Tutorial Letter 201/2/2014

Psychology of Leadership

IOP3707

Semester 2

Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology

This tutorial letter contains important information about your module.

BAR CODE

Open Rubric

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Dear Student

The purpose of this Tutorial Letter 201/2/2014 is to share some important information with you regarding your assignments and the examination in October/November 2014.

1. FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 01

The answers to Assignment 01 are given in the table below:

QUESTION NO	ANSWER		QUESTION NO	ANSWER
1	c		36	d
2	a		37	c
3	a		38	d
4	a		39	c
5	d		40	c
6	b		41	b
7	d		42	d
8	d		43	d
9	b		44	c
10	b		45	d
11	b		46	d
12	b		47	c
13	c		48	a
14	d		49	c
15	d		50	b
16	d		51	d
17	d		52	d
18	a		53	d
19	d		54	d
20	b		55	b
21	d		56	d
22	c		57	b
23	d		58	b
24	b		59	c
25	a		60	b
26	a		61	d
27	c		62	a
28	d		63	b
29	a		64	b
30	b		65	c
31	d		66	c
32	a		67	c
33	a		68	c
34	b		69	a
35	b		70	d

Assignment 02

Below are the suggested answers for Assignment 02. Look at the way the questions are answered. First a theoretical discussion of all the concepts applicable is given and then examples from the case study (if asked for) are given to confirm your understanding of the concept.

QUESTION 1

1.1 Analyse the available information on Richard Branson's personality. Using the Big Five personality dimensions, indicate on a scale of 1–5 where Branson can be placed on each dimension. Remember to justify your answers with suitable examples from the case study. (15)

The discussion of the Big Five personality dimensions can be found on pages 88–92 in Daft (2011). Firstly describe each of the five dimensions and then give examples from the case study regarding Richard Branson's personality to illustrate whether he is high or low on each dimension. At the end of the discussion of each dimension, rate Branson on a scale of 1–5.

The Big Five model of personality. According to the Big Five model of personality, there are five basic dimensions which underlie all others and encompass most of the significant variation in human personality **(1).** The Big Five factors are:

(1) Extraversion. This dimension captures one's comfort level with relationships **(½).** Extraverts tend to be gregarious, assertive and sociable. Introverts tend to be reserved, timid and quiet **(½).** *Branson would score **high** on this dimension and could be classified as an extravert, as he is comfortable with relationships. He is gregarious, assertive and sociable **(1),** as supported by the following examples: (Give any one of the following examples for 1 point).*

- *He regularly takes entire flight crews out to dinner and parties when he arrives on a Virgin Atlantic flight.*
- Branson notes: *"The idea is to have fun, but by talking to employees you learn a lot."*
- *He is frequently on the road to visit Virgin businesses, talking with employees and customers.*
- *He actively listens to employees and customers.*

Branson would score a **4–5** on this dimension **(1).**

(2) Agreeableness. This dimension refers to an individual's propensity (tendency) to defer (give way) to others **(½).** Highly agreeable people are cooperative, warm and trusting while people who score low are cold, disagreeable and antagonistic **(½).** *Branson would score **high** on this dimension and could be classified as agreeable, as he tends to listen to others and involve them. He is cooperative, warm and trusting, as supported by the following examples: (Give any one of the following examples for 1 point).*

- *He regularly takes entire flight crews out to dinner and parties when he arrives on a Virgin Atlantic flight.*
- *He is frequently on the road to visit Virgin businesses, talking with employees and customers.*
- *He actively listens to employees and customers.*

- He says: *"Loyalty means a lot to me. Working with people I know and trust makes me feel secure."*

Branson would score a **4–5** on this dimension **(1).**

(3) Conscientiousness. This dimension is a measure of reliability **(½).** A highly conscientious person is responsible, organised, dependable and persistent. Those who score low on this dimension are easily distracted, disorganised and unreliable **(½).** *Branson would score **high** on this dimension and could be classified as conscientious, as he is a reliable person. He is responsible, organised, dependable and persistent, as supported by the following examples: (Give any one of the following examples for 1 point).*

- *A hard-working ethic.*
- *A strong employee, customer and shareholder service focus.*
- *He is frequently on the road to visit Virgin businesses, talking with employees and customers.*
- *He gets some 50 e-mail messages or letters each day. He addresses each concern by answering personally or by initiating some action.*

