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Exploring the Manager's Role beyond the Rule Book: Investigating the Influence of Managerial Emotional Intelligence and Individual Traits on Team Efficiency

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Abstract: ***In most teams, the junior members constitute the primary workforce, while those in managerial positions are responsible for task allocation. Even individuals at the entry level have limited impact on contributions. The pivotal role falls upon mid-level employees, as their optimal performance is essential for the team's overall efficiency.***

TABLE 1: Distribution across levels:

Level 1:	***10%***	***Forms the foundation.***
Levels 2 to 7:	***70%***	***Form the core structure and drive the work.***
Levels 8 to 10	***20%***	***Assume leadership roles and significantly contribute to the company's progress.***

To attain levels 8 to 10, leaders must progress through all the intermediate levels, gaining insights along the way. The term "leader" inherently implies the key responsibility of orchestrating the team's efforts.
While there exist, fundamental steps outlined in universally acknowledged rule books for leadership, these principles alone cannot cultivate leadership qualities. Leadership is an intrinsic trait that goes beyond rule books. It encompasses an individual's inherent characteristics and emotional intelligence.
Key Words: Emotional Intelligence (EI), individual trait, rule book, Team efficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI), also referred to as Emotional Quotient (EQ), is a concept that encompasses a person's ability to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively utilize their own emotions and the emotions of others. It involves a set of skills that relate to perceiving, comprehending, and influencing emotions in oneself and others.
Emotional intelligence is recognized as a crucial skill in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, workplace dynamics, leadership, and overall well-being. It can positively impact decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and teamwork. Developing emotional intelligence involves self-reflection, active listening, empathy practice, and continuous learning about emotions and their effects on behavior.

B. Individual Trait

An individual trait refers to a characteristic, quality, or attribute that is specific to a person and distinguishes them from others. These traits can be physical, psychological, or behavioural in nature, and they contribute to shaping an individual's personality, behaviour, and overall identity. It's important to note that individual traits are not strictly determined by genetics but can also be influenced by environmental factors, upbringing, experiences, and personal choices. Understanding and recognizing one's own individual traits can be valuable for self-awareness, personal development, and effective interaction with others. In various contexts, including workplaces and interpersonal relationships, understanding individual traits can contribute to better communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution.

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C. *Rule book for Managers or Leaders in an Organization*

A "rule book" for a manager or leader in an organization refers to a set of established guidelines, policies, principles, and expectations that provide a framework for their behavior, decision-making, and responsibilities within the context of their role. This rule book can be both formal, in the form of official policies and procedures, and informal, based on organizational culture and best practices. It's important to note that while a rule book provides a foundational framework, effective managers and leaders also need to be adaptable and context-sensitive. They should be able to apply these guidelines to different situations and exercise judgment when necessary. The goal of a rule book is to provide a structure that supports effective leadership while maintaining alignment with the organization's values and goals.

D. *Team Efficiency*

Team efficiency refers to the ability of a group of individuals to work together as a team to achieve their goals and produce desired outcomes in a productive and effective manner. It is a measure of how well a team can utilize its resources, skills, and time to accomplish tasks while minimizing wasted effort, time, and resources. Overall, team efficiency is crucial for organizations to achieve their objectives while maintaining a competitive edge. It requires a balance between achieving results and ensuring the well-being of team members. Effective leadership, clear communication, and the right tools and processes are essential for fostering team efficiency.

II. STUDY METHODOLOGY

A collective of 20 managers, all employed within the same organization situated in India, participated in a brief survey pertaining to teams. Additionally, a total of 40 employees from the identical organization completed a team-related survey. This approach facilitates a more holistic investigation, shedding light on viewpoints from both managerial and employee perspectives. As an integral aspect of the survey, each participant also responded to demographic inquiries. The demographic composition of the population is outlined in Table 2 (Managers) and Table 3 (Employees).

Table 2
Manager's Demographic

Total	Age between 30 to 40	Experience > 10 years	Project success rate > 90 %	Total project managed > 10
20	10	12	18	19

Table 3
Employee's Demographic

Total	Age between 30 to 40	Experience > 2 years	Project success rate > 80 %	Total project > 2
40	30	20	24	32

III. OBSERVATIONS

The presence of these leader attributes elevated team effectiveness.

A. *Taking the Lead in Being Accountable Whenever Necessary, and Encouraging your Teammates to take the Forefront when it's time to Receive Appreciation.*

In matters of accountability, a genuine leader takes the lead and accepts responsibility for outcomes. Conversely, during moments of success, a true leader ensures that team members receive recognition. This dual approach strengthens the team by fostering ownership and empowerment. By allowing team members to enjoy recognition, they develop a sense of project ownership and appreciation for their efforts. This enhances morale and team cohesion, ultimately promoting a culture of shared success.

