pearlstein, 2011). When the members of the company found out the CEO's motive, they thought it was uncalled for, which then started a political behavior at the organization (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2004).

For organizational factor at the HP that stirred a political behavior was the absence of power structures that were effective and in place in the company. In organizations where everyone shares the decision-making process and power ensures that effective decisions about important issues are made effectively and within a good range of time. However, in the HP Company, there were power structures that allowed senior leaders like the CEO to make decisions that would benefit themselves and not consider other people within the organization (Robbins, 1997). Hence, the power that the CEO had allowed her to make decisions and not consult anyone. This led to the political battle that occurred in the HP Company since it was not structured appropriately

Question 2

Individuals who want to win a political battle always try to apply several political behaviors to prove that they are superior to others. The political battle that occurred between the board members of HP and its CEO provided the world with the opportunity to see the type of political behavior they exhibited to make them win. The CEO was alone, whereas the board members acted in unison during the political battle within the company. The CEO, Patricia Dunn, exhibited a political behavior of taking advice and counsel from individuals who were more experienced and qualified to help her in her mission of gaining all the power for the company. Therefore, she hired investigators who were more experienced in getting the information she needed on how she could grab all the power to herself.

After investigating, they would counsel the CEO on how to succeed on her mission for the company and become unstoppable by the board members. When appropriately applied, the mentioned political behavior becomes very effective in achieving one's ambitions. This is because it gives the individual an added advantage in winning the political battle compared to their competitors. In the case of HP, the board members did not know that the CEO had investigators roaming around the company and collecting information about their private thoughts and information that she could use against them. This is because the advice given to her by the investigators helped her have a step forward compared to her competitors, the board members.

Having access to an individual's information automatically leads to control if the process is applied correctly and effectively. The collection of the needed information by the investigators hired by the CEO proved that she was getting effective mentorship that she would use against the members of the board. Hence, the CEO being armed with information that the members of the board knew nothing about gave her an upper hand and total control. Nobody except the investigators and her knew her plot until later in the years when the board members found out her aspirations.

Also, the CEO exhibited another political behavior which included restricting information about her motives towards the company and employees. She did not share any information with anyone, even when the investigations were being carried out. Dunn deliberately held back communication of the information she got from the investigators until her motives were set in place and have succeeded; then that is when she would talk about her motives and intentions to other people (Luthans et al., 2015). This became one of the most potent strategy anyone could exhibit because it would guarantee the individual's success with no interference. If

she could have communicated about her motives with the investigators, the board members would have gone against the process or faked information that would ensure that the CEO failed in her quest to achieve power. Thus, the CEO knew well to restrict communications concerning the investigations that took place but it was known later by the board members after when the CEO had already achieved her aspirations for the company.

The board members at HP also used specific political behavior which helped them in achieving their goal of going against their CEO, Patricia Dunn. First, they exhibited blame and attack as their political behavior which appeared effective if done appropriately. It involved tarnishing the reputation of their CEO, making her look like she seemed unqualified for the position. It was intended to minimize the CEO's influence on people and make her weak for her not to compete in the political battle. They blamed every bad and wrong thing that has ever happened to the company on Dunn which later led to her being fired since the accusations made her look as if she was unfit to run the company (Pearlstein, 2011). This allowed the board members to choose their preferred CEO, resulting in them winning the political battle.

Question 3

1 The leaks that were made to the press through the board members were ethical because the information shared did not intend to harm any individual, and it was true. The information given to the press concerning HP Company's CEO, Patricia Dunn, was to serve as an example of future CEO who would be after money and power by making their employees' lives miserable. This was also to teach CEO to treat their employees better and work for their best interests and that of the company, turning the actions made by the board members ethical (Robbins, 1997). On the other hand, the actions taken by Dunn were unethical because she invaded the privacy of other people and did not consult the perspectives of the board members on the actions she was

taking. Hence, due to lack of consultation and obtaining private information for her benefit made her violate the privacy rights of the board members. This move turned out to be unethical since the welfare of the company and employees did not improve after she succeeded in her motives (Robbins, 1997).

In summation, having discussed in detail the organizational and individual factors leading to intense political behavior in HP, it is clear that there exist internal matters in companies that can lead to underperformance and quarrels thus lowering the competitiveness of the company. Besides, the political behaviors exhibited and whether the leaks to the press were ethical demonstrates the path that companies have to take in solving internal affairs to remain competitive and operational.

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