1   Introduction

In 2008 Jamie Oliver presided over the televising of his project to recruit and train a group of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds as top class chefs. At all stages in the project Oliver was seen to adopt the role of leader and manager. This essay evaluates Oliver's abilities as a manager in relation to a number of theoretical models of management attributes.

2   Mintzberg's Management Roles

The first systematic attempt to provide structured model of the relationship between management and organisational effectiveness was Mintzberg's influential Ten Management Roles (Mullins, 2010:439). Mintzberg proposed that these roles could be classified into three categories: *interpersonal*, *informational* and *decisional* (Shapira and Dunbar, 1980:87). The classification is shown in figure 1. While Mintzberg's work was subjected to a degree of academic criticism (Carroll and Gillen, 1987; Martinko and Gardner, 1985; Snyder and Glueck, 1980; Willmott, 1987), his typology remains influential and will be applied here to Oliver's performance on the 'Fifteen' project.
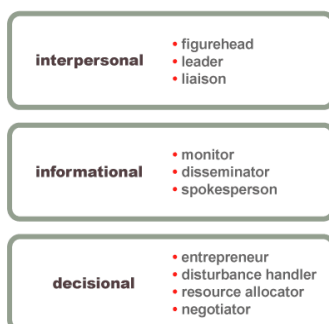

Figure 1: Mintzberg.s Ten Managerial Roles. (Proven Models, 2013)

2.1 Interpersonal

What unites the three Interpersonal roles of Figurehead, Leader and Liaison is the function of interacting with people both inside and outside the company (Mullins, 2010). As the Figurehead, the manager is the 'voice' and public face of the organisation, performing 'symbolic' duties such as representing the company at public events and welcoming new staff (Shapira and Dunbar, 1980). The Leadership role requires managers to instil a sense of direction and purpose, to formulate company strategies and to motivate and direct others. The Liaison role is necessary to form and maintain networks both within and outside the organisation in order to manage information flow and facilitate coordination of resources.

Oliver's role as the Figurehead in this project is clear. He is a high profile public figure with a clear and distinct public identity which has already brought considerable success prior to his involvement with this project. He is in an ideal position to promote its vision and benefits widely and to actively respond to criticisms and detractors. Since Oliver is coordinating the entire project, his role as a leader is effectively a given. We will discuss leadership per se in more detail below but for now it is worth noting that Oliver's enthusiastic and dynamic personality, his clear vision and his organisational skills show that he is well equipped to fulfil the role of leader in this project. Regarding the Liaison function, the entire project is founded on Oliver's well established position within both the catering community and the media. His contacts with suppliers, colleges and professional colleagues in other restaurants allow him to structure the training programme at a deep level. He is able to establish a basic skills training regime which is based on solid education and training by enrolling the students in college. He is then able to contextualise the training programme within the highest levels of the industry itself through his contacts with

suppliers and his placement of the students with other chefs located in high profile restaurants.

2.2   Informational

The informational category includes the roles of Monitor, Disseminator and Spokesperson and is concerned with the collection, processing and transmission of information. As Monitor a manager must track issues such as market trends and competitor behaviour in addition to monitoring progress within the company itself. The Disseminator role involves ensuring that the relevant information is selected and transmitted wherever it is needed within and outside the organisation. The Spokesperson role is similar to that of Disseminator but in a more public capacity.

On a number of occasions Oliver is forced to intervene when students encounter problems during the college training programme. This indicates that he is fulfilling the role of monitor by checking on progress even in those areas of the project in which he is not directly involved. In addition, while he employs a project manager to oversee the development of the restaurant itself, he is shown on a number of occasions to be monitoring and expressing concern at widespread problems which arise. Hi debriefing of the trainees in Episode 6 following the charity dinner shows that he recognises the importance of keeping the team informed not only about developments but about their performance. Throughout the series he is clearly the public face of the project and is therefore clearly fulfilling the Spokesperson role.

2.3   Decisional

Perhaps Oliver's most crucial role is in those areas of the project which involve acting on relevant information. Within the decisional category Mintzberg identifies four roles. As Entrepreneur, the manager has overall responsibility for dealing with

change. This involves not only generating new initiatives in response to developments but also dealing with problems. A more specialised role in this respect is Disturbance Handler in which the manager is required to overcome obstacles and to mediate in disputes which threaten to derail the project. Other roles within this category include the allocation of resources and negotiating with interested parties both inside and outside the project.

Oliver demonstrates a degree of facility in all of these roles. While his entrepreneurial skills have been the primary impulse for the entire project, he also demonstrates that he is adept at dealing with problems as they arise. In addition to taking control of the situation when the building project runs into difficulties, he also responds quickly and effectively to the two trainees who fail to turn up at the college and the kitchens.

