

RESEARCH PAPER

PEER LEARNING



THE EFFECT PEER LEARNING HAS ON THE ABILITY OF TOP EXECUTIVES TO MAKE BETTER DECISIONS

Version 1.0: November 14, 2011

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November 14, 2011

ABSTRACT

Globalization and rapid advances in technology have opened up new opportunities and challenges for businesses of all sizes. Bestowed with the responsibility of meeting the ever increasing demands of customers, employees, investors, partners, and the general public at large, top executives must make nothing but the best decisions. This enhances better performance, better results, and above all improved financial returns. A top executive cannot meet the ever changing demands placed on him/her without continuous learning and understanding how other executives who have faced similar demands have excelled. Such learning and experience sharing can best be achieved through CEO peer groups. This paper therefore analyzes the effect peer learning has on the ability of top executives to make better decisions.

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INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this paper is to give an insight into effects of peer learning in CEO peer groups. In essence, the paper ascertains and gives an in depth understanding of the notion that peer learning in CEO peer groups improves top executive decision making. This presentation begins by highlighting what peer learning in CEO peer group is and its relevance to the decision making process. Various aspects of peer learning are discussed within the text to help understand how peer learning is beneficial in decision making. Arguments for peer learning in CEO peer groups are then discussed as the main text of this presentation. The paper ends with a conclusion where a summary of the whole presentation is made.

The term CEO in this paper is meant to reflect the appropriate title of the firm's top executive and therefore encompasses at a minimum the following titles: chief executive officer, president, owner, founder and managing partner. CEOs exist in a world with many surprises and many uncertainties. They need to continuously meet the ever changing customers, workers, investors and company owners' demands for better performance, better results as well as for bigger returns. Effective running of these organizations in this volatile environment thus calls for joining a focused CEO peer group whose major provision is top executive learning. Overall, high performing CEO peer groups offer opportunities where the company's tough problems can be solved with the assistance of fellow, experienced and knowledgeable top executives who are as well moved in the same direction.

This greatly influences the total organization's decision making process as top executives are in a position to find better solutions to their day to day management issues. They are as such privileged to access company's bottom line decisions and top line decisions. In today's competitive business environment where businesses repeatedly go through revolutions, top executives are faced with tasks of making difficult decisions so that the entire of body of stakeholders are satisfied with the organizations performance. Speedy decision making is thus very fundamental. Top executive officers must be ready to swiftly and systematically make difficult decisions which are required for the success of their companies. To withstand this pressure, a good number of top executives, estimated at over 40,000 worldwide, actively participate in CEO peer groups where critical decisions, opportunities and problematic issues can be discussed so that solutions to their personal uncertainties are settled.

PEER LEARNING IN CEO PEER GROUPS

CEO peer groups are, at their foundation, peer consulting groups of the company's top executives who have the obligation of meeting regularly to assess and confront business issues that are threats to the members company's better performance. CEO peer groups are basically gatherings which are formal in nature and professionally facilitated. It is a group of top executives specifically formed with a view of helping one another through knowledge and idea sharing. The groups entertain free and transparent discussion of company issues; support sharing and access of real time advice and network from fellow top executives from non-competing industries. Essentially, CEO peer groups act in the capacity of a company's most trusted advisors; charged with the responsibility of knowledge provision in round table

discussions. In fact, the CEO peer group is perceived by members as an advisory board, where nothing but information sharing and solution provision is sought. When members openly talk and share with fellow top executives--who are able to understand the difficulty a colleague is in--they can give their assumptions and make a comparison to how they previously handled the issue and how it was handled by other colleagues successfully. Once an issue is raised, members brainstorm ideas and opinions that are helpful as they search for a better approach into how to tackle the issue as opposed to when the issue is handled alone. The group acts as a board that help members confront tough executive decisions. Members become completely open and thus are ready to share anything that appears to be a management issue. Among the issues members periodically share in roundtable meetings include the common company failures, set backs, aspirations, problems and management fears. Basically, group members comprise of fellow top executives who undergo the same pressures and at the same time deal with similar issues, problems and opportunities.

Top executives perceive these groups as their respective company's external source of ideas, peer-reviewer of the company's strategies as well as an adjunct top executive for the company's top issues and opportunities. CEO peer group members do discuss in their regular meetings the following issues (Franzi, 2008).

