MGT 385 Personal Development Plan Part II

Name

Institution

* **How did the action plan go?**

The three steps I chose to work on are listening to dialog, focus on positive feedback and stop talking too much and listen more. I was able to execute all the steps and I knew that I had to work harder and let myself continue developing listening skills. The efforts were successful, especially when I started focusing on the positive, even when I had negative review it gave hopes to see the other side, that I had a chance to improve my work, I took recommendations seriously and I continued working hard every minute. I also Improved highly the way I respond to questions, as I realized it was an important part of dialog. I always kept an open mind towards people’s point of view even if I did not agree with their points. This meant that I could negotiate with a lot of people and come out of a situation with only positive elements. The steps were therefore helpful in my steps towards dealing with difficult people. For every step, the following are the ways in which I executed the steps;

*Listening to dialog*: The main key element to this step was listening keenly and deciding issues sooner rather than later. The longer I waited, the more difficult and harder I found the situation. While listening, I was courageous and also took time to note the points I wanted to pass through. I also practiced with someone I knew before going to the real stage. Another aid I found important while listening was focusing on the issue and not the person saying it. An individual must be gentle and be ready to describe the actions or the behaviors that are causing stress between the two of us. While talking to an individual, it is important to make an agreement between the two of us the next steps.

*Focus on the positive feedback*: Whenever an exchange involves different viewpoints, and even opposing positions, there is a common ground that can be found. The common ground requires individuals to be open minded while considering someone’s position. I have learnt to have an open debate, and this has proved to be beneficial, and I have adopted it as part of the culture. The positive feedback also means that when another individual is speaking, I have to take notes of what is beneficial for the two parties. For example, after having attended a difficult meeting, it is important to continue resisting further communication and instead, focus on the matter at hand and take a deep breath, look at what might have gone wrong or right.

*Stop talking too much and listen more:* Since communication is an exchange between two individuals, it is important to listen to other people’s viewpoints before a common ground is reached. Finding a common ground means that an individual need to listen to consider an individual’s position. Instead of keeping defending myself, I have learnt to listen more and give the others time to air their opinions. For example, when I was told that the model I am using would threaten the organization, I felt challenged but also I had the discomfort that came with it. But inwardly I felt challenged but I had to remember to keep quiet and calm and wait for the next instruction. I also realized that listening to others created trust, that was lacking in me before, when people realize that they are being given an ear, they continue with their trust, which in turn creates a psychological safety. I also understood this to be an important ingredient in developing teams.

2. **How would you like to further develop your identified skill going forward?**

The further step I could take to improve my listening skills is being present where my listing is required. When sitting down face-to-face, it is important for attention to be hijacked especially when my mind wonders, it is possible considering the dozens of emails, calls and instant messaging, when an individual is interrupted, an individual will take time to refocus. When in a meeting, in many cases I remember what happened earlier, or just read the telephone conversation that people had before. In this case our mind is elsewhere therefore, bringing our wondering mind elsewhere is an important step in enhancing listening skills.

I have also learnt incorporate the saying that we have two years and one mouth. Developing curiosity on what is being said is important than even making contribution to what is being discussed. Listening more with curiosity helps individuals to connect and understand what is being said and also helps in navigating the conversation. It can also help in tuning the topics that the colleagues are passionate about. Getting to know them is important in realizing the different perspectives and also coming to an agreement where everyone benefits. Thirdly, being open during conversation is an important step, the company even helped by providing an environment where an individual is being proven wrong

3.**What portions of the course did you find most useful/helpful to your learning about “difficult people?”**

There are many aspects of the learning about “Difficult People” that have proven to be fruitful in this section. The lesson was very useful in the first two cases and helped me in having a different perspective of the problem. For example, currently, I have not waited for the problem to become passive or aggressive, I have learned to tackle the problems before they get worse. Being cool helped me understand that when I argue with people, it is not necessarily true that my point of view is the same as theirs; I tried to understand their point and look at my point from a third person's perspective. I had to accept future conflict that my perspective is always right and become more open to other people's perspectives.

Another element that I have employed apart from calming down and reflecting on a different perspective is active listening while communicating. It is not important to get together and talk, and it is also important to get the time and listen to people. When I crossed the line for the other driver in the driveway, I felt that I could have taken time to talk to him, just let him talk, and wait for my turn to talk. I have learned to be attentive when other people talk and think that they are not feeling the same way. I have also tried to understand what people mean when they speak rather than concentrating on what is spoken. Finally, self-reflection is the best way of resolving conflict; when I consider things from other people's points of view, it means that I will understand them better. Self-reflection was important in the driveway incident since, I had to agree that I was wrong, and it was also difficult for the driver to guess my problem without giving me time to talk about it. Given that it was also rush hour; I might have wasted his time on the highway.

4. **What areas of difficult interpersonal interactions—whether they are personal, in the workplace, or both—would you like to improve upon (beyond your identified skill)?**

The best methodology to adopt to deal with difficult people are Three Practices, a framework that is useful when talking with an individual that holds opposing views. The Three Practices include:

* I’ll be usually interested with others
* I’ll stop comparing my best with your worst
* I’ll stay in the room with a difference.

The three practices slow an individual down to focus on listening to someone else. When employing the Three Practices, where there are given the person the gift to further clarify the position. The framework is therefore important in making people develop understanding of each other, when applying the viewpoints, the framework is important in sharing the opinions that may be controversial, I would therefore want to improve this aspect of dealing with a difficult person.

5. **How could the course have been improved upon and/or what would you have liked to learn more about?**

The course would have used the 7 guidelines for teaching listening skills. The framework has seven guidelines. For example, before listening;

**Set a goal**: the students should set a goal for every listening skill, stating the purpose will give the students guidance on where to focus and also help the achieve the set goals.

**Build background**: this will help students connect with the little they already know, such as asking questions about their personal experienced on a given topic. The tutor should therefore explain what the students are able to understand before listening, such as when understanding the vocabulary, and also help them anticipate the subject story, this is important in making relevant what they learnt with where they are supposed to employ their knowledge.

**Prepare environment**: when a story is relayed, the environment must be set. For example, when learning in school, it must be as quite as possible.

**Introduce Listening strategies:** the student would learn how to use the strategies and tools unsuccessful listening.

**Scaffold Note-Taking**: The tutor should also encourage the students to use the listening organizer to help them focus on important ideas, there was a conservative use of Venn diagram, use of blank page to keep track of other character’s action. The use of these organizers are useful in focusing on their listening skills.

**Explain problem solving strategies**: When students do not understand a word or a concept, there are cues that are derived from the story that makes sense.

**Reflect on the story**: After listening to the story, the students should be engaged and also focus on the key understanding goals.

# References

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