Branson would score a **4–5** on this dimension **(1).**

(4) Emotional stability. This dimension, often labelled by its converse, neuroticism, taps a person's ability to withstand stress **(½).** People with positive emotional stability tend to be calm, self-confident and secure. Those with high negative scores tend to be nervous, anxious, depressed and insecure **(½).** *Branson would score **high** on this dimension and could be classified as emotionally stable, as he tends to be calm, self-confident and secure, as supported by the following examples: (Give any one of the following examples for 1 point).*

- *He says: "Get out there and have a good time. Really enjoy yourself, because most of your life is spent working, and you ought to have a great time doing it."*
- *The Virgin culture demands that people are given far more accountability and responsibility at an earlier stage.*
- *"Loyalty means a lot to me."*

Branson would score a **4–5** on this dimension **(1).**

(5) Openness to experience. This dimension addresses one's range of interests and fascination with novelty **(½).** Extremely open people are creative, curious and artistic sensitive. Those at the other end of the openness category are conventional and find comfort in the familiar **(½).** *Branson would score **high** on this dimension and could be classified as open to experience, as he is creative and curious, as supported by the following examples**:** (Give any one of the following examples for 1 point).*

- *The Virgin culture demands that people are given far more accountability and responsibility at an earlier stage.*
- *Virgin believes in making a difference.*
- *It continually improves the customer's experience through innovation.*

Branson would score a **4–5** on this dimension **(1).**

1.2 Analyse the leadership style of Richard Branson in terms of transactional and transformational leadership. Indicate which category you think he belongs to, justifying your answer by providing suitable examples from the case study. (12)

The discussion of transactional and transformational leadership can be found on pages 320–322 in Daft (2011). Start (1) with the characteristics of transformational leadership and then (2) compare it to transactional leadership. Explain (3) why transactional skills are important for all leaders. Indicate (4) on which four areas transformational leadership differs from transactional leadership. Finally, give (5) transactional and transformation examples that Branson uses in the case study and come to a conclusion as to whether Branson is a transactional or transformational leader.

Examples from the case study: Transactional leadership

- Richard Branson uses transactional leadership when he contracts exchange of rewards for effort, promises rewards for good performance and recognises accomplishments. This is illustrated by the fact that he regularly takes entire flight crews out to dinner and parties when he arrives on a Virgin Atlantic flight. He gives every Virgin employee a Virgin card, which provides big discounts on the airline as well as at Virgin Mega stores and other Virgin businesses.

Examples from the case study: Transformational leadership

- Branson provides a sense of vision through his approach to managerial effectiveness. He instils pride in people to support the vision of Virgin. The group has always done things in their own way emphasizing Virgin values, Virgin brand, Virgin spirit and Virgin people.
- Branson communicates high expectations but at the same time promotes the fact that employees must have fun. He also employs people that can support his vision and reinforces that continuously.
- Branson promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving. Virgin is a fast-moving environment, so they recruit people who like to be given responsibility, who like to be given scope to try new ideas and who can cope with being thrown into the deep end.
- Branson treats each employee individually, coaches and advises. He gives personal attention to employees and customers, people have direct access to him and his philosophies are clearly communicated. He states that loyalty means a lot to him and he wants to work with people he knows and can trust and then he feels secure. That is also the reason why he prefers to promote from within.

Conclusion

You should have then come to the conclusion that Richard Branson is indeed a **transformational leader**.

1.3 To what degree does Richard Branson apply authentic leadership in the Virgin Group? Justify all your arguments by means of suitable examples from the case study. (8)

The discussion of authentic leadership can be found in the Study Guide on pages 126–129. Shortly define authentic behaviour and then given examples from the case study to show that Branson acts like an authentic leader. Then you should come to a conclusion that Branson is indeed an authentic leader.

According to Avolio, Gardner & Walumbwa (2005), authentic leaders are leaders who:

- Know who they are and what they believe in **(½);**
- Display transparency and consistency between their values, ethical reasoning and actions **(½);**
- Focus on developing positive psychological states such as confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience within themselves and their associates **(½);**
- Are widely known and respected for their integrity **(½).**

Authenticity has to do primarily with *being* one's true self **(½).** *Authenticity develops in parallel to morality **(½)*.** Authenticity and morality are mutually reinforcing in that one cannot be authentically immoral or antisocial **(½).**

