
Capacity Building through Integration and Transformational Leadership - A case study

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ABSTRACT

This article suggests that educational managers can have an influence through leadership by establishing certain moderators that integrate and shape the faculty into a solid team working towards a high performing organisation. The study looks at a case in China and draws suggestions that could be used in other similar settings. The conclusion is to make integration a crucial part of capacity building.

KEYWORDS: capacity building, transformational leadership

FOCUS OF THE RESEARCH

The focus of this case study is to investigate the relationship between integration and capacity building in a private hotel management training college located in Shanghai, China. The goal is to find out how leaders can develop the performance of each member in the organisation and establish synergies in order to achieve high performances. This is different from previous studies, which have focused more on the establishment of self-efficacy or the creation of good cultures or learning environments within educational institutions (Copland, 2003; Cosner, 2009; van Knippenberg D., van Knippenberg B, de Cremer, Hogg, 2004).

Integration refers to bringing individuals in an organisation closer to each other to form a solid community which clearly understands and follows the college's purpose, while capacity building looks at enhancing and making the human resources of an educational provider more useful and effective to perform well in a dynamic and competitive environment. Establishing a solid community and enhancing human resources calls for educational leadership since it involves building a cohesive and goal oriented community that is capable of working together to accomplish objectives and fulfil the mission (Reinhartz and Beach, 2004).

The importance of creating capacity building through integration lies in the competitive, dynamic and complex environment of this private hotel management training college located in China. Because of cost, prestige and accreditation reasons, Chinese students prefer to enter their national, public universities rather than any international, private institution. In the past, it has not been a big problem for private institutions to overcome this challenge since there were plenty of students graduating from high school and only a limited amount of them were accepted by the state universities. However, this has changed and as Johnson (2009, p. 26) reports:

“On government orders, China’s universities – most of which are state controlled – boosted enrolment by up to 30% a year, year after year for most of this decade.”

These government orders create a difficult situation for private colleges in China to recruit students. For our college this meant that its target market shrunk between 5-15% in the last two years.

Based on the “Darwinian principle of survival of the fittest” (Stucke, 2008, p. 973) only the strong companies will endure an economic downturn. Therefore, capacity building is needed to form high performance organisations. According to Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (2004, p. 19) a high performing organisation needs to be “fast, agile, and market driven that is intentionally designed to bring out the best in people and create an extraordinary organisational capability that delivers sustainable high performance results”. Building such an organisation is extremely difficult and requires, steady communication and certain moderators that cultivate the community.

The cultivation of attitudes, commitments and development over time makes all members an integral part of an organisation. Through this cultivation, the creation of a complete unit can occur where the goals and plans of the institutions are clearly shared and people are motivated to work effectively towards the achievement of the goals with the effect of improving the institution. This calls for guiding and effective leadership, since leadership is about coping with change by influencing the institution’s members toward the achievement of an established direction or set of goals (Robbins and Judge, 2008). The author’s intention in conducting this research is to investigate the means to integrate people to build capacity and establish a high performing educational college in China. The goal is to link the research to practice (Burgess, Sieminski, and Arthur, 2006) in a way that helps improving this college.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Before capacity building can occur, an understanding of the concept of capacity for schools needs to be provided. Youngs and King (2002) suggest that school capacity is the collective power of an institution that includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions of each individual teacher. Therefore in order to build capacity, it is essential to improve the understanding, knowledge and skills of the entire faculty consisting of all teachers within an educational institution. The terminology of ‘school’ refers in a more general sense to any institution in education whether it’s primary schools, high schools or higher educational institutions.

But what are the means to build or enhance capacity? Cosner (2009) suggests that a general agreement regarding building capacity exists, consisting of resources that are interactive in nature and which support a school-wide reform that leads to changes in teacher attitudes and ultimately to the improvement of student learning. Since the word ‘interactive’ is used, it implies that capacity building focuses on enhancing the resources an organisation has at its disposal through a communication process. This communication process is linked to resources that are ‘social’ in nature, since building capacity requires that essential information is exchanged between people within the organisation (Cosner, 2009). Social nature or socialising refers to the interactions (such as conversations) between humans taking the interests, intentions, or needs of other people into account. Davies and Davies (2006) suggest that conversations of a strategic character should be implemented in the day-to-day operation via formal and informal discussions and dialogues about future issues. The benefit is that teachers, as the key resource of an educational provider, understand the purpose and goals of the institution and the institution can draw ideas from the teachers. Lambert (1998) supports the perspective of involvement of all teachers by referring to capacity building as the development of leadership through broad-based, skilful participation of all members in the organisation’s

community. Hence, school capacity can be seen as the creation of social interaction that brings out the best in people through an exchange of essential information in order to create a high performing organisation. The exchange of essential information forms a collective power that will ultimately lead to the improvement of student learning and performing. Therefore, integrating all members to become one strong unit seems to be the key when building capacity.

Copland (2003) suggests the development and distribution of leadership in building and sustaining capacity for school improvement, and argues that decision-making is a collective undertaking that requires the entire institution to focus on the improvement of students' learning. Through working together an effect can be produced that is greater than the sum of their individual effects. The important point Copland (2003) is making, is that capacity can be built through the integration of everyone in planning, decision making and action taking, hence the requirement for leadership. Through leadership, synergies would be generated that will improve the performance of the organisation. The implication of leadership when building capacity will be discussed later in this article.

Additionally, Gooding (1996) asserts that capacity building requires the ability to set and accomplish goals, assess a need and develop a strategy to reach it, and develop a vision and organise around it. Gooding (ibid) refers to the importance of establishing a clear direction and highlights that structured plans and systems are required when working to achieve it. This calls for the additional requirement of good management. Managers have formal power, also referred to as authority, given by the organisation (Mullins, 2007). People with authority can make decisions such as who is included or excluded in a team and how resources are allocated. This kind of power has a strong influence on the social structure, the behaviour, and action of people within the organisation.

Northouse (2010) calls leadership an influence process, but since managers can also influence the members in an organisation through authority, it would make sense that managers should foster good leadership skills in order to build capacity. An example of the importance of leadership specifically for managers would be the well-known book by Collins (2001) from 'Good to Great' which studied Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and their companies and suggested leadership to CEO's in order to create a great company. Additionally, Gray and Streshly (2008) suggested the application of the same kind of leadership to principals in schools. Therefore, this article will discuss leadership from the perspective of the school principal or educational manager who is trying to build and integrate a community by establishing necessary moderators such as collegial trust, positive emotions, self-esteem, and clear but interesting performance tasks of which the building of capacity is based upon.

