

**SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP:
HONEYBEE PRACTICES AT EXXONMOBIL, THAILAND**



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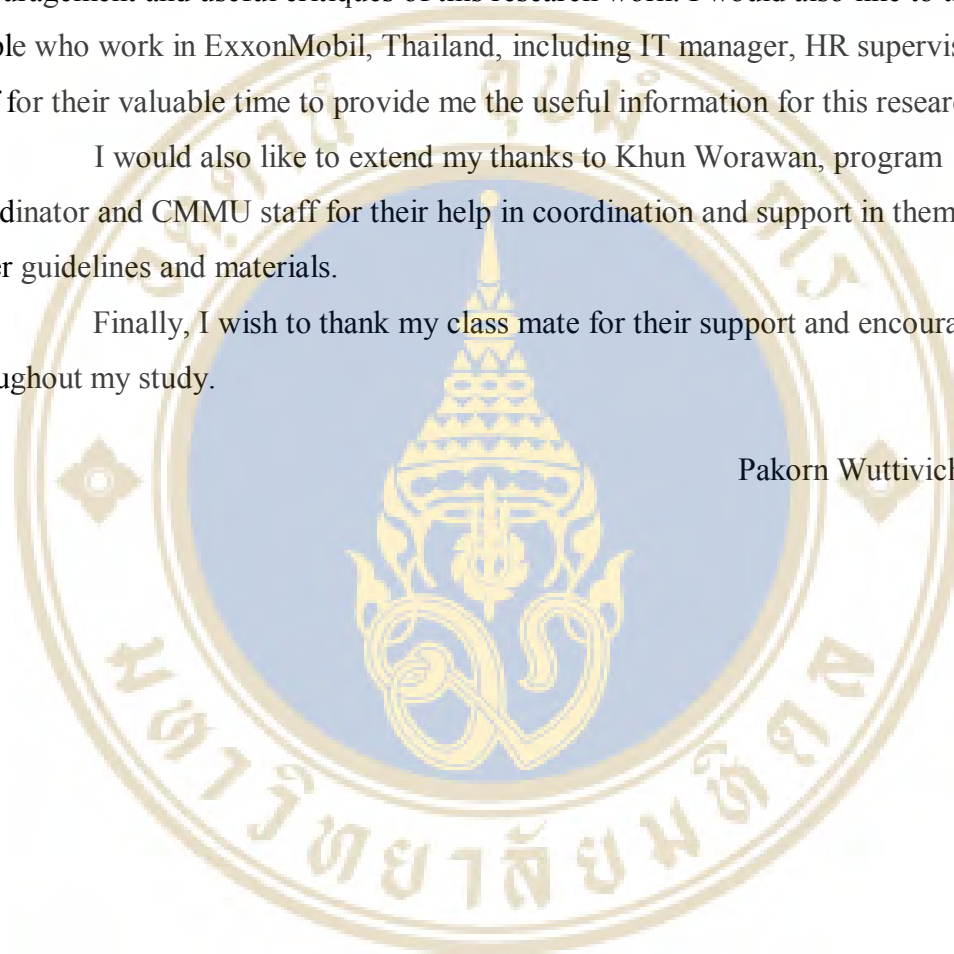
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to adopt Avery and Bergsteiner's 23 Honeybee sustainable leadership practices derived from sustainable organizations as a framework to examine the leadership practices of ExxonMobil, Thailand. The research uses qualitative methods including interview, and observation. It also uses secondary research by finding information from corporate website and others. The research finding was found for compliance with 21 of Avery's 23 sustainable leadership elements, but to various degrees. The paper concludes that Avery's 23 Honeybee practices provide a useful framework applicable to global organization that operates in Thailand. The organization that wants to sustain their organization success could adopt Avery's 23 Honeybee leadership practices to examine their leadership practices, and adjust them to become more sustainable.

