**360-Degree Appraisals at GE Case Analysis:**

Introduction:

170 GE Employees in Durham, North Carolina, work in nine teams to produce the GE90 jet engines that are used by Boeing in its long-range 777 aircrafts. Each team "owns" the engines they build, starting at the beginning of the assembly to them being loaded on the trucks for delivery. Teams are not given instructions from managers except for the date of when the engine is to be shipped from the plant.

Self-management is used by the employees in this plant. The decisions that are made include, when to order tools and parts; training, scheduling vacations, overtime, adjustments to the production process to improve efficiency, monitoring product quality, and taking responsibility for diagnosing and resolving any issues that may arise among the members of the team. Decisions are made by a consensus by everyone on the team; this is a founding principle of the plant. Any ideas and decisions are to be lived with even though all team members may not agree; however, no blame is allowed to be place on any of the team members when things go wrong, because the decision was made with all team members consent. The consensus process has become a way of "life" at the plant so much that the employees routinely talk about "consensusing" on this or that.

Paula Sims is the only boss at this plant and her main objective is to keep everyone's attention focused on the common goal of "making perfect jet engines correctly, quickly, and cheaply." Her job is to make sure that all team members' efforts are coordinated so that their decisions optimize the plant's performance and to free up resources for growth and improvement. She has learned that what you intend to communicate isn't always easy and she has also learned to listen carefully to monitor her effectiveness.

The culture at this plant is that the manager is responsible for making decision only about a dozen times a year and the decisions are either heavily relied on input from the employees or are made by the employees. The manager is only responsible for making sure the plant employees know about the problems and for informing the GE managers whom they report to. The manager is expected to listen, not decide. The plant manager educates the task force and everyone else about the problem and explains why it is important. It is the task force's responsibility to find the solutions. Once the plan has been formed, the task force takes it to the plant manager who then informs the GE managers how they will proceed and makes sure the GE managers agree with the plan.

Key Issues:

The first is that the production team lacks direction, and instruction in terms of completion date goals. The team is able to receive a definitive shipping date for the completed product. However, the team does not have a definitive process in reach to complete the product by that given shipping date. As a result, an inconsistency in the efficiency of production would be seen by this particular GE plant.

The second key issue is that there is a lack of allocation of responsibilities between the team members, and the plant manager. There should be a human resources manager that coordinates with this particular team. This human resources manager in turn would be responsible for overtime, scheduling, training, and vacation dates. The production team's primary focus should be on efficiently completing the product. The plant manager should be able to take on the responsibilities of ordering tools, and parts, monitoring efficiency, and product quality, and being an unbiased mediator for resolving issues that surface amongst the team members.

The last issue is the plant manager should be able to effectively resume checks, and balances within the plant, if this is what she feels comfortable doing in order to be an effective and proficient manager. Following up with the team about their productivity appears to have become an issue amongst that particular plant production team. The plant manager's actions have become offensive to the team members. However, this is not the plant manager's intent at all to be offensive, or come off as judging the team. The plant manager at the time was not aware of the plant's culture, or team norms.

Root Problem*:*

The root problem in this case is to incorporate the least consistent decision-making styles into the current process used by Durham/GE.

Problem Component:

The problem component in this case is to implement a 360-degree appraisal process into the current process without changing the structure that is currently in place at Durham/GE.

Generating Alternatives:

Due to the root problem and the problem component noted above, some alternatives that might be used to address these problems include:

Alternative 1: Incorporate the least consistent decision-making styles into the current process used by Durham/GE.

Alternative 2: Implement a 360-degree appraisal process into the current process without changing the structure that is currently.