Management Styles Within the Graphic Communication Industry

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Abstract

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This study was intended to examine the management styles within the graphic communication industry while comparing the management styles used in the print and digital media components of the industry. Both print and digital media companies used similar management approaches with their employees. However, the study discovered how each type of business implemented the management approaches differently.
styles differently. The largest contrast between print and digital media management was the way the manager promoted employees, delegated tasks, and motivated employees and laid employees off.

Chapter 1

Purpose of the Study

Statement of the problem

The graphic communication industry is a large industry consisting of many different professions. Because of the array of professions that graphic communication encompasses, not one management style can prevail. For example, the nature of work in a print based company is much different than that of a web and digital media company. In which case, the management in each of these companies will be implemented differently. The purpose of the research is to explore management styles in the graphic communication industry and compare the management styles of the print and digital media components of the industry.
Significance of the Research

This research will be relevant to managers of the print and web industries. It is important to the target audience because many managers may not know exactly what type of management style they use and how it affects their employees. Benefits that will be derived from this study will be the acknowledgement of management styles used in the graphic communication industry, which styles are specifically used in the printing industry compared to the web and digital media industry, and how managers implement them in each industry. Additionally, the audience will gain the knowledge of how other managers oversee employees with different skill sets, and the variations in management styles they use when in that situation.

Interest in the Research

I am interested in this research because I would eventually like to become a manager. Upon graduating I am prospecting for entry-level management positions and am interested how I might manage a team if ever put in that position. Additionally, this research applies to my everyday work life where I will always have a manager above me. Knowing what types of management styles my manager implements could be valuable knowledge to help better myself in the work place and ultimately work more efficiently with my manager.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The way people are managed in the workplace has a direct impact on the enjoyment of one’s job, and can also contribute to how an employee performs. An effective manager leads by example and guides employees onto a path of efficient work. A manager is vital to company success because they are dedicated to achieving company goals, reducing waste, simplifying the organizational structure, and increasing stability within the company to increase efficiency and profit (Importance Of Management, 2014). Management is specifically important for the Graphic Communication industry because one must be knowledgeable about running companies involved in both new and traditional print, web, and
media. Managers must know how to accept economic limitations while still achieving desired results, as well as how to manage and train personnel to efficiently produce high-quality work. These managers understand planning, quality control, and production control. They are versed in price estimating and financial controls, marketing and sales strategies, and customer relations to ensure the overall success of the business (assist.org, 2014).

Although many managers go through training programs and are among the highest educated and knowledgeable people in the business, upper management roles are growing a bad reputation among subordinates. Pfeffer (2012) references to his colleague Bob Sutton’s research, that showed how truly terrible the work environment is for many people. Suttons book found that employee disengagement is high and that job satisfaction is at an all-time low. Research shows the importance of supervisor – subordinate relationships, and that they are the principal drivers of employee engagement or, on the other hand, turnover (Pfeffer, 2010). The way that managers establish relationships and interact with their subordinates has to do with their management style and how and when they implement those characteristics. These management styles differ between the print and digital media industries. Both print and web industries have to produce products of a certain quality standard. However, the management styles of these two industries differ in the way that the print industry focuses on total quality management and the web and digital media industry focuses on chaotic and consultative management styles.
Management Styles

There are many different management styles that supervisors use to interact with their employees and run their business. However, the type of work environment and competency of the workers determines which type of management style is appropriate. Below are a few management styles that relate to the Graphic Communication industry.

1. Directive / Coercive: Managers that use this style are known as “micro managers” and want immediate compliance from employees motivating them with threats and discipline. This type of management does not work well in any type of work atmosphere. However, it is seen mostly in technology-based companies where employees are highly skilled and frustrated with being micromanaged (Cardinal, 2013).

2. Participative / Consultative: The manager shares information with their employees and involves them in decision-making. They encourage employees to run their own departments and make decisions regarding policies and processes (Cardinal, 2013). This management style is best implemented in the “open work place.” Places like Google use this management style to stimulate collaboration between employees.

3. Autocratic: These managers make decisions unilaterally without much input from employees. This style is found in traditional workplaces that have a tall organizational structure where higher positions of employment do not consult the lower staff.
4. Chaotic: This type of manager gives employees total control over the decision making process. This style of management works best in open communication, technology, and web based companies.

5. Laissez-faire: This type of management is commonly used in sales. The manager is a mentor and stimulator, while employees manage their own areas of business.

Unlike a traditional print company, present day print companies have recognized the need for a new management system to stay competitive within the industry and to meet the needs of their customers. Total Quality Management (TQM) provides a framework for implementing effective quality and productivity initiatives that can increase the profitability and competitiveness of organizations. It is a comprehensive management approach that works horizontally across an organization, involving all departments and employees and extending back and forth to include both suppliers and customers. TQM requires participative management, which allows continuous improvement, and the utilization of teams. This technique improves upper management’s understanding of operations and motivates workers because they feel like they have control and ownership of the process in which they participate (www.inc.com, 2014).