KEY WORDS: leadership/ sustainable leadership/ Honeybee leadership/ corporate sustainability

38 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable organization is an ideal organization that everyone wants to have. It is widely discussed among corporate leaders to develop sustainable leadership in organization. Even though, it is a vital topic now a day, there is still a few approaches to corporate sustainability have been examined in the Thai context.

The present study therefore adopts Avery and Bergsteiner's Sustainable Leadership concept that has been supported by previous studies as a relevant approach to corporate sustainability in Thailand. The study examines business practices of ExxonMobil, Thailand to determine if there is a fit between Sustainable Leadership practices and those of the case company.

ExxonMobil is the largest publicly owned oil and gas exploration, development and production company in the world, as well as the world's largest fuel refiner and manufacturer of lubricant basestocks used for making motor oils. ExxonMobil's affiliates have refining operations in 26 countries, 42,000 retail service stations in more than 100 countries and lubricants marketing in almost 200 countries. It started operation of its Bangkok Business Support Center (BK BSC) in February 2003. It is part of a network of Business Support Centers around the world that support ExxonMobil global operations and customers; providing a wide variety of transactional, financial, technical support, information services, and customer service activities.

To determine the fit, the literature on Sustainable Leadership in Thailand is reviewed in Chapter 2. In Chapter3, the methodology used to test the Sustainable Leadership concept is explained, this includes how to collect and analyze data. Chapter 4 presents findings, while Chapter 5 discusses the finding and concludes the study with practical recommendations to enhance the prospect of corporate sustainability for the case company.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Honeybee Sustainable Leadership

In today, we live on globalization. All things are interconnected and integrated together to become a global economy. Result to create fast changing environment and increase competition. Moreover, there are many external factors that organizations need to closely aware of including global warming, shortage of natural resources, unethical corporate practices, and corporate reputations (Wong and Avery, 2009). These raise awareness in a range of important and become an urgent concern regarding to corporate sustainability. Therefore, organizations tend to emphasize on long-term value and success of business.

Corporate Sustainability is an approach that focuses on long-term value and success. It is not just creating a green and friendly environment, but also concerning on every dimension, the social, cultural, and economic environment. It embraces opportunities and mitigates risks that might arise from economic, environmental and social developments. Result to maintain confidence of investor and other stakeholders. Moreover, it prevents fraud and damaging scandals that might happen to organizations.

Therefore, it is important for organization to invest and emphasize in sustainability to benefit all stakeholder and investors of companies. It will have a positive impact on not only economies but also societies as a whole.

To ensure corporate sustainability, organizations could adopt many frameworks to promote corporate sustainability. Each geographic region adopts different approaches to its own model. All the approaches share some similarity in term of long-term sustainability. For example, **Human capitalism** approach is widely developed in Japan. It has a strong employee focus (Ozaki, 1991). In Thailand, the '**Sufficiency Economy Philosophy**' becomes a famous approach. It balances both economy and ecosystem (UNDP, 2007). **Rhineland capitalism** is seen as a main approach for

corporate sustainability in Europe (Albert, 1992). It focuses on the long-term sustainability and the relationships with all stakeholders, not just with shareholders (Albert, 1993). It develops 19 grids elements that crate leadership practice. Another alternative approach is 23 elements leadership practice of **Honeybee philosophy**. It has evidence that the outcomes go beyond the triple bottom line – environmental sustainability, social responsibility and financial success (Kantabutra & Saratun, 2012).

The Honeybee approach shows that it is among the first few comprehensive frameworks in the sustainable leadership literature (Kantabutra & Saratun, 2012). With its 23 elements could enhance organization reputation, customer satisfaction, financial success, and long-term stakeholders' value. It is more comprehensive approach comparing to other alternative approaches. Therefore, in this paper focuses on Honeybee approach. Since we could ensure that it can sustain organization in the long-term perspective. The detail of Honeybee approach is discussed more in this paper.