B. Understanding the Team Members' Natural Instincts Toward Work.

Effective leadership involves understanding the inherent work tendencies of team members, categorizing them into three groups:

1) *Assets:* These individuals take a comprehensive approach to tasks, assuming full ownership and going beyond their roles. They prioritize team success and task excellence over personal recognition.
2) *In-Between:* Team members here focus on their assigned tasks while balancing individual contributions with project requirements. They ensure smooth task execution.
3) *Liability:* This group tends to be less proactive, investing time in excessive discussions rather than productive work. They can hinder progress due to a lack of significant contributions.

Diversity in work styles is common, with the in-between category being the largest:

a) Assets: 25-30%
b) In-Between: 50-60%
c) Liability: 10-20%

Successful leaders understand these inclinations, leveraging strengths and improving weaknesses. By promoting collaboration, task-focused efforts, and minimizing unproductive discussions, leaders create a harmonious team contributing optimally to organizational goals.

C. The Leader Should Maintain Observation of Team Activities.

A leader's role extends beyond reacting to events and requires a vigilant and observant approach. Success depends on understanding the true essence of ongoing situations, as appearances can be deceiving. Diligent team members may not overtly express their efforts, while others may seek undue recognition. A leader's skill lies in deciphering underlying realities beyond spoken words, crucial for accurate understanding. For example, perceiving an unassuming hardworking employee's dedication or recognizing when a less proactive employee seeks undue acclaim showcases a leader's acumen. This deep insight allows leaders to categorize team members accurately and tailor their interactions accordingly. In essence, leadership involves understanding beyond the surface, enabling informed decision-making. This skill fosters fairness, empowerment, and effective team steering towards goals.

D. Approach Towards Valuable Contributors

Approach Towards Valuable Contributors:

1) *Personalized Encouragement:* Building a deep connection with valuable contributors involves direct communication from higher-ranking managers to acknowledge excellent performance. Expressing satisfaction with dedication and recognizing efforts establishes motivation and trust, fostering a sense of importance. This individualized approach, like a director addressing associates, generates holistic motivation.
2) *Understanding Their Priorities:* Maintaining high productivity among assets requires understanding their main work focus. Leaders should delegate or streamline tasks that distract from their core responsibilities, demonstrating trust and accommodating their needs. For instance, allowing assets to work from home in a hybrid environment reflects this understanding.
3) *Differential Treatment:* Authentic leadership involves praising assets publicly to create a positive atmosphere and subtly addressing improvement areas for liabilities through humour or friendly banter. This strategy communicates the leader's care for team success and encourages everyone to contribute valuably.

Implementing these methods creates a cohesive strategy for managing and nurturing assets. Tailored attention, recognition, understanding, and balanced treatment contribute to a motivated, focused, and productive team. Effective leadership adapts to unique team dynamics beyond formal procedures.

E. Engaging at the Grassroots

In a team setting, issues often reach the managerial level for resolution. However, it's important for leaders to avoid hasty decisions and instead engage in direct communication with the involved parties to understand their perspectives. When faced with such situations, effective leaders act as intermediaries, engaging individually with each party. This approach recognizes that ground-level insights are often missed in written communications or formal meetings. Personal interactions reveal nuanced details, emotional aspects, and context crucial for a comprehensive understanding.

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Engaging directly with those involved allows leaders to gather deeper insights. These interactions provide real-life examples and emotional nuances, unveiling the true nature of the issue beyond surface explanations. This approach, demonstrating a commitment to understanding all team members, leads to informed decisions that address complexities accurately. It builds trust and inclusion within the team. In essence, effective leadership involves valuing direct insights by engaging with team members at all levels. This approach yields accurate solutions and fosters a culture of trust and collaboration.

F. Embrace the Collective Identity: It is always "WE or Us" not "I or Me"

An effective leader emphasizes unity and inclusivity by consistently using inclusive pronouns like "we" or "us." This approach enhances team performance and fosters a sense of shared responsibility. For example, using "we" when discussing challenges creates a united atmosphere and shared purpose.

Inclusive language cultivates belonging and collaboration, motivating active participation and better contributions. This approach reduces hierarchy perception, encouraging open communication and joint problem-solving.

Beyond words, this practice reflects a teamwork-focused mindset, inspiring collective effort toward common goals. This unity boosts morale, motivation, and overall team performance. In essence, inclusive language showcases a leader's dedication to teamwork and shared success, building trust and reinforcing the team's collaborative achievements.

G. Initiating Timely Communication with the Team

Effective leadership involves proactively communicating relevant information to the team, especially regarding potential overtime or extra work requirements. This approach benefits work-life balance among team members.

Proactive Communication: Leaders who give advance notice about possible extended work hours demonstrate consideration. This approach allows team members to plan, make arrangements, and prepare mentally.