Management Styles in the Printing Industry
In order to remain competitive, printing companies are continuously having to meet demands being placed upon them by their customers to provide consistent quality and a wider range of products and services, while at the same time, reducing delivery lead times and costs. Management styles are an important factor in keeping a business thriving during a difficult time. Carnelison (2013) states that core principles of Total Quality Management are widely implemented in printing companies. This participative management approach has proven very effective on modern businesses within the print industry. It focuses on reducing defects, improving customer service, continuous improvement, improving employee involvement, and improving communication within the company.

Carnelison’s research covered three different print companies, all of whom used Total Quality Management values to run their business. Premier Press, a commercial printer based out of Portland, Oregon hired a worker to solely focus on continuous improvement within the company. The focus on continuous improvement entails the recognition of small, incremental gains toward the goal of total quality (www.inc.com,2014). They held weekly review meetings in every department to solve production or workflow issues, to see what tools were needed, and to solve any frustrations that employees had. These small improvements over a long term show the managers willingness to invest in the present for benefits that manifest themselves in the future of the business. This act encourages workers to develop an appreciation and confidence in the company as well.
Smyth Companies, LLC a labeling company with various locations throughout the US, also incorporated features from various quality management systems. Their main focus was: reduce defects, improve customer service, continuous improvement, improve employees involvement, and to improve communication within the company. Smyth used the autocratic management style to initially create company goals through their upper management and then allowed each plant to determine how they would reach those goals. Once the goals were filtered to each plant, they were dispersed using the participative management style in which each business team is given the freedom to decide how to reach the goals. The horizontal communication that the participative style brings improves communication across all plants to ensure their ability to work toward the same goals.

In addition, The Flesh Company in St. Louis Missouri, which manufactures value added print products, has the same focuses on total quality management as Premier and Smyth. However, they have created their own quality policy which reads: “quality is not a separate function of our production unit, emphasis is on consistent methods as well as quality results, emphasis is focused on continual improvement of systems and procedures, emphasis on empowerment of the associates, and emphasis of providing feedback to the associates.” (The Flesh Company, 2014). In order to fulfill their quality policy, the Flesh Company used the participative management approach and implemented task teams. They believe that this approach has brought about many benefits within their
employees such as employee empowerment and involvement and has even encouraged them to become problem solvers in the business.

Management Styles in the Web and Digital Media Industry

Management in the web and digital workplace is more interactive and lenient than the management implemented in the printing industry. Tech workers have more freedom to explore ideas and collaborate with each other than in most other industries.

Björn Stansvik, CEO of MentorMate, a custom software development and IT consulting firm, reported that he has found that the consultative management style works best for managing his workers (Stych, 2013). This type of management style includes sharing information with employees and involving them in decision making. It encourages employees to run their own departments and make decisions regarding policies and processes (Rosalind, 2013). Stansvik reports that this works for him because it allows for the benefit of team wisdom without losing the ability to make executive decisions. He does not find any weaknesses in this style of management as long as it is blended with other styles, allowing managers to pick the right style for each occasion. For example, Stansvik estimates that he uses consultative management style 60 percent of the time, while using the autocratic, chaotic, laissez-faire for other situations as he sees fits.

Mike Derheim is the CEO of the Nerdery where tech strategy, user experience, design, development, and quality assurance takes place. Mike
implements the chaotic management style to run this developer-driven interactive production shop. The chaotic management style gives employees total control over the decision making process. Derheim says that distributed leadership has been key for the company so far but will also be important in sustaining and furthering the company’s success. To further explain his point, the company’s first core value is “Win by empowering people.” However, Derheim expressed this style’s weakness is shown when multiple leaders have myriad ideas. When this happens, initiatives can become difficult to prioritize from an overall company standpoint. Despite this, they embrace the chaotic implementation and let the best ideas win, no matter whose they are (Stych 2013).

Difference in management between new innovative technology based companies and traditional print companies

The difference in the management styles used in the traditional workplace, compared to the management being introduced into new companies is striking. Google, for example, believes that the hierarchy that still exists in most businesses does not bring out the best work in the young generation. The closed, centralized technology systems and communication channels inside the big corporations are deadly to the open source generation (Worstall, 2013). Because of this, Google has introduced the open workplace and has begun to bring Gen Y-ers (people born in the late 1980’s – 1990’s) into top management teams. Including the young generation in top management provides knowledge and energy to speed up the
renewal of American business and leadership. Significant benefits of this include: a deeper understanding of the values and aspirations of the younger demographic, quicker and more smooth shifting of business practices to social media platforms, faster evolution of internal corporate compensation; and ultimately, the work organization to fit and accommodate the “Gen Y life” (Nussbaum, 2011). Google’s unique management works because they choose leaders who are predictable and consistent. These characteristics in a manager provide their team with freedom of action because they know the set rules and don’t overstep the boundaries (Worstall, 2013).