Since the Honeybee leadership is among the first few comprehensive frameworks in sustainable leadership literature and widely applied in many leadership practices. It is vital to explain all its 23 elements below:

Table 2.1: Honeybee sustainable leadership 23 elements.

Honeybee leadership elements	Sustainable leadership “Honeybee” philosophy Sophisticated, stakeholder, social, sharing
1. Developing people	Develops everyone continuously
2. Labor relations	Seeks cooperation
3. Retaining staff	Values long tenure at all levels
4. Succession Planning	Promotes from within wherever possible
5. Valuing staff	Is concerned about employees’ welfare
6. CEO and top team	CEO works as top team member or speaker
7. Ethical behavior	“Doing-the-right thing” as an explicit core value
8. Long or short term perspective	Prefers the long term over the short term
9. Organizational change	Change is an evolving and considered process
10. Financial markets orientation	Seeks maximum independence from others
11. Responsibility for environment	Protects the environment
12. Social responsibility (CSR)	Values people and the community
13. Stakeholders	Everyone matters
14. Vision’s role in the business	Shared view of future is essential strategic tool
15. Decision making	Is consensual and devolved
16. Self-management	Staff are mostly self-managing
17. Team orientation	Teams are extensive and empowered
18. Culture	Fosters an enabling, widely shared culture
19. Knowledge sharing and retention	Spreads throughout the organization

20. Trust	High trust through relationships and goodwill
21. Innovation	Strong, systemic, strategic innovation evident at all levels
22. Staff engagement	Values emotionally committed staff and the resulting commitment
23. Quality	Is embedded in the culture

According to Kantabutra (2011) and Kantabutra and Avery (2011), Avery and Bergsteiner's 23 elements are described in detail below:

Developing people: Honeybee organization heavily invests in training for employees both technical and soft skills. All staff is equal to train not only for manager or selected staff. Honeybee organization plans the courses for their employees to enhance their competency. Staff can develop themselves to achieve company goal.

Labour relations: Employer, employees, and employee representative have a good relation in Honeybee organization. Therefore, Honeybee leadership focuses on collaboration with unions. Employee representative can help in managing change within organization. They can help both management and staff in the change that affect their working life.

Staff retention: Honeybee organization looks at employees as the heart and soul of the company. They believe that staff is a key person in creating value for company. They usually recruit people whose values align with the firm value. Therefore, staff is willing to stay with firm in long term.

Succession planning: Honeybee leadership prefers to have management from within rather than hire them from outside. Because, they believe that promoting people from within can preserve organization's core value and culture. It can payoff in advancing staff's career and successful organization.

Valuing employees: Honeybee leadership always put priority on staff caring. They recognize employees as the key driver of organization's success. Therefore, they offer incentives such as welfare, bonuses, and benefits to staff in order to value on employees' contribution.

CEO and top team: Honeybee leadership has CEO as a top team speaker rather than act as a hero. They always share responsibility since business becomes more complex. It helps increasing quality of decision making because it comes from many people input. It promotes a team-based approach.

Ethics: Honeybee leadership promote ethically doing business and against wrongdoing and fraud. They also encourage all members in organization to have ethical behavior and aims to become company's cultures.

Long-term perspective: Honeybee leadership primarily focuses on the long term. They do not only measure business success on profits in each period. Unlike Locust leadership, they trend to resist the pressures and aims to archive overall performance in the long timeframes.

Organizational change: Honeybee leadership never underestimates disruptive effects that may occur during major change on the organizational system. They always aware of it and immediate act to response the change. They plan and manage processes as possible to ensure new change and existing behavior are compatible.

Financial market orientation: Honeybee leadership value the company's independence from the capital markets. They do not prone to grow profits and pleased shareholder in the short term. They carefully manage relationship with their shareholder by looking long-term financial value of shareholder. Many firms trend to remain in closed system in order to keep them away from capital markets interference.