Work-Life Balance: Early communication about overtime supports a healthier work-life balance. Team members can adjust personal commitments, reducing stress and facilitating smoother transitions during demanding periods.

Respect and Trust: Proactive information-sharing fosters transparency and trust. Openness about expectations and challenges encourages engagement and collaboration, building a culture of commitment.

In conclusion, proactive communication about extra work fosters a positive work environment. It empowers team members to balance work and personal life effectively, promotes trust and engagement, and contributes to successful teamwork and leadership.

H. Cultivating Indispensable Ally

Effective leadership involves identifying a capable problem solver to serve as a crucial ally. This individual possesses qualities such as intellectual acumen, compassion, social adaptability, communication dexterity, and resourcefulness.

1) Qualities of an Indispensable Ally

a) Intellectual Acumen: High intelligence and knowledge to dissect complex issues.
b) Helpful and Benevolent: Compassion and altruism for positive contributions.
c) Social Adaptability: Ability to navigate diverse social situations.
d) Communication Dexterity: Balancing assertiveness and empathy in communication.
e) Clarity and Resourcefulness: Offering clear and practical solutions.

2) Role of the Right Hand

A leader's right-hand person serves as a delegate, extending the leader's capabilities. They resolve issues, manage tasks, and report progress, reducing the leader's load and enabling focus on strategic decisions. If problems persist, they escalate matters to the leader after exhausting alternatives.

3) Conclusion

An adept right hand possesses cognitive prowess, empathy, adaptability, and effective communication. Their role enhances team efficiency, promoting problem-solving, collaboration, and optimal resource use. This leadership approach leverages a dependable right hand for effective decision-making and issue resolution.

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I. Communicate in the Language of Comfort

In diverse countries like India, teams comprise individuals from various regions, often with different native languages. Leaders, who usually know multiple languages, can establish a strong team unity by addressing team members in their native languages during personal interactions. Recognizing the team's linguistic diversity involves acknowledging members' different backgrounds. Conversing in their native languages, even during one-on-one interactions, fosters a sense of belonging and connection, building a stronger team bond. The phrase "Language CONNECTS HEART" encapsulates this idea. Language carries emotional weight beyond its practical use. Speaking a team member's native language conveys respect for their identity and heritage, creating a bridge of familiarity. Ultimately, using familiar languages goes beyond words, reflecting a leader's effort to build relationships and honour team members' uniqueness. This inclusive approach enhances collaboration, unity, and an environment where diverse identities are embraced and celebrated.

J. Giving Resources Freedom to Work

Leaders empower team members by granting them autonomy to manage tasks independently. This boosts confidence, encourages initiative, and fosters innovation, aligning with "management by objectives." Autonomy leads to ownership, improved processes, and new solutions.

K. Using Physical Gestures to Motivate the Team

Non-verbal communication, like gestures of encouragement, significantly impacts team morale. Simple actions such as a pat on the shoulder or a supportive hug convey camaraderie, unity, and acknowledgment. These gestures enhance confidence, motivation, and commitment, resulting in improved performance.

L. Creating Meaningful Connections with Resources:

Effective leadership involves forming genuine relationships with team members. Linking their contributions to the team's vision fosters belonging and purpose. This connection deepens commitment, transforming team members into active contributors aware of their impact on the broader objective.

M. Understanding the Lives of Subordinates

Leadership extends into personal lives, requiring leaders to understand team members' challenges and aspirations. This empathy allows tailored support, enhancing morale, engagement, and productivity. Genuine care leads to loyalty, open communication, and a cohesive team environment.

In essence, these aspects go beyond task management, highlighting trust, communication, motivation, and empathy as crucial components of effective leadership that create a productive team environment.

IV. LIMITATIONS

Cross-cultural leadership presents challenges with two significant limitations: the employee understanding gap and cultural differences.

A. Employee Understanding Gap

Diverse perceptions and expectations in cross-cultural contexts can lead to misunderstandings. For instance, refraining from intervention might convey trust in some cultures but negligence in others. Misinterpretations can hinder collaboration, necessitating leaders to clarify intentions and expectations to bridge gaps.

B. Cultural Differences

Cultural diversity can result in varied approaches to leadership. Actions deemed respectful in one culture might be misinterpreted in another. Leaders must adapt their strategies to align with cultural norms, as failure to do so can lead to conflicts or disengagement.

These limitations underscore the need for cultural competence in leadership. Leaders should understand team members' backgrounds, adapt practices, and practice active listening. Effective cross-cultural leadership demands flexibility, adaptability, and sensitivity to nuances that impact team dynamics and success.

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V. CONCLUSION

A. Prioritizing Positive Individual Traits in Recruitment

Organizations should focus on recruiting individuals with valued personal attributes like integrity, adaptability, and collaboration, alongside skills. This enriches the team dynamic and organizational culture.

B. Recognizing and Acknowledging Positive Attributes

Acknowledging caring, helpful, and dedicated employees through praise and awards reinforces appreciation and motivates others. This positive reinforcement fosters a cycle of value-driven behavior.

C. Prohibiting Exploitation of Such Employees

Clear guidelines must prevent the exploitation of employees displaying positive behaviors. This protects them from burnout and demotivation, ensuring their well-being, growth, and proper recognition.

D. Creating a Home-like Office Environment

A comfortable and welcoming workplace is essential, promoting open communication and a sense of community. This enhances satisfaction, productivity, and a positive work culture. Incorporating these principles enhances the work experience, fostering mutual respect, care, and appreciation. This approach creates a healthier, more engaging environment benefiting both individuals and the organization.

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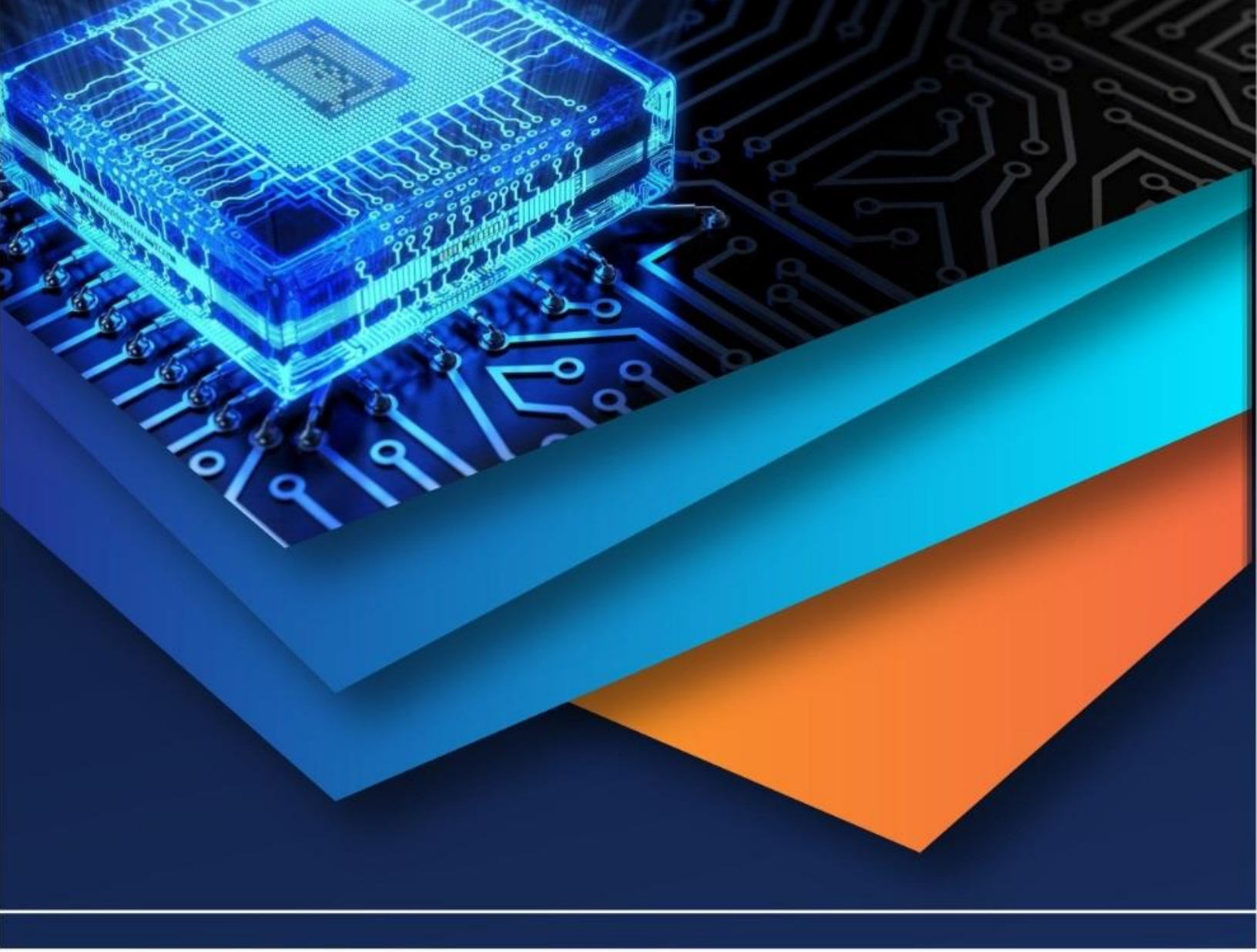

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