Yellow Media, on the other hand, is a traditional print company that prints directories. Their workplace atmosphere is nothing like that of Google’s. Julien Billot, the CEO of Yellow Media, said that rather than feeling empowered like Google’s workers, his workers are worried about their jobs. When they express their concern to him he tells them, “You’re doing a great job. Of course the print business is declining, but that’s not because of you. That’s just the industry” (Castaldo, 2014). Billot implements the persuasive management style, which does not give employees the direction they need in the rapidly changing industry. Billot relates his management to a “helicopter”, he says that he flies high but also comes down to see what is going on every once in a while. Because of this vertical organizational structure, employees are afraid of the organization and do not receive the tools or guidance they need to succeed at work (Castaldo, 2014).

The difference in management between Google and Yellow media is how they interact with their employees. The needs of each company determine the
success of each management style. Google is a tech company that encourages innovation and creativity. Because of that work environment, their participative management style has been successful. Yellow Media however, is a traditional print company that requires an autocratic management style. They print directories, which requires more structural supervision because they need consistency and must meet specific deadlines. In all, the differentiation in management style for these two companies is due to their difference in work.

Management challenges related to managing people with different skill sets

The essence of effective management is motivating your team to consistently perform while instilling a desire to improve. Managing people with different skill sets requires the right approach, attitude, and priorities. Some may require firm directives, while others will respond better to a soft tone and complaisant attitude. However, regardless of how each is managed, directions and expectations from management must remain consistent, honest, and straightforward (Bakke, 2014).

There is no cookie cutter approach to every employee. In order to administer the correct management approach with each employee, managers should get to know each employees personality. In most cases, the manager will have to change their communication approach and adapt to each individual’s personality to maintain an effective supervisor-subordinate relationship. For
example, there will be little acceptance of a task if it is dictated directly and data oriented with a touchy-feely type of person. In which case, the communication should not be touchy-feely oriented with a no-nonsense type of person. This is also very important to keep in mind when delegating projects to individuals or teams. If a team is too analytical, there will be little creativity. If an individual or team is too sensitive, fewer decisions will be made confidently (www.masterclassmanagement.com, 2014). In all, the most effective way a manager can manage their different employees is to get a feel for their personality, and pay attention to their specified field of practice in order to designate the correct tasks and get desired results from employees.

Conclusion

In conclusion, management is a very important role in every industry and business. It dictates employee’s job satisfaction and performance, and ultimately the success of a business. The management style used in each workplace is dictated by the needs of that company. Print companies tend to have a specific outline of goals and deadlines, which calls for a more supervisorial management style. Tech companies on the other hand are more collaborative, which allows for a more open management style. Management styles in each company vary because the nature of work in each company is different.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore management styles within the Graphic Communication field and compare the management styles implemented within the print and digital media components of the industry. Because the nature of work throughout the industry is different, no single management style can dominate all parts. Therefore, this research focused on what management styles are used in printing companies compared to the management implemented in web and digital media based companies. The objective of this study is for each
component of the industry, determine how managers motivate, delegate tasks, and guide successful employees. Additional information this study will provide is:

- Understand how managers keep their employees accountable for on-time completion of tasks
- Determine how managers obtain feedback on the quality of completed tasks
- Understand the management styles used to motivate different types of employees

Data Collection Plan

Experienced managers of print and web-based companies were interviewed about how they implement management within their companies. The sample candidates were managers of both print and web, and digital media businesses. As a courtesy, the professionals were contacted and sent the interview questions ahead of time so that they would be well prepared for the interview. The interviews were conducted over the phone; the respondents were asked questions as well as given time to provide comments and ask questions at the end of the interview.

Questions that the respondents were asked were: what type of business they worked for, what their role in the business was, specifically what their title was and how they see themselves benefiting the business. What their highest level of education was. What management style they thought they implemented
and if they also see themselves using a different management style any other time. How their employees respond to their authority, and how they keep their employees accountable for quality and on time completion of tasks.

Additional questions that were asked based on the objectives were: How do you motivate your employees, do you use a reward strategy. If your workers work in teams, do you do some sort of group evaluation so you can keep everyone accountable for their own progress and contribution to the company. And lastly, how do you manage your employees with different skill sets, how do you get to know each employees and adapt to their personality.

Analysis

Responses to the interview questions and comments from the managers were noted. Using the content and feedback from the experienced managers determined what types of management styles were used in each industry and how each component implemented their management differently. Additionally, the case study brought to our attention the importance of knowing how to manage people with different skill sets and how both industries overlap with their management styles.
Chapter 4

Results

To examine the differences in management styles between print companies and web and digital based companies, three print companies and three web-based companies were interviewed to help distinguish the difference in management techniques between the two types of businesses.
The web and digital media companies that were interviewed were: Small Pond Studios, a design studio that focuses on graphic design and web development; Fertile Minds, a web design and development agency, and Jayne Wayne Design a web development.

Small Pond Studios was a small graphic design and web development firm based out of Truckee, California. Recently, the company made the decision to cut out the office and have the employees work remotely from home. Meg, the owner of Small Pond Studios, was interviewed on how she managed her employees remotely and kept tabs on their work and progress.