Mitchell and Sackney (2001) suggest to educational managers that structures and systems need to be created that support and value personal learning and that also facilitate and encourage collective learning. Therefore, an essential component in capacity building is the construction of synergy that prevails through interventions and information sharing by educational managers. It can be argued that the process of capacity building can become an integral part in the creation of a high performance organisation by defining capacity building as the establishment of synergy where the output of the collective unit becomes significantly higher than the sum of each individual component, and by providing directions that are understood and followed. However, establishing long-term synergy requires that each member in the organisation wants to contribute to the organisations well being and is willing and capable of supporting it. Judge, Bono, Thoresen, and Patton (2001) suggest that several moderators can help in establishing this synergy, such as role clarity, self-esteem, value attainment, job complexity, positive emotions, and citizenship behaviours. The educational manager's

interventions in creating these moderators could help in improving capacity building within the organisation.

LEADERSHIP AS A REQUIREMENT FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

As mentioned previously, it would be advisable for managers in the private education sector to institute a high performing organisation that is flexible and adaptable, and possesses a collaboration of all members within to establish shared values, collegiality, empowerment, and professionalism (Walker, 1994) in order to survive and potentially grow if desired. Walker (ibid) is not referring to a rigid, already laid-out and established system or framework that are easily to follow, rather the importance of a soft or human aspect when building a great organisation is stressed. Cosner (2009) adds to this by referring to social resources, especially collegial trust, as an important factor in the creation of school capacity building since it creates the willingness to exchange essential information within an organisation. Leadership will help in creating these social resources. But what exactly is leadership?

Over the past century, many definitions of leadership have been provided and theories of leadership have been established and evolved in many ways. Yukl (2010) suggests that there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who have attempted to definite the concepts. However, for the purpose of this study, I define leadership as the cement, glue or the connection that keeps the whole structure of an organisation together in the right places and enables the structure to grow. A metaphor to describe this would be the construction of a house; it cannot be held together and built with brick stones alone. It needs the cement to keep the house together and the mason who puts the cement in the right places. This article discusses leadership from the perspective of the school principal or manager who leads the organisation like a mason who puts the cement in the right places. One of the definitions which describe this metaphor was given by Reinhartz and Beach (2004, p. 3) who suggested that “leadership involves building cohesive and goal oriented teams that are capable of working together to accomplish objectives and fulfil the mission”. The author believes the mason’s job and the glue of building a house is a good description of leadership for capacity building.

However, when it comes to capacity building the goal of the manager is to make the organisation sustainable over a long period of time, ensuring it is healthy and might even grow further when the manager is gone. In order to build this kind of organisation, the manager would be more like a gardener who plants the seeds of a tree and provides it with water. The tree will then bloom and spread its roots and become stronger and stronger over time. Soon it will be able to take care of itself, and even after one day the gardener is gone, the tree will still live on for many more years to come. Seeing leadership from this perspective would be beneficial since it shows that leadership starts from the top but needs to be encouraged downwards in order to make the organisation strong.

In order to approach this kind of leadership correctly, we need to identify a good leadership theory. One such theory that has been validated as effective is “Transformational Leadership” (Avolio, Zhu, Koh, and Bhatia, 2004; Reinhartz and Beach, 2004; Walker, 1994; Weller, 1998). Robbins and Judge (2009, p. 196) suggest that “organisations are increasingly searching for managers who can exhibit transformational leadership qualities”. But what is transformation leadership? Mullins (2007, p. 381) defines transformational leadership as:

“a process of engendering higher levels of motivation and commitment among followers with the emphasis on generating a vision for the organisation and the leader’s ability to appeal to higher ideals and values of followers, and creating a

feeling of justice, loyalty and trust. In the organisational sense, transformational leadership is about transforming the performance or fortunes of a business.”

The definition implies that transforming an organisation requires the commitment and passion of all organisational members to work together in the given direction that has been cooperatively generated and agreed. There is a high demand on the managers to show leadership skills, since they need to be able to inspire the staff to transcend their own self-interests for the good of their organisations (Robbins and Judge, 2009). The goal of transformational leadership is to ensure that employees agree with the goals and values established in an organisation by feeling trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect towards the leader, and therefore doing more than they were originally expected to do (Yukl, 2010). Northouse (2010, p. 171) suggests that “transformational leadership fits the needs of today’s work groups, who want to be inspired and empowered to succeed in times of uncertainty”. Uncertainty refers to the changing and competitive environment of today’s workplace. In order to cope with this uncertainty four components of transformational leadership are required to be effective: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration (Bass, 1997).

Transformational Leadership

This section will further explain the four components of Bass in order to get a clear picture of the use and importance of each component.

Idealised influence consists of two aspects: the leader’s behaviours and the elements that are attributed to the leader by followers (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Followers refer to people who are voluntarily acting in accordance with the leader. Through idealised influence the follower likes to emulate the leader since the follower can understand and identify himself/herself with the leader’s behaviours (Bass and Riggio, *ibid*; Yukl, 2010). Idealised influence is achieved when the leader displays conviction, emphasises trust, takes a stand on difficult issues, acts like role models by presenting most important values and emphasises the importance of purpose, commitment and ethics (Bass, 1997). When it comes to idealised influence, the concept of role modelling seems to be at the centre. Role modelling refers to the leader’s requirement to take action through personal example, by standing up for their beliefs and by dedicated execution (Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

The second component focuses on motivation through inspiration. Robbins and Judge (2009) suggest the following definition for motivation: “the process that accounts for an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal”. Inspirational motivation includes communicating an appealing vision of the future, stimulating the followers with new perspectives and ways of doing things and encouraging the expression of ideas and reasons (Bass, 1997). The idea should be to create a road map or a vision for the organisation that everybody within the organisation understands. It requires that leaders know and involve their followers by communicating with them through a dialogue where everybody can raise openly issues and concerns (Kouzes and Posner, 1995).

The third component, intellectual stimulation, is behaviour that increases follower awareness of problems and influences followers to view problems from a new perspective (Yukl, 2010). Here the goal is that everybody in the organisation questions old ways and brings up ideas for improvement. In order to come up with ideas to improve, the leader needs to stimulate their follower’s efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Kouzes and

Posner (1995) refer to this component as 'challenging the process', and suggest leaders to be pioneers who are willing to take risks, innovate and experiment to find new and better ways of doing things.

The last component on the list to achieve effective leadership through transformational leadership is individualised consideration, which includes providing support, encouragement, and coaching to followers (Yukl, 2010). The requirement for individualised consideration is for the leader to enable their followers to take action by providing them with more discretion, authority, information, trust and confidence, but also to encourage the heart of their followers by considering their individual needs, their abilities and aspirations (Kouzes and Posner, 1995). The leader's job is to show people that they can win and succeed through encouragement and aligning benefit when behaviour is aligned with the established cherished values. The goal is to awaken passion and love of their followers regarding their products, their services, their clients and customers and simply their work. Through individualised consideration involving attentive listening, the leader's job of developing each person is possible. The development of each individual leads to the improvement of the whole organisation since every individual component is involved.