- How to enhance accountability
- Ways of developing stronger support networks
- Successful delegation skills and strategies

- Best management practices that are likely to enhance productivity
- Ways on how to realize better return on investment
- Approaches to team work and team building
- How to increase the level of company's profitability and the stakes that come with it
- How to remain competitive in the ever volatile business world

To help understand how peer learning can assist executives in making top executive decisions, it is deemed fit to explain the meaning of peer learning. Peer learning has been defined by the resurgent literature as the focused process among the CEO peer groups that comprises top executives helping fellow executives in the process of mitigating the current and real world business problems, issues, set backs and opportunities. Peer learning facilitates learning or sharing of knowledge among the members. In essence, learning stems from the top executive sustained actions towards the current and future company goals. CEOs do also learn via continuous reflection of their actions and how to make their company accomplish a set of goals. Peer group learning therefore entails top executives working in cohort groups solely with a purpose of sharing focused deliberations and an endless support to the members. Peer learning usually comes into play when top executives in different businesses share a common experience with one another. The core method is an active learning that provides opportunities for the CEOs to formulate their own problems, open discussion for their issues, present their view points and continually participate in cooperative learning through teamwork. Peer learning in CEO peer groups quite often improve the decision making of top executives. Through an open communication and exchange of emotions, expertise, experience and

knowledge, an authentic learning environment is created which presents vast knowledge and new ideas that enhances authenticity in top executives' decision making. Peer learning therefore presents the following benefits to company's top executive (Franzi, 2008).

- Peer learning breeds team-building and enhances creation of supportive relationships.
- Enhances CEO's communication skills.
- Understanding of the company's goals, problems as well as the pressure each member is undergoing.
- Enhances transfer of learning between and among companies.
- Provides motivation to top executives as it avoids the feeling of isolation.
- Presents executives with greater organizational productivity.
- Enhanced company performance via instilling in the company high-performing strategies and best practices.
- Knowledge sharing and enhanced skills development.
- It helps top executives think critically and strategically as it promotes CEO's self direction.

HOW PEER LEARNING IN CEO PEER GROUPS IMPROVES THE DECISION MAKING OF TOP EXECUTIVES

With the continued volatility of the market place that affect companies in different ways, active learning through peer learning is perceived as pertinent for company executives to sustain their businesses development and profitability. The results generated as a result of unbiased and direct feedback from fellow top executives are of great importance for decision making

purposes. Peer learning in CEO peer groups thus improves top executive decision making via the following propositions.

Peer learning enhances team building which improves top executives' decision making. Team building is an aspect of management and presents top executives with varying levels of self examination, group participation, problem solving as well as clarity in company's goal setting. Generally, through peer learning in CEO peer groups, top executives are capable of employing goal-setting approach, interpersonal approach, managerial grid model or the role models of team building which are easily translated into higher performing decisions (Franzi, 2008). For instance, through team building--resulting from peer learning--top executives are in a position to learn better not only employees' behaviour but also coordination, direction and the extent of workers' engagement. Team building facilitates problem recognition (Franzi, 2008). Top executives are thus able to share, discuss and find solutions to the identified business issues in their peer groups. Based on the generated solutions, sound goals and decisions are set to mitigate the problems identified. Therefore, peer learning enhances top executives commitment towards achieving set goals and objectives.

Peer learning is a source of new ideas and skills suitable for decision making. CEO peer group members do have a wealth of different business knowledge, expertise and skills. Knowledge sharing and enhanced skills development are key products of peer learning. Top executives are in a position of accessing sound business management skills, knowledge and strategies that are easily translated to improve their respective business decisions. For instance, through peer learning, CEOs share and discuss pertinent company best practices. The learning process

imparts knowledge, skills and experience that are used in decision making for improved performance of the company. In essence, peer learning facilitates transfer of learning which top executives use in decision making for improved performance of their companies. Besides, the new ideas, knowledge and skills put in place new opportunities and alternatives that can be employed for decision making by top executives (Parsloe and Wray, 2000). New knowledge skills, ideas and experience learned present top executives with new problem solving techniques due to the fact that peer learning is on the cutting edge of company transformation. The new techniques can then be easily used by top executives in making subsequent company decisions.