Meg graduated Stanford with a bachelors in American Studies and had managed for fifteen years at four different companies, including her own for ten. She explained that with her type of company the employees worked individually, so having an office was not necessary and that they still produce high quality work not collaborating in person every step of the way. Her company consisted of one manager and four employees so it was easy for her to keep in contact and informed of what her employees were working on.

Because her employees work remotely, Meg gave them freedom to run their own projects, inevitably leading to a chaotic style of management. However, because she had different types of people working for her with varying ranges of experience, skill, and age, she used a different type of management approach for each employee. Having a lot of experience working with the manager right below her, Meg was confident in the manager’s work so she used a laissez-faire and participative interaction with that manager. Differently, Meg used the autocratic
and directive approach with the designers, telling them what to do in order to ensure clear directions.

The employees at Small Pond worked individually as a “team” and passed a project along to each employee depending on what skill set was needed. Each employee knew their strength within the group and was expected to pull their own weight. Meg’s team was made up of individuals that had worked with her before she created her company, so the pressure to do well and contribute equally was held to a very high standard. She had a high level of expectations and if an employee could not meet those expectations, they did not last long. The expectation throughout the company was that each employee is to produce quality work on time. All of the projects that Small Pond worked on were very hands on which enabled Meg to be very involved so employees were aware of the deadlines and expected outcomes. When Meg faced conflict with an employee not completing a task on time or not generating the expected quality, she spoke with them about why they were not able to meet the expectations. However, although the employees were close with Meg, if they continued to miss deadlines or did not produce quality work, they were asked to leave.

Because Small Pond was a small company, Meg got to know her employees well. They were an interactive company and got together socially outside of work to help build a positive connection between the employees and Meg herself. Getting to know each of her employees on a more personal level helped her adapt to each personally and manage them better in the work place.
Motivation was not something Meg found herself needing to feed to her employees. When her employees were excited about a project or a client, they produced good work. Meg recognized her employee’s skills and clients they worked best with to help give them projects they enjoyed. She established a flexible workplace in which she allowed her employees to take vacation or personal time whenever needed as long as work got completed on time. She felt that the freedom to pick your own work schedule was motivation to enjoy the work you’re doing.

Meg offered pay increases for employees that stayed with the company for an allotted amount of time and would take employees to a day spa, or out to lunch as a thank you for working a lot of hours or completing a big project. In all, Meg consciously created a family culture and used the participative/consultative approach with her managers and the directive and autocratic approach with her designers in order to ensure clear instruction (M. Rab, personal communication, January 7, 2015).

Similar to Small Pond Studios, Fertile Minds was a creative digital agency based out of San Luis Obispo, California that specialized in design, web development, and ecommerce. Sara, the manager of the web development team and director of design and development, was interviewed on how she managed her direct team and the other employees below her. She had a bachelor’s degree from Cal Poly and managed for two years at Fertile Minds.

Sara implemented the participative and consultative management style to effectively guide her employees. She encouraged each person to take a role in
being a project manager so that they could get the experience handling clients directly and learning how to make more thoughtful and informed decisions on projects. Sara saw herself as a mentor; there to help them learn and to teach them along the way in order to help them improve, but didn't give them the full freedom to make the big decisions.

Sara did not have a total quality management system per se, however she did have structured process upon hiring employees to ensure that they were capable of producing high quality work. Upon hiring an employee, the company reviewed portfolios to determine how well each candidate could develop and design and determined each employee’s style of work. It was vital in the process of quality management because before bringing someone onto the team, Sara made sure that they could produce quality work that Fertile Minds clients would be happy with.

Sara’s strategy to efficiently manage was to manage everyone with the same participative approach until she found that someone was struggling. Once she recognized an employees struggle, she would use the directive management style and micromanage them and show how to do it and how to get better. On the contrary, when she noticed an employee excelling, she would give them a more difficult project and guide them through the laissez-faire approach to lead them and show them how to further develop.

Fertile Minds has their staff work in teams because every project required multiple skill sets. Sara kept each employee accountable by having each team hold meetings where they would decide who was the leader, and what specific task
each person was responsible for completing. Sara was big on having her employees make their own decisions, however if the team could not reach a good decision on their own, they would come to Sara and she would use the directive approach to show them what should be done.

Because Sara encouraged her employees to make decisions on their own, a lot of her employees did not positively respond to her authority. She noticed the ones who did not respond well to her authority well were also the employees who did not take criticism well, and the ones who positively responded to her authority were collaborative and were able to further develop their ideas. With employees that did not respond to her authority well, Sara would use a mix of laissez-faire as well as participative management to help give constructive feedback and help mentor them to a better solution.

To ensure that everything is on track and completed on time, Sara gave her employees deadlines based on how long it would take her to do the same task. If there were problems completing a project on time, Sara would evaluate the hold up and see what could be done to fix it. She always made a point to take the employee aside and tell them they were not performing and that they needed to do better or they would lose their job.

