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Frames Paper

The problem to be analyzed occurs in a small office setting with two undergraduate interns. Both are senior females who are new to the office and job position. The office is in the second year of being reorganized in structure, purpose and organization. I supervise the females, working closely with them to plan and organize campus programs and events. Though we all seem to share the same vision for the office, the two student interns have very different personalities and working styles. As the semester has progressed, the tension between the two has increased. It is becoming more difficult to set common goals and work toward effective programming. The students were originally hired for their proven dedication to the mission and vision of the office. Unfortunately, as the conflict and difficult relationship has increased it has been difficult to set programming goals and supervise. What results is an uncomfortable environment for everyone and poor execution of work by the interns.

The leadership framework used to develop the staff was done from a Human Resources frame. As Bolman and Deal (2008) have described their was and is a clear relationship between the office and students (p. 137). During the hiring process, it was all about hiring the right people for the job. How can the office and programs benefit from these students and how can the students benefit from the work? In addition through initial training, the staff was introduced to this framework. A significant amount of time was spent discussing personal strengths and working styles. I made a priority to ask questions about their personal investment in the office and how I, as their supervisor, can empower them to complete their personal goals for the year. The office's philosophy is all about autonomy, designing

programs that reflect each person's passion and ideas, and all levels of leadership working together in purpose and vision (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p. 149). For example, one of the interns had a personal vision to educate the campus on issues of domestic violence and the culture that perpetuates this social problem. As her supervisor, I made an effort to encourage, empower and develop this personal vision into an actual idea and campus program. Lastly, evident in staff meetings with the two interns, and myself, decisions are made in a democratic way. Though I may be the supervisor, it is a very egalitarian work environment. Power is shared between all of us (p. 155).

Because the Human Resource framework has shaped the leadership and office environment, I will analyze the problem with this framework. In this personal conflict between the two students, how do I balance investing in them individually while continuing to build the program and events offered through the office? As a result of the conflict and tension, productivity has decreased. While encouraging autonomy, I have discouraged supportive teamwork. Bolman and Deal (2008) clearly define strategies and specific practices that help manage interpersonal conflict through the Human Resource Frame. Developing interpersonal and social aptitude, such as setting common goals and interests, developing communication skills, and valuing diversity of opinion can help overcome conflict (p. 184).

If I continue to operate in the human resource frame I would recommend discussing with each student how the internship is going for them and their overall satisfaction with the job. Towards the end of the semester I would conduct an evaluation based on personal and professional expectations and their overall

satisfaction with their job. Are they content? What would they change to make things better? Do they feel like this is a good fit? Secondly, I would discuss teamwork strategies, how is each person contributing to the team? How can we more effectively work together to accomplish our goals? I would also address the problem from an interpersonal perspective rather than a productivity issue.

Another way to say this is what matters are the relationships in the office, not the programs offered through the office. As discussed earlier, developing interpersonal skills would be helpful. The two interns, with an emotional aptitude and maturity, should be able to recognize the miscommunication and conflicting work styles that are major factors in the situation. Leading through the human resource frame, I see it as my responsibility to lead them through personal and professional development.

In light of Structural frame, this issue and conflict look very different. The breakdown of communication and interpersonal skills could be due to undefined roles in the office and unclear organization of structure. I as a leader did not set clear expectations of their job and clear goals or objectives for the office (p. 47). Working with the structural frame, I would have assigned specific programs and events to each student. Their responsibility would have been to complete each job and delegate tasks to each team member. Moreover it would have been a basic lateral structure, with coordination of ideas and tasks (p. 60). In analyzing how to organize the team, a circle network may have been most beneficial. Each of us would have clearly defined roles, yet decisions and information would flow openly (p. 105).

Recommendations for practice would be to frame the end of semester evaluation for the students with questions about job performance and execution of responsibilities. I would create questions about specific events or programs, and what contributed to their success or faults. In consideration of the personal conflict between the two students, how can we remedy the problem? What are steps and goals we can discuss in making the work environment conducive to productive tasks? As their supervisor I would take a more authoritative approach in the relationships. Knowing that students fit with in the organization, I would delegate and assign work appropriately. Another suggestion would be for the students to hold each other accountable to their work and assigned duties. This would ensure success and completion of programs and events (p. 112). The personal conflict and frustration felt between the two may be due to a sense that each is not equally contributing.