Peer learning helps overcome top executive isolation and the feeling of loneliness at the top and thus broadens the knowledge search for decision making. Top executives who run non-publicly traded companies do find themselves constantly in need of new ideas, a tutor or a sounding board to help out in solving company issues. Nonetheless, since it is a common practice that these types of companies are being operated by a limited number of persons, the potential resource of knowledge and experience is restricted to a few individuals. This implies that resources can easily be inadequate and hence stale in ideas generation and implementation. With the intervention of peer learning and CEO peer groups, numerous applicable ideas are generated for decision making purposes by top executives. Sharing of frustrations and management challenges help learn new ideas that are appropriate for decision making. In essence, peer learning in CEO peer groups eliminates top executive isolation. Top executives lack a place where they can go and truthfully be themselves. They are deficient of where they can share their problems authentically and transparently so that meaningful

solutions are offered. But by joining peer groups, top executives become convinced beyond doubt that they are with like minded people in a confidential environment where they can freely share out their problems to improve decision making. This kind of environment helps top executive officers make sound decisions relating to company's return on investment, cash flows as well as human capital performance. As asserted by resurgent literature, top executives are not able to meet company problems and challenges alone, but are in need of relationships full of trust, and persistent support to accomplish the challenging goals they face (Franzi, 2008).

Members receive honest and direct feedback on their shared problems thus they are more able to make valid and tested decisions. Peer learning enables members to receive honest feedback that can be implemented immediately into their company. The ideas generated during discussions offer new viewpoints to the top executives' company challenges and opportunities. For example, top executives are able to make decisions relating to payroll issues and personnel issues after satisfactory discussion with fellow CEOs. This is especially helpful in family businesses and partnerships where the issue may be with a close family member. In other words, the discussions present top executives with honest and direct feedback appropriate for solving a given pertinent issue via learning from the decisions employed by fellow CEOs to address their problem. This prompts sound decision making and immediate action. With today's challenging business environment, only top executives who are proactive enough to access peer advisors and mentors to obtain feedback and coaching, support and accountability can perform consistently better. Top executives hence join these peer groups to find feedback and support to help them think through a given problem (Franzi, 2008). This signifies how

directly strategic decisions can be made by top executives once a problem is shared and honest, unfiltered solutions are provided.

Peer learning facilitates strategy setting. Strategy setting is of significance for continued performance of any high performing company. Strategy setting or goal setting makes top executives proactive in their day-to-day operations as opposed to being reactive. Top executives are in a position to access successful and long term goal setting formulas used by peers while in CEOs peer groups. Decisions relating to successful strategic plans must be made in the business by top executives for firm's enhanced performance. Learning is core to CEO peer groups. It therefore implies that the members are open to learn and share with one another their most successful strategies (Franzi, 2008). For instance, top executive without well defined goals or strategies for their companies are open to immediately implement decisions coached and shared in CEO peer learning groups. This implies that top executive officers will perceive everything in broader angles and access full support to implement the needed changes; thus make sound strategy decisions. Top executives find it more difficult to understand other firms' strategy setting without the focus on peer learning and sharing. It is only in CEO peer groups and roundtable discussions that critical strategies and goals are shared openly and coached (Franzi, 2008). A top executive is thus in a position to make decisions that relates to all that was shared by colleagues. Therefore, it is worth asserting that CEO peer learning facilitates making improved decisions relating to company goals and strategies (both long term and short term).

Peer learning with a CEO peer group facilitates decisions for maximum results. In the day-to-day running of the business, top executives are faced with ever present challenges and hindrances.

The problems and obstacles faced are dependent on the company's status, size and objectives. Peer learning characterized by the open sharing of needs and problems enable top executives to access a better and more authentic learning environment that provides peer ideas to be implemented for better performance. Being a member of a facilitated CEO peer group, members are presented with several options that increase company's professional's opportunity to provide and receive in return relevant, real knowledge for the organization they represent (Franzi, 2008). The power of peer learning has become more appealing as the rate of change increases to top executives simply because they are in a position of accessing real time and real world feedback that can be employed immediately into their company's operations for real time decision making (Franzi, 2008). Since discussions are certain to be safe and confidential, CEOs become very specific about their company dealings and can as well easily discuss what is applicable and working for success and what is not applicable for their companies' better performance. The best practices shared can then be used by top executives to make real time decisions for maximum results.