Keeping the company atmosphere positive is what Sara mostly used to motivate her employees. They would share funny videos, memes, and send design articles to each other for inspiration. Sara liked to keep a lighthearted workplace so that her workers did not get burnt out, they went to dinner and out to drinks with each other, and kept a kitchen stocked full of food and even beer. When her
employees were comfortable, they did the best work. However, Fertile Minds did use reward motivation as well. Each employee was reviewed after six months and received a pay increase if they were viewed as outstanding or were recognized for fulfilling an important role.

Getting to know each employee was important for Sara’s successful management because it was how she delegated tasks to each employee, learned how to interact with them and teach them and overall get through to them and guide them to success. She enjoyed the process of teaching someone something in the way that they learn best. She taught them one way and if they did not respond well to that, she would show them how to do it a different way. She learned about their likes and personality outside of work so that she could relate things about their life back to the type of work she was trying to teach them. Overall, Sara gave everyone the benefit of the doubt and implemented the participative/coercive and laissez-faire management styles. However, she also watched her employees closely and stepped in with directive management when necessary to get the job done (S.Stanger, personal communication, January 6, 2015).

Jayne Wayne Design is a small web development firm based out of San Luis Obispo, CA. Jayne, the owner, was interviewed on how she managed such a complex company of independent contractors. Jayne completed her masters in agriculture, had a teaching credential and numerous web development courses as her education background and has managed for six years. Her company consisted of five people plus her coding team that was based out of India.
Upon hiring employees Jayne specifically told her candidates that if they were not self motivated or could not complete a task they commit to, to not join her company. All of Jane’s employees work individually, so she depended on them to be self directed and used the chaotic management style with a mix of a few others to effectively manage each employee. She recognized whether an employee was task oriented or results oriented and based her management approach on those characteristics. Jayne tried to manage based on the idea of autonomy; however, with her new employees she found that initially they needed more direction. With her interns and hourly paid employees, she used the Laissez-faire approach while implementing task management. She gave them a task depending on their skill strength and if they had questions or were struggling, it was their job to reach out to her and get guidance. With her independent contractors and coding team, she used the chaotic management style emphasizing on the value of autonomy. Many of her employees think like an entrepreneur and are motivated by the outcome, which she found helped them manage their own projects.

Jayne’s employees work individually. When delegating a task, Jayne looked to the coding team in India to see who could take the job. If all of those workers were busy doing other projects, she gave the job to one of her local employees that had the right skill set. To ensure on time and quality completion of tasks, Jayne always gave her employees a clear deadline and told them upfront what the expected outcome was. She tried to only hire entrepreneurs and survivalists who knew that if they were not completing quality work on time, they would not have a job.
Jayne set high expectations for her employees and created an image of authority to maintain productivity in the workplace. The authoritative image was intimidating and made her unapproachable to the employees who did not meet her standards of work. Working for Jayne Wayne Design was a privilege and producing high quality work was essential otherwise the employee would be let go. She found that this was efficient because it motivated employees to do a good job. Motivation strategies Jayne used was giving her employees responsibility that other people would not give them anywhere else so that they felt challenged. She trusted and believed in them to motivate them. She also made sure to tell them how much she liked their work. She discovered that nurturing and complimenting was what motivated them to do better work. Jayne also provided financial rewards when she saw fit. If her interns made her money, she would compensate them and provide them with a full time job if she continued to be satisfied with their work. Additionally, if a certain worker continued to impress her, she would reward them by giving them more important and challenging projects.

Jayne got to know her employees individual strengths by requiring them to come work in the office at least two hours a week so she could touch base with them and ensure the project was coming along as planned. She gave her creative workers more distance so they could think and gave her coders more exact directions and worked closely with them. In all, Jayne predominately implemented the chaotic management style with an emphasis on task
management and autonomy in the workplace (J. Wayne, personal
communication, January 20, 2015).

To establish a comparison between the web and digital media and print
industries, three printing companies were interviewed; Proforma M&A, a print
and promotional company, RR Donnelley a print, digital and supply chain
solutions company and DS Graphics a digital media and print company.

Proforma was a print and promotional company based out of San Luis
Obispo, California. Linda, the owner and manager of the company was
interviewed. She managed seven people in the office and had sales
representatives in different areas and cities. She received a bachelor’s degree at
California State University of Los Angeles and has been a manager for seven years
at Proforma.

Linda used the participative and consultative management style allowing
her employees to make decisions about jobs and run their own projects from start
to finish. She had her employees work in an open and collaborative workspace,
which allowed them to communicate with each other and ask her questions
whenever they needed.

Proforma used their own type of total quality management system to
ensure that the company customer service was seamless. Proforma’s total quality
management went over in detail the quality standards of the printed material, and
customer service end of the business. Because the company was small, their total
quality management system was essential to keeping customers happy and
coming back to use their services.
Linda got to know each of her employees by interacting with them at work everyday. Being the only manager at Proforma, she was too busy to “chit chat” and instead watched what they did. From her office, she could see and hear everything that happened. It was a small company so she knew what each employee was good at by observing their work and asking what they thought their strengths and weaknesses were. Everyday she would ask them where they were at with their project and if they had all of the tools they needed.