3   Behavioural Perspectives on Management

Management is often guided by conceptualisations of behavioural aspects of available human resources (Mullins, 2010:459). McGregor (1957, 1960) proposed that there exist two styles of management labelled Theory X and Theory Y. He challenged the prevailing view of the average worker which held that they inherently dislike work, respond only to control and coercion to work effectively, prefer to be directed than to pursue and exercise responsibility and lack ambition (Theory X). Workers tend, therefore, to be motivated only at Maslow's lower physiological and security levels (Maslow, 1943). In contrast, Theory Y asserts that people are as intrinsically motivated to work as they are to play, that they will exercise self-direction towards objectives to which they are committed, that they will seek and accept responsibility and that they will tend towards creativity in their approach to organisational objectives. Workers are therefore motivated at the affiliation, esteem and self-actualisation levels (Mullins, 2010: 458/9). McGregor asserted that

organisations run on the basis of Theory Y assumptions would be managed more effectively. The practical consequences of adopting a Type Y approach would involve more decentralisation of decision making, greater delegation and a management style which encouraged participation rather than blind obedience.

The field of catering at a fine dining level is founded on essentially authoritarian principles. By its very nature, therefore, it tends more towards theory X assumptions than theory Y. A professional kitchen is a dangerous and high pressure environment in which there is little or no room for error. It may then be important that processes and procedures are rigidly predefined and just as rigidly adhered to which leaves little room for individual initiative and collaborative management. It has also been noted that even organisations normally run on the basis of Theory Y assumptions often tend to revert to Theory X practices in times of economic hardship. At the time of the project, the UK was experiencing a time of recession. It may well be, therefore, that the Type X structure was the most appropriate at the time and this may in part account for the eventual success of the project.

A related view of approaches to management was Ochi's Theory Z (Mullins, 2010). Theory Z structures emphasise collectivity and the encouragement of commitment to the organisation. Collectivity is fostered through consensual decision making and the exercise of group rather than individual responsibility. Commitment is achieved by creating a culture in which the employment is conceptualised as long term and the company expresses loyalty. In addition to these measures Type Z organisations are characterised by an emphasis on slow evaluation and promotion systems and a more humanist approach to management which stresses an informal control culture (but backed up by formal evaluation measures) and a concern for the employee's overall well-being, including home and family life.

4   Approaches to Leadership

Adair (1999) argues that being a good manager and being a good leader are not necessarily the same thing. There are, for example, aspects of the management role which are not necessarily essential for leadership, including administration skills and the management of resources. In addition, elements of good leadership such as fostering inspiration and commitment are not necessarily found in all good managers. There is a need, therefore, to consider Oliver's role as a leader separately from his role as a manager.

Figure 2:Adair;s Action Centred Leadership Model (Adair, 1973)

In his seminal contribution to the concept of leadership in organisations, Adair (2222) developed his Action Centred Leadership model which was structured around three intersecting management responsibilities: Achieving the task, Managing the team and managing individuals (See Figure 2). Within this model the responsibilities of the leader/manager are (Mullins, 2010:378/9):

Task: achieving group objectives, defining the task, managing resources, planning the workload, establishing and organising duties and responsibilities, controlling performance and monitoring progress.

Team: maintaining morale and group cohesiveness, setting standards and maintaining discipline, maintaining systems and communication within the group, training the group and appointing sub-leaders.

Individual: meeting the needs of individual group members, attending to personal problems, giving praise and status, reconciling conflicts between group and individual needs and training the individual.

Examination of Oliver's role as a leader in this project suggests that his leadership skills within the terms of this model are of a high order.

In terms of task leadership, Oliver himself was responsible for determining the nature of the task itself and the conditions required to achieve its objectives. He played a key role in accessing and managing the necessary resources and in planning the day to day duties of all concerned. His facility in monitoring and controlling performance and progress was demonstrated by his response to the two trainees who failed to participate fully.

His team leadership skills were tested at various points in the programme when the pressure began to tell. The team itself was inherently challenging given that many of the individual members were unskilled, often lacking in motivation and at times disruptive. Given these constraints, Oliver still managed to motivate and maintain the team to the extent that the majority of the trainees went on to finish the programme and to establish successful careers in catering. He showed a concern for establishing good communication within the team, which is clearly identified as a

crucial skill in a professional kitchen. He also stressed the importance of discipline, particularly in the way he responded to the two recalcitrant trainees.

His responses to individuals within the team were also consistent with god leadership. When trainees failed to attend college sessions he provided the necessary travel costs. He also ensured that they were given praise for achievements, particularly following the charity event at which the group performed well. His training style is also very closely tailored to the needs of individual trainees. His response to errors is robust but supportive and targeted. In this respect he appears to encourage the low level of autonomy which is appropriate in the field and allows the trainees the opportunity to correct their own shortcomings.

5   Conclusion

The three models of management discussed above offer theoretical perspectives on the conditions for effective management which cover a great deal of ground and intersect at many points. Vied in relation to the debate as a whole, an overall assessment of Oliver's abilities as a manager and a leader would suggest that he displays many of the skills and qualities which single him out as a particularly effective manager. He has demonstrated a tendency towards Theory Y attitudes to motivation which are, however, tempered to a large extent by the constraints of the field in which he operates. His ability to inspire and motivate is effectively balanced by his organisational skills and his ability to make the best use of the extensive resources at his disposal to achieve results.

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