Peer learning enhances CEOs survival in today's competitive business world. Top executives are able to eliminate hazards of adversaries via engaging in peer learning. Business owners have the exclusive opportunity to learn from a given company failures, successes and challenges and hence able to improve their own odds of company success (Franzi, 2008). Understanding and learning from other top executive officers failures and victories imparts new knowledge and new ideas for future decision making. This helps CEOs to emerge as the victors in the competitive business world. This implies that a top executive who does not attach

himself/herself to a CEO peer group lacks the opportunity to learn from different company's successes and challenges. He will not be as well prepared to make decisions when confronted with a challenge or potential opportunity (Franzi, 2008). But by engaging in a CEO peer group, the knowledge sharing and learning of how other top executives confronted a similar problem is a boost in that the same techniques can be used to handle the challenge. This way a top executive shall have benefited by making similar decisions to help arrest the situation.

Peer learning helps top executives make better human capital motivation decisions. Joining CEO peer groups provide members with educational training and programs that relate to employees' motivation and engagement. Sharing unique ideas, understanding of managing of the employee knowledge and human resources helps sustain success within a given company (Franzi, 2008). Top executives are able to gain knowledge and understanding in ways that are better than their initial self-determining efforts by joining CEO peer groups. For example, sharing of ideas and knowledge on employee motivation enables top executives officers to embrace better employee motivation techniques and decisions that improve employee performance. With the knowledge that fellow top executives have on human capital motivation, a member is able to emulate rather than simply using his/her more limited self determining efforts (Franzi, 2008). Essentially, better human capital motivation decisions are facilitated by joining peer groups. By meeting regularly to discuss company human resource challenges, members are able to offer advice to each other about critical decisions. A top executive will therefore have a culture of developing decisions on best human capital

management and motivational practices. Therefore, peer learning in CEO peer groups improves the decision making of top executives.

It also worth noting that peer group learning enables top executives to step into the management spotlight. The company's success is uniquely dependent on the role played by its top executive. For successful deliberation of duties, CEOs usually rely on the help of other officers (owners) to provide better results within their companies (Franzi, 2008). However, by joining CEO peer groups, the top executives are assured of communication that has the ability to address the demands of their positions and thus they are able to be in a position that presents them as better off than nonmembers. Basically, top executives are able to learn and exhibit better leadership qualities from their direct reports. Implementation of these learned behaviors tremendously boost the team decision making process at their firms. It is of significance to postulate at this juncture that peer learning places top executives into the leadership spotlight. A top executive officer is privileged to learn the latest high performing management techniques. High performing management techniques discussed in CEO peer groups are then later re-used by a member in making his/her company relevant high performing decisions (Franzi, 2008). Therefore, top executive peer learning in CEO peer groups improves the decision making of top executives.

The paper also wants to point out that peer learning in CEO peer groups improves competitive differentiation. Top executives undertake company's competitive differentiation by joining CEO peer groups that offer coaching to the members (Franzi, 2008). They are privileged to

undertake competitive differentiation decisions by employing the techniques already employed by other high performing top executives in different industries. Besides, top executives find it possible to make decisions relating to competitive differentiation as they undergo the coaching of the peer group's professional facilitator. Through peer learning, members who have advanced knowledge on their competitive differentiation have the opportunity to share with the other members who are as well able to implement the strategies that were shared in roundtable meetings. The knowledge and ideas obtained as a result of investing in coaching and peer modeling will significantly assist in making truly competitive and unique differentiation decisions for the long term well being of the company. Top executives through peer learning emulate and make similar decisions shared and learned. Peer learning in CEO peer groups thus improves competitive differentiation strategies decisions.

Peer learning enables top executives to make decisions that help them stay at par with new developments, knowledge and information. Attending CEO peer groups helps obtain new knowledge. Top executives are privileged to tap new expertise which is not within their experience or industry (Franzi, 2008). Accessibility to outside expertise and knowledge from fellow top executives therefore helps them make relevant and better performing decisions for their business success. Basically, personalized agenda that tackle members' need for current innovation, technology or any new developments in management help top executives embrace shared ideas and knowledge in making similar decisions for their companies (Franzi, 2008). Peer learning makes an organization's leader become a learning leader; and a learning leader is a consistently higher performing top executive due to the fact that decisions on new ideas,

knowledge and experience gained through peer learning is often made easily for organization's better performance. Therefore, by joining CEO peer groups, top executives are in a position to remain a few steps ahead of their competition by making informed decisions that are on par with all discussed aspects of company management; from company financial performance to company strategy. They are thus in a position to make more informed decisions that relate to the same (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). The knowledge shared in CEO peer groups offer fresh ideas on accountability that later top executives exploit in making decisions that aim at increasing both top executives and human capital accountability. The roundtable discussions help bring on board very sensitive accountability issues that top executives cannot otherwise brainstorm alone. Generally, within the confidentiality and safety of the peer group, the members are very specific and candid about their internal performance metrics and thus able to share accountability issues that are working and those which are not working. In essence, the feedback from peers transparent and honest discussions and advice are used for making better accountability decisions (Franzi, 2008).