Linda used two different participative approaches with her employees. Some of them were more hands on and needed a lot of verbal recognition and praise, while others preferred to be felt alone to get their work done. She recognized who needed what to get the most out of them because if they were not getting what they needed, Linda did not get what she needed out of them.

At Proforma employees did not work in teams, however they were all cross-trained and could do every job. This was an essential part of their total quality management to ensure seamless productivity across every department. Because all of the employees worked individually, Linda made clear that the company was all one team and that anyone could walk into her office at any time to ask questions. That made her approachable to all of her employees with the exception of the few that were not completing tasks on time or of the expected quality because they knew she disapproved of them.

For the most part, Linda did not have problems with quality of work or on time completion because all of the employees knew the expectations. However, if a new employee was not meeting the expectations, Linda would continue to tell
them what she expected and if they could not meet the expectations, they would lose their job. However, she has been good at avoiding this problem because she is clear with what she expects when she hires them.

To keep her employees motivated, Linda offered bonuses for outstanding work and for working long hours. She would buy them lunch to keep them concentrated and recognize good work within the company by sending out a memo. Her biggest motivation effort was to make everyone feel like a part of the team.

Tasks were assigned to employees based on availability. All of her employees did customer service; however if someone had an obvious strength they would take projects that required that skill set. But for the most part, all of her employees were cross-trained so everyone was equipped to do any job assigned to them.

Linda used the participative management approach at Proforma. She checked in with everyone in the morning and encouraged her employees to come ask her for help, but let them run their own projects. She cared about her employees and made a conscious effort to thank them and make them feel appreciated (L. Martinelli, personal communication, January 12).

Gerry, the regional human resource manager at RR Donnelley in Los Angeles, California was interviewed. RR Donnelley was a much larger company than Proforma and printed large jobs such as US Weekly Magazine, and had plants spread throughout the nation. Gerry was the regional manager for eight to ten facilities with about 300 people under him, and acted as the liaison between
the plant and corporate office. He earned a masters in Human Resources from Chapman University and was a manager for twelve years.

Because RR Donnelley was such a large company, Gerry used situational leadership to adapt to each team he was working with. He was always changing his management approach depending on how big or small his team of workers was. The work at RR Donnelley was labor intensive so employees worked in groups to get jobs done efficiently. Based on his span of control, Gerry mostly used the participative and autocratic management styles. However, when Gerry had small enough teams with a defined mission, he used the chaotic management approach.

Every RR Donnelly plant used their own total quality management system. In the Los Angeles plant, they had specific processes and made sure each employee was using them. Their customers had high expectations, so the same process had to be followed each time for every project to produce top quality results. Gerry found their quality management system to be even more important now because customers were doing their own audits in addition to the RR Donnelley quality practices.

Each project determined which employees made up each team, along with consideration of experience and how well each person worked with the machines. Unlike the web and digital media companies, creativity, or unique strengths or weaknesses were not considered. Gerry tried to balance each group by matching the person to the equipment. He put the best operators on the long run jobs that used complex machines; and as much about who ran the jobs on the smaller
machines because everyone was trained well. Each employee is depended on to be self-accountable and contribute equally to the team. They do not have many bad employees anymore; however Gerry hoped that the team members would exert pressure onto the employee not pulling their weight, and report back to Gerry with that information.

To keep employees accountable for quality and completion of on time tasks, Gerry tells his employees the client’s expectations and what the finished product should look like. If an employee were struggling to meet the standards, Gerry would implement the progressive discipline policy: making low level quality errors, Gerry talked to the employee and told them how to fix it. If they did not fix it, Gerry wrote them up, and if the employee continued to not improve, they lost their job.

To keep employees motivated to produce quality work, Gerry communicated with his employees. He offered feedback and was willing to help. He was very open with his employees and thought that employees had to believe that they could trust in him to do their best work and know that if they messed up they would not lose their job. This encouraged the productive employees to respond well to Gerry and the unaccountable employees tended to avoid him. He estimated that about 90% of his employees approach him with questions and comments.

Unlike the web and digital media companies, RR Donnelly did not motivate workers with bonuses or cash rewards; they did promotions in a more traditional fashion. If an employee was doing an exceptional job, Gerry would look at
appropriate compensation for the current market and generate a promotion over time. Before the promotion, the employee would get increased responsibility and the compensation would come with time. For the most part, Gerry motivated employees with recognition and showed them he appreciated them by thanking them for their work and pointing out specific things each employee did well.

Getting to know each employee was harder for Gerry because he managed so many employees. With smaller teams, he had more interaction with the employees and got to know them better. On the other hand, if the team was big, Gerry got to know the leaders to determine how to efficiently manage the team. His span of control was huge so he could not tell everyone what to do, so he would grab the leaders and set up a process where they could clearly target the goal and Gerry could get progress targets throughout the project.

Situational leadership is how Gerry managed most efficiently and would change his management style depending on the size of each team. Gerry predominately used a mix of autocratic management to tell the groups what to do and chaotic management once the team had a mission. He found collaboration to be counterproductive and that it was much more efficient for him to tell his teams what to do and let them run the project (G. Marecek, personal communication, January 17, 2015).

