

James Wiley

Magic Johnson: Endorsements “After” ...?

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A. Introduction and Summary

Ramesh Patel works at Aragon Entertainment Limited. He joined the company in 2008. Patel recently joined a select group of high-potential leaders to work together on new initiatives and to determine the company's direction. This was a very big honor for Patel who saw this as an opportunity to work on exciting projects as well as gain exposure with top executives. Patel was also excited about being appointed to this elite group of individuals because his friend, Jeremy Gibson, was also chosen. Patel enjoyed the first few meetings because he learned a lot about the company.

Following a couple initial meetings, management created sub-groups to work on specific projects. Patel, Gibson, and another colleague, Maria Hernandez, were assigned to analyze customer data on one of Aragon's new products. The team of three agreed upon the division of labor—Patel would review and analyze the blog entries and survey data, Hernandez would prepare the competitive market analysis, and Gibson would analyze the game usage data. The small team met often and quickly realized the Gibson was falling behind. He came unprepared to meetings, he was not completing his work, and he failed to follow-up when he said he would. Patel was growing more frustrated because he wanted to be successful and wasn't sure if it was possible with a group member who couldn't seem to keep up. Gibson, on the other hand, was conflicted because he enjoyed the special team he had been selected to participate on, but knew that he had more time-sensitive work to complete in his 'regular' job.

B. Statement of the Problem

- a. Magic Johnson announced he had HIV and sponsor companies were face with a decision to drop him or not.
 - i. Symptoms:
 1. AIDS is incurable
 2. The image projected from a sexual disease is not good
 3. Magic Johnson's health could rapidly decline as medicine was not as good
 - ii. Root Causes
 1. Magic Johnson contracted the HIV that will lead to AIDS
 2. Magic Johnson did not use protection while having sex
 3. Being in the public eye, he had to make an announcement regarding the disease.
 - iii. The decision of the companies that endorse Magic Johnson is to decide if they should keep him or drop him with the chance of possible backlash from the community

C. Decision Criteria and Alternative Solutions

- a. A solution is effective if it mitigates negative feelings among team members and results in the team successfully completing and presenting a report that meets/exceeds management's expectations.
- b. **Alternative solutions**

- i. Patel and Hernandez can politely explain to Gibson that his work is unacceptable and give him the option of either remaining on the team and increasing his productivity or resigning from the team at which time Patel and Hernandez will have to share the additional work load to complete the report
- ii. Patel and Hernandez can simply divide up Gibson's workload among themselves while Gibson technically remains on the team, but does not contribute to the output.
- iii. Patel and Hernandez can express their concerns with management and ask that Gibson be replaced with a new team member.

D. Recommended Solution

- a. Patel and Hernandez can politely explain to Gibson that his work is unacceptable and give him the option of either remaining on the team and increasing his productivity or resigning from the team at which time Patel and Hernandez will have to share the additional work load to complete the report. Providing Gibson with a choice provides an opportunity for Gibson to explain why his work has been less than satisfactory. This may mitigate negative feelings that Patel and Hernandez may have towards Gibson. If Gibson chooses to remain on the team, Patel and Hernandez may have feelings of uncertainty with regard to whether Gibson will actually change his behavior. If Gibson chooses to resign from the team Patel and Hernandez may become overwhelmed with work as they will be doing one and a half times the work. However, this solution has the best chance of mitigating negative emotions among team members and completing a satisfactory report.