Considerations with Transformational Leadership when Building Capacity

As outlined previously, transformational leadership might be an effective leadership approach when building capacity. However, two challenges arise when building capacity for a high performing organisation.

The first challenge is to consider the current situation of the organisation and its members. Every organisation is different and operates in a different environment. In addition, every follower is motivated differently since humans are complex by nature with different needs. Leaders would be advised to be aware of this and react flexibly in order to adapt to different situations and to different people.

The second challenge for a leader is to establish an effective foundation within the organisation in order to get the basics right. A discussion about idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration when building an organisation cannot begin if the foundation of the organisation is not laid out and understood (Baldon, Petrov, and Gosling, 2009). In order to move on to the intangibility of leadership the tangible part needs to be established first. This requires a clear organisational structure and understanding of the task requirements. In addition, expectations need to be communicated about the fulfilment of tasks and benefits need to be identified for doing the tasks in correct ways. This calls for leaders to become a guide and to motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements (Robbins and Judge, 2009). Bass (1997) explains that establishing goals and ensuring that people complete the tasks requires contingent rewards through engagement in constructive path-goal transactions and the enforcement of rules. Through a path-goal construction clarity can be created and people can be integrated into the organisation. Integration through a clear understanding of what needs to be done and by establishing a clear pathway from efforts to performance to rewards in order to achieve a positive outcome is essential.

However, leaders need to be careful in relying too much on contingent rewards. Although they are essential, passion for the job and the feeling of trust and comfort should be at utmost importance, since only relying on contingent rewards might result in the creation of an ineffective organisational culture. The staff might become accustomed to transactions (rewards,

bonus, awards, etc.) in compensation for their work under such leadership. They might stop taking ownership in the purpose and value of the organisation, and might just become order-takers and follow the instructions of managers. This would narrow down the chances of creating a high performing organisation where automatic leadership occurs and people take charge of the situation.

Thus, the author would not call leading through contingent awards a give and take leadership, but rather a leadership that clarifies tasks and goals and guides the follower to successful completion of the job. Important however, is to apply this kind of leadership only to struggling employees who are, for example, new to the organisation or when dealing with people who are insecure about what they are supposed to do. The goal is to make them comfortable at their workplace and provide them with a foundation to perform well. The author sees the clarification of tasks and goals as the initial stage of transformational leadership to transform an organisation to new heights. Once the person is clear of what their role within the organisation is, then leadership needs to move on to the pure form of transformational leadership, as the person has been instructed and trained and becomes a capable person who can be entrusted to take on challenging tasks on his/her own.

Leadership to Build Capacity in Educational Institutions

As mentioned previously, educational institutions, no matter whether it is public or private, need to become organisations that can perform at a high level in order to survive with the possibility to grow in a challenging environment. They need to establish a formalised system which focuses on integrating staff effectively into the organisation's community and secondly, encouraging self-esteem and competency within each new teacher.

Establishing an effective leadership approach to build high performing organisations in educational institutions cannot only help the institution but also its members to succeed. In most schools, we can detect high pressure and demand on teachers, which explains the high turnover in this field. This is especially true for new teachers. De Paul (2000, p. 1) suggests that in the United States "22 percent of all new teachers leave the profession in the first three years because of lack of support and a sink or swim approach to induction." Brewster and Railsback (2001, p 4) explain the difficulties new teachers go through by stating:

"The first few years are consumed with keeping their head above water: struggling to learn a new curriculum, develop lesson plans, deal with behavioural issues, track down supplies, and respond to the various needs of students, parents, fellow faculty members, and administrators."

When looking at such intensive pressure new teachers are exposed to, it is necessary for the institution, and especially their leaders, to help and support them in coping with these high demands. Quite often inexperienced teachers rapidly find themselves criticised by students and hear complaints about their course delivery which will then reflect on the institution as a whole. However, not only teachers new to the education field, but also almost all teachers beginning a new job, appear to face some difficulty. This is because they encounter a new situation and a new environment and have to find the means to adapt to them (Stocklin, 2010). An effective integration of new teachers into the institution can not only help the new teachers to feel immediately as an important team member but also help the institution to build capacity and increase performance. School leaders can support this development by "building organisational structures and systems that support and value personal learning and that facilitates and

encourages collective learning” (Mitchell and Sackney, 2001, p. 2). This could be done by considering the dimensions explained by King and Newmann (2001) when building capacity:

1. knowledge, skills and disposition of a teacher;
2. professional community that provides a shared purpose, collaboration, reflective inquiry, and influence; and
3. coherent program.

In this context, teachers feel capable and accepted. They integrate into a community and form a professional culture through sharing, developing meanings and communicating values. The interesting but complex job of a teacher becomes clearer within such a community since open dialogues are the norm. Additionally, through interactive communication of values, positive emotions within the community are established, resulting in the teacher demonstrating citizenship behaviour. This relates to behaviour such as punctuality, helping other teachers, volunteering for things that are not required, making innovative suggestions to improve the institution, not complaining about trivial matters, responding promptly to correspondence and not wasting time (Oplatka, 2009). This kind of behaviour supports task performance and improves a social and psychological work environment (Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, and Chen, 2005). The proper integration of all members into a team to build capacity will help the teachers to not only attain the required skills, but to foster a resilient self-belief in one’s capabilities (Wood and Bandura, 1989). With the resulting self-esteem, the teacher can deliver a high quality service for the institution. Capacity building takes place in this environment since harmony and teamwork is present. The building of capacity creates a sense of belonging, which is associated with positive emotions and is a powerful motivational factor for teachers (Sufi and Lyons, 2003).

School managers, who want to improve institutional capacity should therefore intervene and cooperatively create improvement moderators with all members in the community. The emphasis in such an organisation is on authentic self-expression, the development of relationships, and the overall development of a person within a community (Beatty, 2002). With capacity building in mind, Walker (1994) calls for educational institutions to become more flexible and adaptable and create collaboration between all organisational members to establish shared values, collegiality, empowerment, shared leadership and professionalism within the institution. However, the building of capacity is different in each educational setting and generalisation is not possible. Capacity building requires a reflective process from the leaders in their institution in order to establish effective procedures and moderators. Additionally, it requires time as it is a product of carefully cultivated attitudes, commitments, and management processes that have accrued slowly and steadily over time through a consistent application (Garvin, 1993).