Paul from DS Graphics in Lowell, Massachusetts was interviewed on how he managed his employees at a company that did print and promotional services. Paul was the manager and Vice President of Fulfillment with twenty years of experience under his belt managing at two different companies. Paul, similar to
Gerry, was a supervisor at RR Donnelly where he was taught the benefits of situational leadership and embraced a very structured management approach at DS Graphics.

The employees at DS Graphics worked individually so Paul used the participative/consultative, and laissez faire management styles and implemented directive management when necessary. Paul based his management off of trust in his employees. He trusted his employees to do the right thing most of the time and knew that they would make mistakes. However, when he lost trust in their ability to do the job, he became more of a micro manager.

DS Graphics practiced total quality management and was a registered ISO 9000 or 9001 company since 1998. They spent a lot of time over the years involving their employees in the program and offered them financial rewards when they met the goals of customer satisfaction, rework, and profitability in a given year. As a manager, Paul was encouraged to encourage others to use their total quality management program as a part of their daily ritual in terms of corrective actions, implementing training and working more closely with their partners.

Paul scheduled all of the work in his area of responsibility so he met with all of his departments daily to discuss job schedules, customer projects, department goals and anything else that was going on. This helped Paul keep employees accountable for on time completion of tasks and kept his customers happy. If employees were not meeting company standards, Paul took action by meeting with the employee and letting them know of the performance problem
and that it was hurting the company so they needed to correct it. This was the
type of situation Paul used a directive approach to implement a plan that would
result in improved performance. However, he tried to avoid this problem by
having an open door policy so employees could come to them if they were having
any problems.

Paul motivated his employees by taking interest in what they were working
on or what they were involved with. He also made a point to thank an employee
or group for doing a job well or catching another departments error before the job
when out to a customer. Recognition worked well for his employees. He also
offered other types of reward motivation such as financial, reward, and type of
work. DS Graphics offered promotions and new jobs when employees increased
their responsibilities. He offered bonuses only when an employee had made a
success that was company wide. For reward motivation, Paul offered comp time
and took employees to lunch. Each department set goals and got a reward such as
a pizza lunch or something they wanted as a prize and would be rewarded with
that if they reached their goal. His most effective motivation for employees was
the type of work he gave them. High profile assignments acted as a great
motivational tool; it gave employees the feeling that their manager believed in
them and their ability.

Paul assigned jobs primarily based on whether or not the employee was
capable of doing the task correctly. Then he determined if they had the
temperament to handle the stresses of that particular job. His priority was to
create a win-win situation for the company and employee and to set up the
employee to be successful. Sometimes he went with his gut about an employee, and sometimes he wanted to challenge an employee.

Paul got to know his employees at work; he very rarely interacted with employees in a non-work situation. However, most of his employees have worked with him for over nine years so he learned about his employees throughout the years working with them. He also spoke with his employees on a daily basis about many topics both professional and personal so he learned about his employees that way too.

In all, Paul implemented the participative/consultative and laissez-faire management styles with his employees. He trusted his employees would get the job done and collaborated with them on a daily basis, and only used the directive management style when an employee lost his trust (P. Cresto, personal communication, January 23, 2015).
Chapter 5

Conclusion

The objective of the study was to explore management styles in the graphic communication industry and compare the management styles of the print and digital media components of the industry. The purpose was to determine if there was a difference in the way that web and digital media companies and print based companies managed their employees. The interviews used to collect data yielded interesting results and made the participants think more in depth about the way they were managing their employees.

From the research, data collection and analysis, it can be seen that there are both similarities and differences in the way that print and digital companies manage their employees. From the initial research, it was found that traditional print companies had their own type of total quality management, each of which had specialized core values. Smyth Companies, LLC used the autocratic management style to establish company goals and disburse them into the company. Once the goals were established, management used the participative approach to implement them. The Flesh Company used the participative management style to empower their employees and encourage them to make their own decisions.

Those two traditional print companies manage their employees similar to the way that Gerry from RR Donnelley and Linda from Proforma managed their
employees. Similar to Smyth Companies, LLC, Gerry used the autocratic management approach to tell his teams what to do, and then used the participative and chaotic style once they had a set goal. Linda, similar to the Flesh Company, gave her employees more responsibility, which empowered them. She encouraged them to make decisions and run their own projects. Paul also used a similar management approach, he trusted his employees to get the job done and collaborated with them on a daily basis.

Research of the technology based companies also aligned with the interview results. MentorMate used a consultative management style to benefit from team wisdom and allowed them to make decisions. Sara, from Fertile Minds, managed similarly encouraging her employees to always make good decisions and work through problems. The Nerdery managed their employees by the chaotic management style, giving their employees total control over the decision-making and project process. Their first core value was “Win by empowering people” which was comparable to Jayne Wayne’s management style. Jayne managed based on autonomy and gave her employees responsibilities they would not have received anywhere else to motivate them. Meg, at Small Pond, managed similarly in the way that her employees all worked remotely so she gave them a lot of responsibility.

