

CASE STUDY

Navigating Organizational Politics: The Tale of Dr. Niveditha and the Unhealthy Culture

Authors

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Dr Niveditha has joined a reputed college in Bangalore on 17th December 2018 as Assistant Professor in the Department of Management Studies. They entrusted her with the job of the Academic coordinator as well to look after the students and faculty affairs. With her expertise and attitude, she was able to bridge the gap between the students, faculty and the management. In the process, she became popular among the students. Many of the faculties who had more service with the same college did not like this. They felt that students are listening only to Niveditha and they might lose their control over the students. Hence, they started spreading rumours to defame Niveditha on professional ground by stating that she is not capable to manage the post of academic coordinator and is misleading the students against the management.

The power in the organization was concentrated on the Principal and the Administrator. Both tried their best to keep the maximum power with them resulting in two groups- one supporting the Principal, another supporting the administrator. When the power is concentrated on two people and when it is visible to the employees they will automatically get into those groups whichever is dominant in the organization. With regard to this institution, the power

was kept on shifting from Principal to administrator and administrator to Principal. But at the same time, they come together in case if they want to oppose their common rival. However, there some were neutral and did not belong to the two groups.

Niveditha was neutral and her focus was for the development of students and to develop the institution. She ensured proper discipline among the students while giving them freedom. However, management got wrong information and took her effort in a negative way. They thought of her doing all these for popularity among the students.

Next year as usual, many faculties left the college and they recruited new faculties. Niveditha was relieved from the responsibility of Academic arbitrarily. The organization's culture slowly became unhealthy. Faculties including Niveditha who were not a part of either of the groups got a shabby treatment. They got more work but less increment or no increment at all. There was no consideration for their qualification or experience nor for their research output. Scope for the career development and academic development was very least. This become apparent during the performance appraisals as there

was no transparency and proper feedback. People who were supporting the other two groups got good increment and their mistakes were unseen. Whereas, people who belong to the neutral group were verbally abused on their performance. They were cornered and were not being included in any of the events. Equal employee participation was declining in the organization. Neutral group used to work and the fame goes to the people from other two groups. The hard work of the neutral group was always kept hidden from the top-level management.

Many times, Niveditha tried to approach the top-level management to inform about the ill treatment that she and her fellow colleagues are receiving due to the internal politics. However, her attempts failed, as she has to go through either the Principal or the Administrator. She felt harassed and finally decided to quit the job.

Questions

1. Critically analyse the relationship between organization culture and employee engagement.
2. What would be the negative impact of unhealthy organization culture?
3. What steps the management would have taken to prevent high turnover ratio of the employees?
4. Do you think that the decision what Niveditha has taken is the right one? Did she had any other option rather than quitting the job?
5. Discuss the aspects which a management should take to build a positive organization culture?



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