The goal of this article is to look at capacity building from an individual case. From this case some suggestions can be filtered through that can be applied to other educational institutions in a similar situation.

THE CASE - BACKGROUND

As mentioned previously, the institution for this case is a private hospitality management college located in Shanghai (China).

The purpose of this college is to transform young adults into young professionals. The college believes that if their students are successful then the college is successful. The

management of the college also believes that every student has potential and the teachers need to encourage them to perform at their best. It is known to management that students are very challenging since it cannot allow itself to be selective when it comes to students due to the previously mentioned competitive market and the orders given by the Chinese government. It requires the teachers to have patience with these students but at the same time be strict and clear of what is required of them. All their policies and standards of conduct are based on the upscale hospitality industry.

The values for the college require being professional at all time, respectful, motivated and passionate about what is done, honest, open-minded, neat and tidy (professional appearance), team-oriented, hardworking, proactive, organized, solution focused, and internal and external customer oriented.

The strategies to make its students successful are through the creation of an international work environment by recruiting teachers and students from all over the world, by hiring industry and academic experts who can deliver high quality curriculum and have the right attitude, which is a passion and love for education and working with people. In addition, it focuses on an education that is interactive and student-centred. The college wants to apply and develop tools and procedures that turn students into professionals with good knowledge, great ability to communicate in English and if possible other languages as well.

Table 1: Faculty Composition by Nationality

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|-----|
| Australia | 2 | 9% |
| Canada | 1 | 5% |
| France | 2 | 9% |
| England | 1 | 5% |
| Hong Kong | 2 | 9% |
| Mainland China | 10 | 45% |
| Philippines | 1 | 5% |
| Sweden | 1 | 5% |
| USA | 2 | 9% |
| Total | 22 | |

The college's behaviour standards include supporting each other, forgiving mistakes and learning from them, making work easier for each other, work as one team, listening to each other concerns, work hard, be responsible and accountable, be proactive and forward thinking, apply an open communication where concerns are raised and where they are not afraid of confronting each other by discussing issues out.

In this college, the majority of teachers (54%) are ethnic Chinese either from the PRC or SAR Hong Kong (see Table 1).

Therefore in this case, diversity probably needs to be considered when building capacity, especially with the described faculty composition and the location of the institution. Much has been written and

researched on the difference between management and leadership practices between China and the Western world (Chen and Lee, 2008; Fernandez and Liu, 2007, Gallo, 2008), and they all emphasise that management needs to be adjusted to the Chinese situation. Gallo (2008, p. 4) suggests that "it would be naïve for anyone to think that they can just take Western concepts and practices on leadership and make them work in China".

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach used in this research is ‘case study’. Yin (2003) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. In this research, the contemporary phenomenon of investigation is the building of capacity. Case study is a detailed study with a special focus on a single entity. According to Blaikie (2009), undertaking the methodology of case study allows the researcher to get a close and detailed view of social phenomena. The provision of detailed knowledge is an important element to draw conclusions from a case study. The case study research allows developing a theory or a finding that can be transferred or applied to many other situations which is the idea of this article as explained before.

The research is approached through mainly qualitative means in order to record human perception, interpretation and understanding (Creswell, 2009). By qualitative means we are talking about a systematic and empirical approach for answering questions about people in a particular social context (Locke, Spirduso, Silvermann, 2007). Qualitative inquiry relies on the production of individual knowledge (Stake, 2010) where the criteria of credibility, transferability, and dependability become important (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In order to produce individual knowledge and incorporate these criteria, qualitative inquiry views reality as situational and as a human construction. Researching through qualitative inquiry requires the researcher to describe this uniqueness and to find out what is true about the individual case. Describing clearly the unique case allows readers to make a judgement about the ‘transferability’ from this case to their own setting. However, generalization from the case to every setting is not possible since there is no probability sample involved as is when applying quantitative research. Transferability is possible if the social context of the case is clearly understood, since context tends to be thought of as rather stable and does not change much (Stake, 2010). The establishment of meaning through a social context between the actors and the researcher requires the use of detailed and clear descriptions (Blaikie, 2009). If the researcher provides enough of these descriptions then it is possible for the reader to make judgements about whether the findings can be used in other settings. With the intention of providing solid descriptions in mind, the author will take on the role as ‘faithful reporter’ to ensure good qualitative research. According to Blaike (2009) the aim of a faithful reporter is to report a way of live by allowing the research participants or the social actors to speak for themselves and present their point of view.

Research Gathering Tool

The research gathering tool is focus groups by applying the tool of “Metaplanning”. Metaplanning combines a disciplined systems approach with the elements of freedom associated with brainstorming (Davies, Osborne, and Williams, 2002), and is an effective tool for a focus group to gather qualitative data since it encourages active participation due to the requirement for each member to reflect on the question asked, and to write down a key message which needs to be displayed and shared with the other group members. The sharing of the messages encourages useful discussions in helping to clarify the findings of each member and ultimately leading to a mutual representation of the finding as a group.

In addition, metaplanning provides the additional benefit of displaying some data in quantitative form, which enables drawing correlations between focus groups. The quantitative part is based on a reflection of how each group constructed their categories and by the way they assigned importance to each of the categories, while the qualitative part was the recording and reflection of what has been said and presented in the discussions.

Purpose and Organisation

With the purpose of establishing a starting ground, the focus group tried to reveal the view of each participant about building capacity and the required methods to build capacity in this college. In order to reveal this, the author came up with a question that relates to them as teachers, since the term 'capacity building' might be confusing and cannot be directly used. The author presented the idea as a means for improving the college where each teacher can help and can become a significant player. Therefore, the questions posed to the faculty tried to consider this issue.

The focus group took place on August 25, 2009 during the faculty development week of the college. Since the college teaches only one specialist field (hotel management), the college only consists of one faculty. Therefore, the term 'faculty' refers to all the teachers in the college. At the time of the initial study, the faculty was composed of 21 full-time members and 1 part-time member. The development week is mandatory for all full-time members, and consequently, the whole faculty of the college participated except the one part-time member. The activity was conducted through two focus groups. The reason for the second focus groups lays in the establishment of a control group that allows instituting a potential correlation between the two groups. The purpose was to see if both groups came up with similar findings, which could provide a shared view on the concept and requirement of capacity building. Additionally having two groups had the benefit of presenting the finding of one group to the other and vice versa: hence, creating a platform for an interactive discussion to reveal additional insights.

The objective was to get an overall picture of what the current state of the faculty perception within the institution was, to determine differences of opinion, and to highlight agreed positions within each group. The metaplanning approach for conducting the focus groups was intended to capture the relative importance of various factors and the way these factors interact. Additionally, it offered a way of recording and collating data that can be used for analysis.