Examples from the case study: Authentic leadership

- It is stated that Branson believes that the correct pecking order is employees first, customers next, and then shareholders **(½).** He thus clearly shows what he believes in **(½)**.
- Branson regularly takes entire flight crews out to dinner and parties when he arrives on a Virgin Atlantic flight **(½).** He even stays at the crew's hotel rather than in expensive hotels away from the crew **(½)**. He gives every Virgin employee a Virgin card, which provides big discounts on the airline as well as at Virgin Mega stores and other Virgin businesses **(½).** This shows that he is transparent and consistent regarding his values (employees first) and his action (he rewards them for good work) **(½).**
- Branson gives people far more accountability and responsibility at an earlier age **(½)**. He also states: *"Loyalty means a lot to me. Working with people I know and trust makes me feel secure. I guess that's why I prefer to promote from within."* **(½).** Actions such as this tend to develop positive psychological states like confidence, optimism, hope, and resilience within employees **(½).**

From the examples in the case study it is clear that Branson is indeed an authentic leader **(1).**

[35]

QUESTION 2

Analyse the leadership behaviour of Prof Mokadi in terms of moral leadership. Indicate which of his behaviour can be classified as moral, and which can be classified as unethical, justifying your answers with suitable examples from Case Study 2. ***(15)***

The discussion of moral leadership can be found on pages 146–154 in Daft (2011). Shortly discuss moral leadership behaviour and then give examples from the case study to show whether Prof Mokadi acts as a moral leader or not. Then you should come to the conclusion that Prof Mokadi is indeed an amoral/unethical leader. You should have identified examples like those given below to reach your decision.

Examples from the case study: Amoral/unethical leadership behaviour

Amoral/unethical leadership behaviour
He was "autocratic, paranoid, and delusional to a frightening degree for someone in his position".
He had no notion of decency.
He gave orders like an army general and he showed no regard or respect for his fellow-man.
He had 12 disciples who regularly prayed for him in his "chapel of light" on the campus. He was always late for occasions. When he did arrive with his body guards, everything had to come to a standstill. His arrival was announced and his CV was read.
Two special days were marked on the university calendar, namely the "day of the Vice Chancellor" on the 8th October and his birthday on the 5th August.
A secretary in his office was transferred partly because she failed to turn the calendar in his toilet to the right month.
After his return and reinstatement more than 20 staff members who lead testimonies against him had to stand trial and were dismissed.
There was evidence that Mokadi's abuse of his power has led to the "loss of valuable staff members and indeed turned the VUT into a 'graveyard of dismissals'."
Staff who had displeased Mokadi were not dismissed, they were "restructured" **–** an euphemism for summary transfer to another department and job.
Mokadi "apparently destroyed the lives of highly competent, hard-working individuals. The commission was shocked by the destruction of these people, who wept openly from a feeling of grief and humiliation."
He was fired after being found guilty on 161 counts of fraud and corruption.

2. EXAMINATION PREPARATION

2.1 The details of the exam are as follows:

- Total marks = 75
- Duration = 2 hours

2.2 The pass mark is 50%. If you do not pass but obtain at least 40%, you will be admitted to the supplementary examination. If you fail with less than 40%, however, you will have to re-register for this module.

2.3 The two-hour examination will consist of 25 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and a case study for 50 marks. All of the multiple choice questions asked in the examination will derive from the assessments at the end of each study unit in the study guide. It is thus in your own interest to work through all these assessment questions.

2.4 The examination case study will cover the following aspects which are all covered in either the study guide or Daft (2011):

- Make sure that you can define leadership in your own words.
- Make sure you know what the difference is between management and leadership.
- Know the Big-5 personality dimensions.
- Know the concept of authentic leadership.

2.5 Tips on how to approach a case study:

- Read through the case to ensure that you have a basic understanding of it.
- Read through the questions in the exam paper to get a good understanding of what is asked in the questions.
- Make sure that you understand the theoretical basis of each question. Please do not try to find a solution before you are absolutely sure what the question requires from you.
- Now start to answer each question. First give a theoretical discussion of the aspect, then look for examples in the case study to support your answer (when required to do so). *See how I did it in the suggested answers to Assignment 02*.
- Come to a conclusion regarding the aspect discussed if so required by the question.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

3.1 General

A worrying aspect is the small number of students using *myUnisa.* We as lecturers place important announcements on *myUnisa* during the year and also get involved in the Discussion Forum with students, but only a small number of students log into this service. It is easy and free to create your own *myUnisa* password, so do it as soon as possible.

Good luck with your exam preparation!

Kind regards

Mrs Cebile Mensele
Mr Benny Olivier

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