Based on the research gathered, there are many ways that print companies and web and digital media based companies manage their employees differently. Web and digital media based companies primarily used a mix of directive, autocratic and laissez fair management approaches. Print based companies mostly
used situational leadership, participative and autocratic. These types of approaches also had influence on how they managed all aspects of the workplace such as: promotions, delegation of tasks, motivation, and letting employees go.

According to the research gathered, web and digital companies promoted their employees faster and gave different incentives than print companies. Web and design companies gave bonuses for good work, took freelancers on as full-time employees if they showed quality work, and gave employees jobs that paid more. In essence, the companies gave employees more responsibility, but immediately compensated them for it. Print companies took longer to promote their employees. Managers gave verbal recognition but did not always immediately increase the employees pay. Managers promoted people over a long period of time rather than a quick performance review.

The way each type of company had their employee’s work and delegate tasks was also different. For web and digital media companies, delegation of task was determined by each individuals specialized skill and their capacity to be creative. Employees were generally given projects that they enjoyed and wanted to work on. Print companies however, gave tasks to employees based on availability. Employees are cross trained so that they can perform every task to get all of the work done.

Web and digital media companies motivated their employees by giving them freedom to work on projects they enjoyed and allowing them to have a flexible work schedule. Print companies motivated their employees by verbal recognition and thanking them for their hard work. Web and print companies also
laid off their employees differently. Web and digital media companies are
typically smaller than commercial print companies, they work in an environment
where if an employee cannot pull their weight, they are let go. Each manager
explained that they have too tight of deadlines to retain a poor worker. Print
companies had a slower process of letting employees go. Managers took action
and addressed the problem by implementing a plan for improvement. They would
work with the employee to improve their performance and if their work did not
improve, the employee was let go.

Although both types of companies managed their employees differently
due to the type of work, a consistent finding was that every manager set up their
employees for success. Both types of companies appreciated their employees work
and made sure to tell them, and trusted their employees to do their best job. In
all, management styles in the web and digital media, and print components of the
graphic communication industry are different. Each type of company tailors their
management style to the type of work to set their employees up for success.
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Appendix A.

Questionnaire

- What type of business do you work for? Check all that apply
  - Print
  - Web
• Digital Media

• What is your role in the business?
  o Manager
  o Owner
  o Supervisor
  o Other: __________________________

• What is your title?
  ______________________________________________________

• What is your highest level of education?
  o Masters
  o Bachelors Degree
  o Associates Degree
  o High School
  o Other: __________________________

• How many years have you been a manager? ____________

• How many companies have you managed at? __________
• What management style do you implement in the workplace? Please check all that apply:
  
  o **Directive / Coercive:** “Micro manager” want immediate compliance from employees, motivating them with threats and discipline.
  
  o **Participative / Consultative:** You share information with your employees and involved them in decision-making. You encourage employees to run their own departments and make decisions regarding policies and processes. You encourage an open work place and collaboration between employees.
  
  o **Autocratic:** You make decisions unilaterally without much input from employees. You run a more traditional workplace with a tall organizational structure (many levels of power), where high positions of employment do not consult the lower staff.
  
  o **Chaotic:** You give employees total control over the decision making process and let them run their own projects and departments.
  
  o **Laissez-faire:** You are a mentor and motivational stimulator to your employees while they manager their own areas of business.

• Do you use a Total Quality Management system? (a framework for implementing effective quality and productivity initiatives that can increase the profitability and competitiveness of organizations. It is a comprehensive management approach that works horizontally across an
organization, involving all departments and employees and extending back and forth to include both suppliers and customers.)

- No
- Yes
  - If so, please explain your core values/the way you implement this management system.

- Based on the management styles listed above, what styles do you use most often? Please rank them 1-6, 1 being most frequently used:
  1.
  2.
  3.
  4.
  5.
  6.

- Do you use different management styles depending on each situation/worker?
  - If so, how do you determine which management style to use? An example may be helpful

- Do your employees work in teams?
- Yes
- No
  - If so, how do you ensure that everyone is contributing equally? Do you do group evaluations? How do you determine who is in each group?

- How do your employees respond to your authority?
  - Do they find you approachable?

- How do you keep your employees accountable for quality and on time completion of tasks?

- How do you ensure that the work they are doing is of the upmost quality and to the best of their ability?
• What actions do you take if employees are not completing their work on time, or if it is not of expected quality?

• What types of strategies do you use to motivate your employees?

• Do you use any type of reward motivation? Check any that apply and elaborate on how you chose which reward to grant:
  o Financial
  o Reward
  o Type of work
  o Recognition

  • If so, to what extent is an employee in need of motivation before you have to use this type of incentive?

• How do you determine the tasks to delegate to each employee?

• Do employees personality, creativity, or skill set have any persuasion in what types of work they are assigned to?
• Typically, how do you get to know each of your employees?

• How do you adapt to each employee's personality in order to get through to them and guide them more efficiently?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: