Critical Analysis: Difference between Philip and Jane in Their Sources of Power within BFGym

In this essay, I will be examining how Philip and Jane differ in their sources of power within BFGym. After exploring OB theories in light to power, I will be concluding with recommendations they could make to gain better influence with group members and the management team. Mintzberg (1983) stated power is the ability of one person or group to cause another person or group to do something that they otherwise might not have done.

French and Raven's taxonomy 1959 has five categories of power, which are most widely quoted typology of power. Mintzberg (1983) argues that reward and coercive powers are used formally by those with legal prerogatives and may be used informally by those who control crucial resources, skills, or knowledge. The legitimate power corresponds most closely to legal prerogatives and expert power to critical skills and knowledge. Referent power is informal power that stems from being admired and respected. Philip and Jane both differ in their sources of power as stated in the case study; Philip has been working in BFGym for the past 4 years, meaning he is very experienced in his area. Researching bases of individual power, it is clear Philip has coercive power; this type of power is based upon the idea of coercion, meaning the power is grounded on a person's ability to punish another person through the application of negative sanctions, causing an unpleasant experience for the target (Butler & Rose, 2011). As specified in the case study, Philip being dominant he instantly to upon the leadership role of the group meeting to discuss potential solutions. Philip became overruling in this scenario, as other group members had no choice about the meeting hours. This resulted in other group members not engaging, as they are not used to the power being exerted. Coercive power often leads to problems within an organisation as it can result to corrupt behaviour and dissatisfaction in the work environment.

Jane on the other hand has referent power based of individual power on French and Raven, 1959. Referent power is the ability to control another's behaviour because the individual wants to identify with the power source owing to his or her perceives attractive characteristics. This power source comes from others wanting to be like you, to be associated with you or the networks and contacts you have, which they also have value. Jane was the main contributor to the group meeting by actively coming up with creative solutions to their problems. She not only considered her own preferences but also gave suggestions that would benefit the others in the group. Referent power can be seen where people are respected and well admired. Admiration and respect for one area of work can infect other areas and lead to an overall good impression, which is called the "halo-effect". (French et al, 2011) stated that halo-effect occurs when one attribute of a person or situation is used to develop an overall impression of the individual or situation. Within interpersonal perception, the effect occurs when our perception of another person is framed based on a single striking favourable characteristic.

Yukl and Tracy (1992), conducted a study to discover how a manger's use on nine different influence tactics is related to target task commitment and the manager's effectiveness. The nine power tactics for influencing others are; rational persuasion, inspirational appeal, consultation, ingratiation, personal appeal, exchange, legitimation, coalition and pressure. BFGym colleagues would benefit from using some of the nine power tactics for influencing

others as a way of being more satisfied within the work environment.

Inspirational appeal is a tactic that builds enthusiasm by appealing to values, emotions and ideas. This would be an ideal recommended power for Philip as he needs to ensure that everyone is being involved in the group meeting. This was not the case as Nick's input was somehow discarded resulting in him feeling like he does not belong to the group. It is important that everyone's opinions and ideas are taken account for any company policy and training programme changes. Yukl (2010) identified the purpose of team building as being to increase cohesiveness, mutual co-operation, and identification with a group. This suggest social interaction and getting to know members within the group is likely to make discussions and decision making more effective as everyone will be participating in giving their own opinions to come to a final conclusion.

Consultation power is a tactic that focus on seeking participation in the planning process, making decisions, and encourage changes. This power tactic would benefit Philip as he is the main leader in taking on the meeting with the other staff members. During the meeting members such as Robin and Jo did not bring any suggestions to the table and appeared agitated. It would be more valued if Philip worked with the other group members to provide their input and become more committed to the initiative. It is important that everyone is involved and more motivated to take action in making a change to the work environment to not only benefit themselves but also their other work colleagues. Jane would also benefit from using consultation power as a tactic because she needs make sure her ideas are being passed onto Kate who is the manager of BFGym, who will take her solutions on board and make the necessary changes to benefit everyone working in the organisation.

Ingratiation power refers to making others feel good or getting someone in a good mood prior to making a request. Philip would highly benefit from using this power tactic on his other colleagues before taking on the group meeting. As stated in the case study other group members did not find it ideal to hold a meeting after working hours, but they had no choice. Philip needs to be have a more positive outlook before starting the meeting to make sure everyone else feels optimistic whilst giving their own opinions and solutions. Philip was unhappy with Robin and Jo's attitude which resulted in Philip confronting them, and both parties then exchanges some harsh accusations. This also shows that Philip needs to motivate others in the group to participate more and also let other colleagues have a say in when group meetings should take place, so it is suited to when everyone else has time.

In conclusion, Philip and Jane both differ in their sources of power as they have different ways of approaching situations and taking on leadership roles. It is essential that the sources of power match the type of culture of the company in order to have an effective influence for both group members and the management team.