Peer learning encourages roundtable discussions which enhance decision making. Every top executive is able to share an issue for brainstorming and discussion. Since the groups comprises executives from non-competitive industries, they can freely question one another on topics like financing, strategic planning, human resources management, how to competitively position the company in the volatile and competitive business environment, sales and marketing strategies as well as how to put in place effective employee reward systems (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). This implies that top executive officers can learn from the best practices in many

diverse and distinct areas of the larger economy. The new ideas and knowledge discussed—which help formulate part of their decisions—are tested, (O'Donnell 1999) and appraised by qualified and experienced peer executives. The groups undertake discussions on all aspects of management from budgeting issues to time management as well as company board relationships. These greatly benefit member executives in making decisions relating to the same issues discussed. It is therefore true to assert that top executives with any of the problems discussed will have an opportunity to find a tested solution and have it implemented quickly to enhance company performance. Essentially, at the end of the day, a top executive benefits greatly from the experience of his peer group in making challenging decisions and thus peer learning in CEO peer groups improve the decision making of top executives.

Peer learning positively affects decision making as it relates to company's strategic development. Top executive officers are privileged to learn about strategy development as a result of participating in a CEO peer group. Generally, roundtable discussions enhance strategic thinking (Franzi, 2008). As with any other learning discussion, members of a peer group are in a position to get empowered with knowledge, skills, ideas and experience. The knowledge gained is employed in the company to come up with tested and proven successful strategies. These strategies are then used for making competitive decisions by top executive officers. Basically, the learning process instills in a top executive how to be an effective visionary and how to make strategic decisions for better long term performance.

Peer learning facilitates decision making in uncertain company environment. Peer learning with experienced top executives who have established experiences with matters pertaining to return on investment facilitates decision making with regards to company's return on investment and human capital performance. Through sharing and problem solving, issues concerning return on investment are discussed with the expertise of members and thus helps arrive at a resolution to the issue (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). Members thus become well informed on how competitive decisions relating to return on investment and human capital can be made for better company performance. This is always the case as members of the CEO peer group possess high degrees of transparency, honesty as well as high functionality of dialogue when when discovering and establishing the root cause of the problems. The knowledge derived from roundtable dialogues is used for decision making. Peer learning thus helps top executive officers arrive easily at problematic decisions that concerns return on investment in an uncertain company environment.

CEO peer groups help members easily and quickly make decisions relating to company's initial public offer and company sales volume besides related undertakings. Top executives are required to make decisions relating to the company's initial public offer as well as the desired sales volume. Top executives who are not attached to a CEO peer group find it more challenging and expensive to make initial public offer decisions as they may not have the experience. Being in a group where companies are not similar and do not directly compete with each other is helpful for understanding company share floatation. For example, a CEO is able to get to know better or have a better idea about a given market segment that would have

otherwise not been thought of. With the knowledge of the market segments, better decisions can be made to help increase the market share and sales volume (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). This is best attained by joining CEO peer groups where transparent information sharing is the business of the day. This attests that peer learning in CEO peer groups improve the decision making of top executives.

Besides, a top executive is able to inquire more about the need for initial public offering from colleagues in the group and thus make informed decisions relating to amount of shares to float. It is as well believed that being in a CEO peer group helps facilitate making decisions pertaining to the board management, strategic factors for success, growth strategies like partnerships, merger and acquisitions, how to strategically position the company in the competitive market place, how to maximally exploit the market conditions, how to embrace creativity and innovation as well as how to better undertake company team building. A top executive must be knowledgeable enough to carry out such decisions (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). The knowledge is gained from fellow non-competitive CEOs who have a wealth of experience, ideas and information to share with the colleagues in their CEO peer groups. This shared knowledge is thus used for making sound decisions by top executives.

