Organizational Dynamics

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## Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The Learning Journal integrates the essential elements of the course within your professional field of interest. The objective of the coursejournal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to communicate with your professor insights gained as a result of the course. **The course learning journal should be 3-5 pages** in length and should include the following sections:

1. **Introduction** –Summarize the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.
2. **Personal Growth** - Describe your personal growth–*how the course stretched or challenged you*– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during the week and through subsequent readings – *what new insights or skills you gained.*
3. **Reflective Entry** - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or *adaptation and relevant application*) of new learning in your professional field. What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?
4. **Conclusion** – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.

**Introduction**

The idea of the course was to understand forms of organizational and personnel dynamics. The word dynamics denotes interaction, progression, and activity between individuals and groups. Organizational dynamics pertain to the interplay between two or more organizations, between an organization and society and community, or between the organization and its employees. Personnel dynamics are the interplay and interaction between the individuals and groups that make up the organization. Constructs, concepts, and theories within the study of organizational dynamics are learned throughout the course. Because dynamics between organizations or between groups of people can be challenging and fluid, the course allows the student to learn how to address these challenges, transform workplace dynamics, and elevate the relationships they either impact or are impacted by. Interpersonal skills are also an important component of this task.

Another facet of the course is to understand the meaning of organizational culture and how society’s culture can impact the reputation, resilience, and culture of an organization. An organization’s culture may be that leadership is distant and stays isolated with a refusal to engage with subordinates. Leadership’s practices trickle down and affect how middle management interacts with lower subordinates. On the other hand, an organization may have a culture where there is openness, constant training and development, and transparency from the executive level downward. Some organizational cultures expect traditional office hours and traditional dress. Some other cultures allow for casual dress, flexible hours, multiple breaks and even working from home.

Because of today’s culture wars, post-coronavirus work ideology shaky economy, conflicts and tension may arise within an organization. Employees may be resistant to the change and transition that is necessary to survive in today’s socio-economic climate. Students in the course were able to gain the necessary skills through the course to address these challenges.

**Personal Growth**

It was very important for me to recognize the makeup and strands of what an organization is as well as its relationship with society. An organization may be a Fortune five-hundred company, a small nonprofit, or a large church organization. Also, the concepts I learned were very enlightening. One of the most profound concepts learned was abstract in its various forms such as institutional, structural, or hegemonic. This type of power is normally seen in the context of one nation's power over another, but it also applies in this context.

I have experienced different types of power structures and of course, held forms of authority myself, but this concept helps me to label organizational cultures I have been a part of or dynamics I have created myself. KS or knowledge sharing was another term I learned, even though I have recognized in the past the actions of KS or the lack thereof. The interplay between ethics, responsibility, and sustainability was also revelatory.

**Reflective Entry**

One of the challenges I had with this course was of course the lack of live instruction and peer-to-peer engagement. The ability to discuss organizational challenges with a cohort would have been invaluable and would have enhanced my learning of the various constructs and management theories. Another challenge I faced was the subject matter itself. At this point in my life, I am transitioning away from a structured, organizational lifestyle to a more autonomous, entrepreneurial lifestyle. Currently, I am able to work part-time in my field while going to school full-time which has been a tremendous blessing. My desire is to transition out of property management and into academics while still working on my Ph.D. This way I will have a more flexible schedule than I already do. There is also a small t-shirt business in the works, “Faith by Fashion”.

The point is that I have been through the challenges, excitement, and changes of organizational dynamics. In my tenure working in property management, I have had to advocate for myself as a manager, as well as advocate for my staff. Because of my line of work, I have to not only work with the organization which employs me but I have to work with various housing and finance agencies and non-profits. Some of these agencies have been dysfunctional and some of them are run efficiently. Dynamics are especially challenging when you have to consistently partner with individuals from another organization but both of you need each other to complete a project. The culture of their organization affects how you accomplish your task.

I have survived organizational procedural changes, culture changes after 9/11, and even changes in workplace dynamics after Covid 19’. It has been a privilege in the past to serve on presidential committees, lead teams, work with various cultures, and stand out as a transformational manager. It has been a very fulfilling career to be able to serve the underserved and low-income population. My interest in this type of corporate lifestyle has now waned significantly and I’m ready for a new season. What I can say is that once I begin teaching for a university, although an adjunct, I will still be a part of an organization and have a need to understand and navigate the various forms of dynamics. The knowledge from the class will always be needed. I am also an Elder at a large church which can be rewarding and challenging at the same time. All types of dynamics are at play.

**Conclusion**

In the end, I was not able to apply the course content to my field of interest, but I was able to apply it to one of my passions which is the body of Christ, and how to effectively navigate the dynamics at play within a church organization. How a church survives and serves its people will always be an interest to me. Besides an academic institution, who knows what type of organization I’ll be a part of in the future? Many of the concepts and terms I learned can also be applied to other contexts so knowledge is and will always be power.