Focus Group Composition

The faculty was equally divided by placing 11 teachers in one team (Group A) and 10 teachers in the other team (Group B). Tables 2 and 3 show the composition of each group based on country of origin, gender, teaching, and company experience.

The author decided to outline the characteristics of each member in the group in order to generate some awareness when drawing conclusions on their findings. The amount of experience with the company, in the profession, the nationality, and the gender might have some meaning when drawing conclusions. Additionally, it might be relevant to understand each person's perception in building capacity.

Group A is quite diverse with 8 different ethical backgrounds. The group members teaching experience is quite modest and they have not been with the college very long. This is not very surprising, since the college has been operating for only 5 years and in that time has undergone major management and organisational changes including 3 different CEOs and Deans. Group B consisted of 10 teachers and was a little bit less diverse than group A, but comprises of an equal gender mix between 5 male and 5 female lecturers. This group also included a member with significantly more teaching experience than others, but tenure with the company is shorter, with 5 members new to the college versus 3 in group A.

It can be concluded that the groups are diverse from each other, which might have an impact on their findings which needs to be kept in mind when analysing the data. However, the

similarities outweigh the differences with the benefit to draw some comparison between the two groups.

Table 2: Group A

| | Country of Origin | Gender | Formal Classroom Teaching Experience in Years | Company Experience in Years |
|-----|-------------------|--------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Australia | Male | 1 | 1 |
| 2. | England | Male | 1 | 1 |
| 3. | France | Male | 1 | 1 |
| 4. | France | Male | 12 | 3 |
| 5. | Hong Kong | Male | 3 | 2 |
| 6. | Mainland China | Male | 4 | 1 |
| 7. | Mainland China | Female | New | New |
| 8. | Mainland China | Female | 3 | 3 |
| 9. | Philippines | Female | 2 | 2 |
| 10. | USA | Female | 1 | New |
| 11. | Sweden | Male | New | New |

Table 3: Group B

| | Country of Origin | Gender | Formal Classroom Teaching Experience in Years | Company Experience in Years |
|-----|-------------------|--------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Australia | Female | 10 | New |
| 2. | Canada | Male | 2 | New |
| 3. | Mainland China | Female | 1 | 1 |
| 4. | Mainland China | Female | 4 | 4 |
| 5. | Mainland China | Male | 2 | New |
| 6. | Mainland China | Male | 1 | 1 |
| 7. | Mainland China | Male | 2 | 3 |
| 8. | Mainland China | Female | 3 | 3 |
| 9. | Hong Kong | Female | New | New |
| 10. | USA | Male | 1 | New |

QUESTIONS AND INITIAL FINDINGS IN ESTABLISHING THE CATEGORIES

What is required for the whole faculty to become excellent teachers in their institution?

Both groups were asked the following first question: *What is required for the whole faculty to become excellent teachers in their institution?* The purpose of this question was to get each group to frame a concept about capacity building with the findings summarised below. The results are shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Each group decided individually what name they would like to assign to each category. The two charts show on the X-axis, the categories that each group decided on. The Y-axis shows the attached importance to each category. Group A decided on having 6 categories while group B had only 5 categories.

Figure 1: Results for Group A

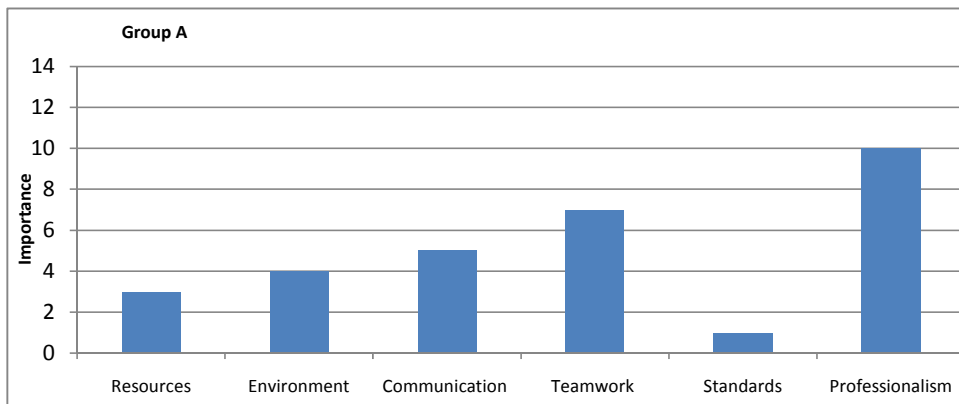
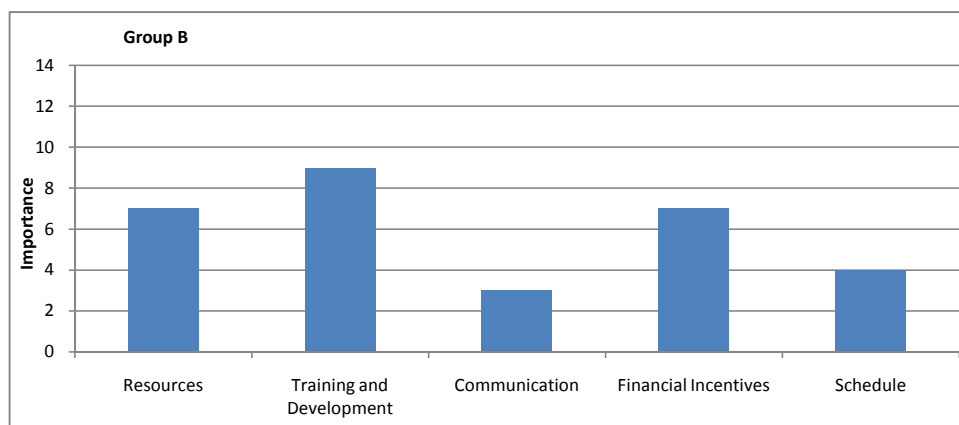


Figure 2: Results for Group B



By listening to the discussions when creating these categories including associated importance, it was interesting to find out that both groups think the implementation of training and development in order to establish professionalism is crucial in creating excellent teachers. Group A refers to this aspect as 'professionalism' while group B titles this category 'training and development'. The creation of effective teams seemed to be more important to group A in comparison to group B since they assigned a special category for this and gave the category 7 points.

Group B on the other hand, stressed the importance of financial incentives. This can be explained by the composition of the groups, since group A consisted mainly of new members and had a better international mix. Group B on the other hand was composed of faculty that are predominantly native Chinese. Salary is found to be of very high importance in China since Chinese measure their success mostly by the amount of money they earn. Additionally,

Shanghai is one of the most competitive places in the world. Another point to mention is that the Chinese faculty feels that they are underpaid since they are working for a joint-venture college between a Swiss and a Chinese partner. The general assumption is that foreign companies have more money and are willing to pay higher wages to attract and motivate people to join and stay with the organisation than do their Chinese counterparts (Bucknall, 2002). This is especially true in this college where the leadership has changed so many times and therefore the current staff stayed on mostly because of extrinsic factors such as money and not because they felt especially attached to the organisation.

Additionally, both groups agreed that communication within the organisation is very important. In particular the communication between management and faculty was stressed.

Another concerning issue for the teachers of group B was the category 'Schedule', which refers to convenient teaching time and location. The college needs to deal with this issue frequently since its location is quite inconvenient. The premises are one hour south of Shanghai by bus. Creating a good schedule seemed to be very important for group B.

What support or condition is needed in the further development of becoming an excellent teacher?

Question 2 asked *what support or condition is needed in the further development of becoming an excellent teacher*. The purpose of this question was to find out what is required to build capacity in this college from a group perspective. The quantitative result of the outcome is presented in Figures 3 and 4.

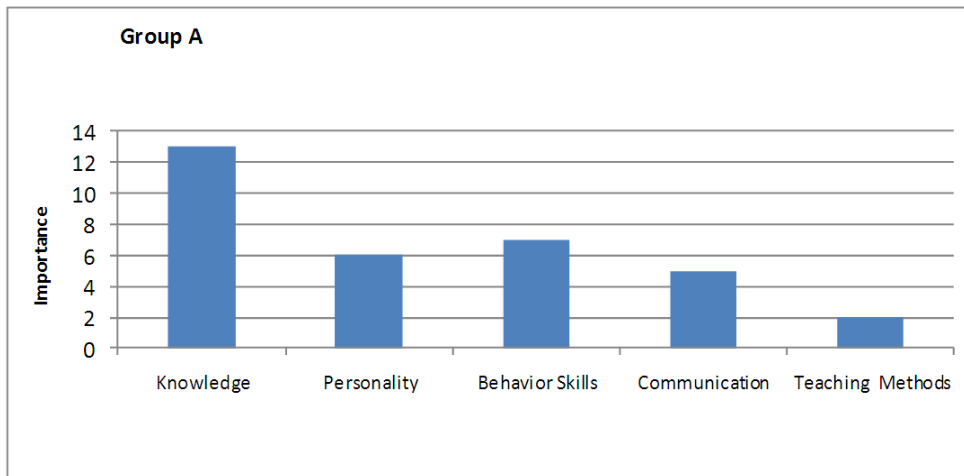
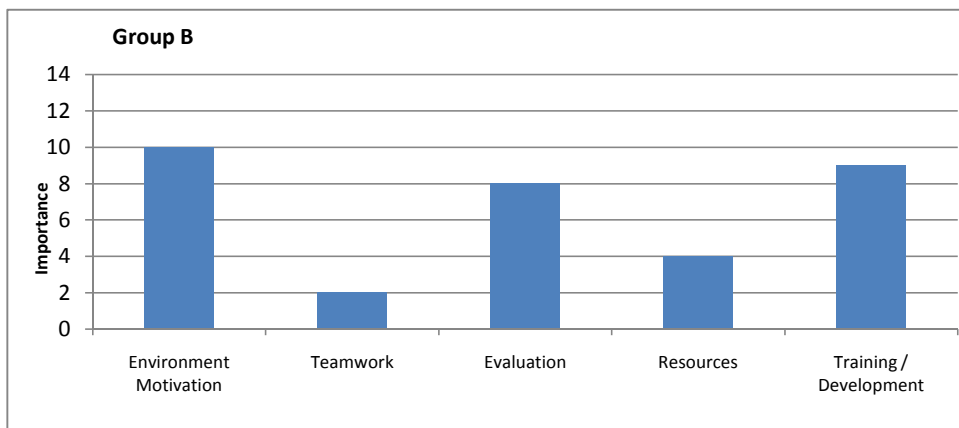
While once again some major agreements can be easily identified, some discrepancies between the two groups are also clear. Both groups agree on the importance of training and development and also on communication providing feedback (evaluation) but group A stresses this even more by separating this into additional categories: usage of teaching methods, strong personality and behaviour skills, and also subject knowledge.

Group B thought that teamwork and a motivational environment is important. This finding is also in line with group A, who referred to this previously when answering question 1.

Findings Presented by the Focus Groups

After being divided into groups, each one elected a representative and started a discussion of their findings, which were noted down by their representative. The representative of focus group A summarised the findings of the first question by stating the following points:

Faculty needs to possess knowledge and experience, have a good personality and attitude, be able to teach with the focal point on listening skills, be able to create a good environment, possess good behaviour skills that helps to create good classroom performance, be organised, flexible, responsible, always looking to continuously improve and be able to learn new training methods, share information and be open minded with fellow teachers, become a role model and a good representative of the hotel industry.

Figure 3: Results for Group A**Figure 4: Results for Group B**

Focus group B's representative offered the following answer to the same question:

Faculty needs to be professional, consisting of a good positive attitude and defined by addressing all issues in an objective manner; good teamwork is required and focuses on the way we work together. In addition, strong communication needs to be established in the institution where people know what is going on and information from the external environment also reaches the faculty. The category of 'professionalism' consists on the requirement of good leadership, being a good role model for students and the creation of 'leadership from within' where it starts firstly with the faculty taking charge of the situation and achieving the expectations of the college.

The second question, which addressed the needed support or condition in further development of becoming an excellent teacher (the author's intended answer to the requirement of building capacity building), revealed the following information for focus group A:

Most important for an institution to create excellent teacher is through training and evaluation, but also technological resources, a comfortable environment such as air-conditioned rooms and the availability of resources that can address professional as well as personal needs. Crucial is also that the company is loyal to its teachers and establishes trust. In addition, the concepts of self-confidence and esteem were mentioned. Fair assessment was important in the development of excellent teachers because it helps to assess and allocate benefits that can lead to the offering or training in the areas that are needed. The significance of leadership that recognises good performance and gives praises was also named.

Focus group B's representative provided the following answer:

Most important is the acquisition of professional knowledge and experience supported through constant training and the provision of practical experience to students. Moreover, leaders need to allocate and use the resources in a correct way. Money motivates faculty but does not make them necessarily good teachers. However, money indirectly through an incentive to motivate helps in making faculty good. Additionally, what is especially important is the creation of a nice timetable or schedule since the college is located quite far away from the downtown centre. All these things will help the institution to create passion within their faculty.