Top executives require advisors to help solve issues that cannot be shared or discussed with their respective boards. Peer group members freely discuss the challenges and offer pieces of advice to each other on company's critical decisions so that best management decisions are made for company's growth and better performance. Basically, the customized discussions

solve top executives real time and bottom line problems. These solutions are extended to decision making by top executives to help arrest the problem fully.

Peer learning in CEO peer groups facilitates making decisions concerned with company's board administration and support. Basically, board administration is one key responsibility of the top executive. By joining a peer group where there is knowledge sharing on board administration and support, a CEO is in a better position to make decisions that support the operations and administration of their respective boards. The acquired knowledge on administration is helpful in making decisions that facilitates board evaluation, support as well as for interfacing between the company staff and the board. It is only through peer learning that fellow top executives can share their experiences and expertise on how to manage effectively and support the company's board (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). These shared experience, knowledge and ideas are then used for making decisions that concerns board administration and support.

Top executives are the company's most critically important decision makers and therefore are charged with the responsibility of making the final decisions on the firm's most vital functions. Quite often they are charged with the responsibility of recommending the company's yearly financial budget for the board of directors to review and approve. Top executives are confronted with issues relating to the amount to be recommended that does not create conflict with the board. Therefore, by joining a CEO peer group, top executives are in a position to proactively confront conflicts arising from the firm's annual financial budget. Roundtable

discussions with the experts assist in making choices that when implemented lead to making higher performing decisions concerning these vital areas.

Peer learning in peer groups facilitates making better decisions that regard program, service and product delivery. In the CEO peer group, problems relating to product and service delivery are discussed as it forms the core internal responsibility of top executives. Fellow top executives are able to freely, honestly and transparently share and give their proven experiences pertaining to the service and product marketing, promotion, delivery as well as quality of the programs, services and products (McDaugall and Beattie, 1997). Peer top executives emulate and make similar decisions for better program, service and product delivery. At peer meetings, members are likely to benefit from the knowledge of the professional facilitator and invited speakers who are exemplary in a given field of business performance. They offer executive coaching. Belonging to a group of top executives thus presents an opportunity to stay abreast with service and product marketing, promotion, delivery as well as quality of the programs, services and products. It is therefore significant that peer learning in CEO peer groups improve the decision making of top executives. Members are able to freely exchange questions, perspectives and ideas within trusted and confidential forums. These are then tested and employed for decision making by top executives.

Top executives have the responsibility of making decisions relating to the coordination of company activities and resources as well as the company's performance management. They cannot succeed by making these fundamental decisions in isolation. Belonging to a CEO peer

group is helpful in that a top executive is in a position to hear experts speak, and share ways on how to implement items learned that regard the coordination of company activities. For instance, a top executive certainly learns ethics management systems, employee performance management, group performance management, company performance management, product/service management, product and service marketing and promotion, pertinent policies and procedures; as well as program management. In essence, they undertake real time implementation of what is learned in the aforementioned areas via their decision making. Therefore, peer learning in CEO peer groups improve the decision making of top executives in regard to the coordination of company activities and resources.

Peer learning that takes place in CEO peer groups aids in making leadership decisions. Top executives are perceived to be the visionary leaders and therefore must at all time make sure that the company board and staff has up to date and sufficient information. They must constantly foresee any changes in opportunity and act as a link between subordinates and the board. To effectively undertake these visionary roles, however, top executives need readily available information where decisions relating to these functions can be readily accessed and feedback can be transparently conveyed (Hara, 2008). It is only through peer learning that real time and significant actions can be identified and an agreement can be achieved so that the top executive can make advancements towards highly rated priorities and goals that concern the same. In fact, this will help improve decision making as decisions will be made on informed grounds. Top executives are able to utilize the learned knowledge and ideas in making decisions that enable them stay focused and always dedicated to accomplishing set results (Hara, 2008).

CEO peer groups and meetings are friendly and habitual events that allow members from non competitive industries access and support in a more structured and highly confidential setting. Top executives use meetings as a major platform to share and come to a conclusion on pertinent issues that benefits each and every group member. Simply put, the members find themselves in a harmony that specifically enables sharing and absorption of valuable knowledge and strategies. By getting rid of competitive rivals, top executives are able to gain the exceptional opportunity to learn from others about their respective organization's failures, successes, and challenges. This enables them to increasingly cooperate as they are able to learn with experts about the challenges, failures and victories which are used for making strategic decisions.

REASONS AS TO WHY PEER LEARNING IN CEO PEER GROUPS DOES NOT IMPROVE DECISION MAKING

The reasons why peer learning does not improve decision making are quite minimal. Based on the resurgent literature, however, a number of points have been put forward to support why peer learning does not improve decision making. Time taken in making decision in peer groups is not real time and can be lengthy. It is felt that the CEO of the individual knows best the subtlies of their situation and something can be lost in the understanding of the other members of his peer group. This being the asserted case leads some to conclude that attempting to solicit input from peer top executive who do not truly know the situation nor the overall conditions of a particular situation leads to invalid and artificial recommendations. This point thus asserts that peer learning may not improve top executive decision making.

To some antagonists, peer learning weakens the top executives control over their organizations. Fellow peer group executives may come up with decisions that wither the member's control over his organization. Decisions may not be as required by a member as other members have different organizational goals, aspirations and philosophies for the ongoing operations of his organization. Peer learning as well demands committed actions and follow up that may hinder the top executive's willingness to agree to implement the decisions.

A top executive may suffer from lack of the other members' motivation while presenting their feedback. In such situations, accurate decisions may not be made. Also, in circumstances where the group does not withhold confidentiality, truth may not be shared. Without confidentiality, open communication of issues, challenges and problems is not easy and therefore the trust of giving valuable information, knowledge and ideas to be used to for decision making is eroded. This thus implies that peer learning in a real sense may not improve decision making in CEO peer groups. Besides, belonging to a CEO peer group that does not contain true peer executives is sure enough to thwart decision making. Also, CEO peer groups that do not hold their members to actions and deeds committed. Without accountability, members are likely not to achieve their strategic objectives or critical decisions. This makes them worse off as leaders and thus able to make worse off decisions.

Belonging to a large-sized CEO peer group hinders value of information shared. It is impossible to get maximum value from the individual members. Also, members are capable of not actively participating in their organization's issues. Therefore, it will be hard to find real time feedback to use in decision making in large-sized CEO peer groups.

CONCLUSION

From the presentation, it is evident that peer learning in CEO peer groups affects the decision making process. Essentially, it has been noticed that peer learning in CEO peer groups improves the top executives decision making. It facilitates decision making in all aspects of management, i.e. from production decisions to budgeting and even marketing and personnel decisions. Over the whole, CEO peer learning help top executives to make better decisions. As shown in the text, through peer learning, top executives are in a position to find applicable roundtable topics where the discussions relating to the size, issues, goals and objectives of their respective companies can be provided. Essentially, it is evident that peer learning in CEO peer groups creates a beneficial learning environment where pertinent topics that relate to top executives management issues, challenges and opportunities are shared and discussed. Belonging to a group of top executives with well defined deliberations is a sure way to make higher performing decisions. This is simply due to the fact that the members are in a position to access real time knowledge, present their issues and have transparent and honest feedback for their critical decision making needs.

It would sound backward to assert that peer learning is time wasting. Essentially, the time taken to resolve an issue is quite minimal as compared to when an issue is left to a single top executive. Decisions to arrest an issue are reached as fellow top executives are in a position to freely brainstorm and offer immediate feedback on how to make a better and more profound decision concerning an issue, challenge or opportunity. As has been presented in the text, belonging to a learning peer group helps top executives make decisions that are in the

management spotlight. Being a member of a peer group assures communications that definitely sort out the demands of top executive position. Therefore, peer learning is perceived to instill new knowledge that put top executives in a better position than their competitors who do not belong to a peer group. It is in CEO peer groups that better leadership qualities are modeled and learned. Executives are thus in a position to make decisions that are at par with what is learned and discussed in roundtable sessions, for instance, high performing management techniques. Also, belonging to a CEO peer group that embraces peer learning helps top executives overcome the extreme pressure of being the final decision maker inside their firm and enables them to learn and apply best practices from a variety of industries. In the end, CEO peer groups provide an unparalleled vessel for transformative business and personal improvement through the application of a peer learning model. This unique opportunity is best performed when a group of top executives join with a professional facilitator and create a learning environment free from competitive tension and devoid of individual egos replaced with the clear mission to help each member realize their fullest potential as a top executive.

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2011-11-14_RAF_PeerLearning_RP_001

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