Findings on an Interactive Discussion between Both Focus Groups

After the presentation participants of both groups started a lively discussion where additional points were revealed such as the need for teachers to get more student feedback in order to provide additional assessments and opinions about their teaching delivery.

In addition, one teacher suggested:

The college needs to put the teacher's well being as the first priority. It should treat the faculty as internal guests (the same as the Ritz-Carlton or the Four Season hotel group is doing with its employees in their mission statement). The faculty should be treated as an asset of the college and this should be the underlying philosophy.

The above teacher refers to the notion that teachers are in the frontline for the college by dealing with students firstly and every day. After giving this suggestion, it was mentioned that there had been a student strike in this college three years ago under the old management. The story was that this has happened due to the influence of teachers on students. The participating faculty in the workshop had the impression that students were motivated to strike due to their feelings that teachers were not happy and something was wrong within the college. Therefore, the motivation to influence students came from the teachers because they tried to get revenge at the institution due to their perceived feelings of unfair treatment.

Other points that were raised during the workshop included: the good preparation of the teacher for class, better understanding between all parties and in all power directions (students, peers and management), the importance of cultural understanding between people especially in this college where there is quite a diverse culture between Western and Eastern cultures.

Additionally, one teacher referred to the 'notion of a value chain' where he conveys the concept of a cycle that starts with happy teachers leading to happy students. This will have the

result that the college will have more enrolment of students and more revenue for the college and consequently can reinvest again to build infrastructure, establish benefits and others in order to maintain or even improve the teacher satisfaction.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to put the findings into a recommendation, the author would like to refer back to the work of King and Newmann (2001) and Youngs and King (2002) by looking at their three dimensions as the basis for capacity building:

Dimension 1 – Individual performance: The focus group explained that there is a need for every staff member to have a professional attitude and to continuously educate themselves. Trust needs to be given to them in order to build self-confidence and esteem. Good performance needs to be recognized and also supported by financial incentives.

Dimension 2 - Harmony through culture creation: The findings reveal that team spirit is very important. This is achieved through information sharing and effective communication. In addition, harmony is preserved when having a good infrastructure in order to conduct their work effectively. In addition, the staff needs to be aware about cultural differences and be open-minded and tolerant to each other.

Dimension 3 - Understanding of the whole concept together: The main point that was mentioned was having purpose and passion for what they are doing. This requires the leaders to transmit visions and plans and continuously communicate what is going on and what the organisation wants to achieve in order to excite their followers.

When looking at the whole picture of these three dimensions, it can be seen that they are related to making people effective and comfortable at work. The findings reveal the need for considering culture and individual needs in order to build harmony through a steady and developing way. Applying the concepts of transformational leadership and finding a way that embraces all ideas and satisfies people will provide leaders with a conceptual tool to build capacity. Additionally, leaders will be able to engage each individual and establish proactive ways that will help the organisation to adapt to changing and unpredictable circumstances. One important finding which was mentioned strongly by both focus groups was the need of engaging all members. This requires effective communication within the whole community. In order to establish effective communication, leaders are advised to follow the suggestion of Kouzes and Posner (1995, p. 12) who emphasise that leadership is a dialogue where followers are part of the team and explain “those who are expected to produce the results must feel a sense of ownership”. This requires that on one hand the leader needs to trust his followers by empowering them to make decisions and on the other hand, the followers need to feel comfortable and accountable when making the decisions.

A suggestion of how capacity building within the Chinese value system can be approached is given by Wang, et al. (2005: 430), who “advocate a socially interactive and dynamic model of leadership, where the influence of transformational leadership on performance is through a social exchange between leader and follower”. Therefore, in order to build capacities in a Chinese educational institution, managers would need to ensure that social exchange is happening at all the time, but different leadership approaches might need to be taken into account depending on the situation and the experience of the follower. Different styles of leadership should be employed when applying transformational leadership such as Max Weber’s bureaucratic leadership where the authority rests on a system of consciously made formal, rational rules (Nass, 1986). This is important when constructing the core or

foundation of a high performing organisation. Bureaucratic leadership approaches establish clarity and ensure consistency in doing daily work as everything is written and can easily be checked in order to avoid ambiguity. Additionally, Kurt Lewin's, laissez-faire and democratic styles (Lewin, Lippitt, and White, 1939) can help transformational leadership and the development of the organisation.

These leadership styles enable employees to feel ownership of decision making since they are involved by democratic means or entrusted by laissez faire. The feeling of ownership in democratic leadership approaches is established as policies and issues are a matter of group discussions and decision making. In a democratic system issues are brought in front of people and their opinions are asked before decisions are made. This generates a feeling of self-worth and being important to the institution. Laissez-faire leadership calls for a style where the leader provides complete freedom to the group or individual to make decisions without any leader participation (Lewin et al., 1939). This helps in the empowerment of specialists, such as teachers, who are competent in the fields they are practicing in the delivery of knowledge. This kind of leadership style creates the feeling trust on behalf of the follower towards its leader and also forms the feeling of being in charge and having control over outcomes. When applying this style correctly the manager consciously makes a decision to pass the focus of power to the teachers to allow them freedom of action to do as they think best (Mullins, 2007).

Applying flexible leadership styles consisting of democratic, bureaucratic, and laissez-faire approaches can create the inspiration of a culture of empowerment, modelling and teamwork (Slater 2008). Leaders need to keep holistic ways in their mind by seeing the complete pictures and solutions can be found that satisfies all parties involved. Applying this kind of leadership when facing different individuals and different situations, could be the secret of capacity building. However, in order to get to an environment that builds capacity, leaders needs to know their followers well and look for strengths in individuals and build upon them. Many managers in today's competitive environment run the risk of creating organisations that under-utilise employees and do not develop the capabilities necessary for employees to perform successfully (Lawler, 1994). Managers who fail to focus on the capabilities and motivation of individuals are building an organisation that might be only sustainable for a short period of time until the manager has no oversight of the situation and/or is not present. It is better to develop people, since we are talking about humans who are the key resource in building capacity.

On this topic, Peter Drucker stated "management is about human beings and its task is to make people capable of joint performance, to make their strengths effective and their weakness irrelevant" (Hass Edersheim, 2007, p. 157). Therefore, one of the major goals of educational leaders is to enhance the belief in their followers that one can prevail and be successful. The creation of this belief starts through the provision of clear guidelines and helping people to understand these guidelines. This can be done through a bureaucratic leadership style by the establishment of standard operating procedures such as required teaching methods, syllabi, scheme of work or lesson plans, and the explanation and reinforcement of these standards and policies through training and development programs. When teachers understand their job duties well, they will be able to manage the classroom effectively and establish a classroom environment that can deliver the school's intended goals.

Therefore, the core viewpoint for capacity building is for all to become task focused through clearly understood management guidance. Joyce, Nohria, and Roberson (2003) call for guidance that is clear, consistent and focused. This is achieved through a clear and effective communication process of expectations that are put in writing and understood by all the members in the organisation.

Another point that was revealed in the study was the importance of satisfying teachers by developing harmony at work. This can lead to more commitment to their jobs and less worries (Rooney, Gottlieb, and Newby-Clark, 2009). Eib and Miller (2006) suggests that there are many teachers who care deeply about teaching, yet feel isolated and disconnected from like-minded colleagues. Therefore, school leaders are well advised to create a community within the school that consists in pervasive values, enduring commitments, a sense of belonging, a sense of togetherness, and caring interactions among and between teachers, staff members, administrators, students and parents (Ladd and Zelli, 2002). Leaders need to ensure that teachers exhibit the traits of a sense of comfort in school setting, establish a classroom environment that accepts and values students from diverse cultures, work effectively with colleagues, and understand and comply successfully to the school's educational vision (Bristor, Kinzer, Lapp, and Ridener, 2002). A useful approach is the application of democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles since these styles will establish involvement in decision making and empowerment when dealing with familiar, daily situations. Involving and empowering employees creates a healthy organisational climate that enables trust and effective team work.

Therefore, both clarity and harmony need to be addressed and an amenable way needs to be found since leaders need to create a community where collegial socialisation occurs, but also where teachers are motivated to contribute for the institution (Slater, 2008). Addressing both issues and finding the right balance can help the leaders in the creation of a professional community consisting of organised human and technical resources (King and Newmann, 2001). By addressing this, school leaders are able to generate an organisational climate that evokes a spirit of support and is conducive to motivating members to work willingly and effectively through the organisation (Mullins, 2007).

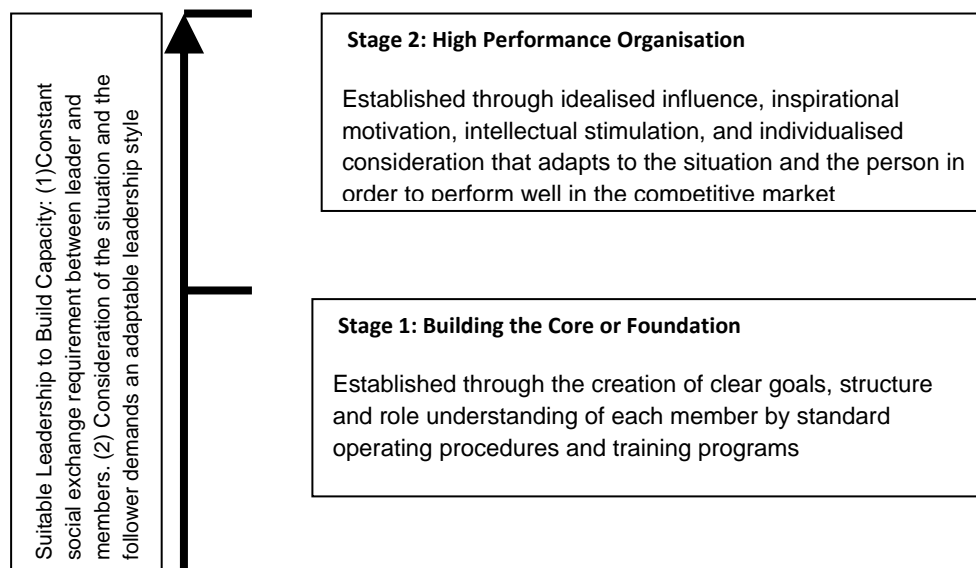
Institutions need to create an environment where its faculty has a positive attitude that can be transformed into a successful performance. Joyce, Nohria and Roberson (2002, p. 52) define performance "as a function of the customers' personal reaction to the employees". In educational setting that means the performance of a teacher is good if their students speak positively about the school. The teacher will be successful in their future working life due to things acquired, learned and improved in the educational setting. Finding the right balance requires leaders to deliver and transmit cherished values, their beliefs in best practices, and the goals and plans for the present and strategic future. This is crucial in creating positive employee attitude within the institution.

A positive employee attitude is crucial in breeding high performance (Joyce, et al., 2004) and thus in capacity building. In order to create a positive attitude throughout the whole college, it is important that everybody clearly understands what to do and how it is linked to the whole organisational purpose. Teachers who deliver lessons that are in synchronisation with the college's mission and the teaching standards should be recognised by their leaders and the behaviour reinforced through positive comments such as praise to continue. It is important that educational leaders are aware about when and who to praise or whom to address when something does not run smoothly or according to plan. Through clear communication, educational administrators can make teachers build confidence and make them feel like winners. It will also encourage other teachers to do the same, since in basic instinct all want to be winners. This requires that leaders make all expected tasks measurable and set deadlines for this as much as possible. In addition, the leader needs to follow a control cycle that monitors processes, checks and controls stages along the process and provide the teachers with feedback through each step.

Regular meetings will help a school to get teacher commitment in participation since many things occur and situations are always changing in a relatively short time with students, parents, management, etc. Regular meetings of democratic work teams featuring discussions concerning work objectives and the leader's commitment to coaching and quality work is what enables capacity building. The crucial point is to involve the teachers in setting goals, and creating plans of actions to achieve these goals. The goals and plans need to be put in writing and enforced through reminders and a disciplined approach in order to generate clarity for all teachers. This will lead to better internal communication about the direction, vision, mission and values of the institution. Additionally, it clarifies the role of every teacher in the institution (Comm and Mathaisel, 2003). With clear and shared goals a performance-oriented culture can be created (Schein, 1990). In addition, the teachers get a sense of the big picture due to their involvement in the planning process.

In conclusion, forming and keeping a high performance organisation demands building capacity by integrating each member in the community, and constantly improve them. This requires leaders to transform schools with new habits in mind, new forms of collegial interaction, and the creation of a climate and culture that supports true professionalism (Sagor, 2000). Building capacity requires getting the core right through the establishment of clarity about the required task performance. Once this clarity has been established the focus can be on converting it into a high performance organisation through the application of transformational leadership to bring each person together and establish an effective teamwork within the community. In order to integrate people, especially in China, a constant social exchange between the leader and members in the organisation is required. In addition, the leader needs to adapt to the situation and the followers requirements by transformational leadership and the application of varying leadership styles. Figure 5 shows a conceptual framework that summarizes the findings and gives an overview of the recommendation in establishing capacity building through integration for an organisation.

Figure 5: Conceptual Framework



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