Responsibility for the environment: Honeybee organizations concern on environmental impact. They conduct business to strict environmental standards. They follow the ethical consideration by believing no one have right to damage other's health, and quality of life. Therefore, Honeybee leadership always put environmental responsibility as a core value of organization.

Social responsibility: Honeybee organizations operate business ethically by concerning communities around wherever they operate. They protect and support communities though various CSR activities. They also invest money on CSR activities as a part of company strategy because they believe that this is the right thing they have to pursue.

Stakeholders: Honeybee organizations look at interest of all contributors in the organizations including shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, governments, and partners. Therefore, they treat everyone equally.

Vision: Honeybee organizations have clear vision. They know what they stand for and what they're trying to achieve. They also share the vision to employees. In order to make them feel this is a great place to work, employees have to fit well with the core value of organization. Therefore, organization culture has to support the vision.

Decision making: Honeybee organizations extend decision-making throughout the organization. Decision-making does not come from only top managers. They involve consensus to get acceptance of decision within a team.

Self-management: Honeybee organizations have a horizon team which every member can freely manage one self. Everyone knows what one has to do. They know their role and responsibility. They also can make decision on initiative or innovation that could benefit to organization.

Team-orientation: Honeybee organizations extend responsibility and decision making to team not just superior person. They empower every member in the team. Team also has a good collaboration.

Culture: Honeybee organizations have a strong corporate culture. They also share the culture, norm, behavior to all staff. They preserve and foster this valuable culture in the company because they believe that it takes time to create this value in organization.

Knowledge sharing and retention: Honeybee organizations have a good system to store and retain knowledge. They ensure that knowledge have been shared to all staff. It should not be kept into one person. Because, knowledge is intangible asset of company which can make them gain competitive over competitors.

Trust: Honeybee organizations have a high trust through good relationship and goodwill. All stakeholders have to perceive this and they trust the company. The trust can come from the way they ethically operate business, the environmental management, and the way they treat their employee and customers.

Innovation: Honeybee organizations always look for innovation in all levels because they believe that this can help them gain competitive advantage in the market. Innovation can be seen in all processes. It can be both radical and incremental innovation. They also seek innovation from staff at all level.

Staff engagement: Honeybee organizations value on emotionally committed staff. Staff are always willing to contribute themselves to extra job when require. They also volunteer themselves to do step out activities, because, they do not focus on only money.

Quality: Honeybee organizations always commit to deliver quality products/services to customers. This has to be embedded in the culture of organization.

2.2 Previous studies on Rhineland and Honeybee leadership in Thailand

Since Rhineland and Honeybee leadership overlap, there are many previous studies on Rhineland and Honeybee leadership in Thailand. The finding of three organizations; True Corporation, SCG, and Bathroom Design can be explained in detail below:

2.2.1 True Corporation

It transformed the company name from Telecom Asia to True Corporation and acquired a cable TV company, and adopted a new convergence strategy. These changes make difficult decisions during the crises. However, the company has long-term view. They believe that the change will enhance the performance in long-term. It ultimately proves that True Corporation becomes the leader in technology driver through its convergence strategy. It offered a competitive salary in line with their role and responsibilities, employees are treated as family. Training and development programs are offered to staff. It introduces four Cs: caring, creative, credible, and courageous. This culture creates a strong bond of royalty among staff even it encounter a crises. It heavily invested in product and service innovation development to retain its competitive advantage. Moreover, innovation ideas come from employees at all levels, customers, and other stakeholders. It has four key attributes guide for its CSR vision: Caring, Creative Courageous, and Credible. It has project “Plook Panya” with a goal of planting knowledge and fostering environment among students. It treats its employees with trust, respect, and sincerity to show it values their contributions. It also maintains an ethical relationship with its customer stakeholders.

2.2.2 SCG

During the crisis, it could still attract investors through its long-term view strategies. Now, it becomes the ASEAN leader in sustainable business. It heavily invests in its people through training and providing scholarships for further studies. Training at SCG is available to all employees. It shares values and vision to all employees. It also boosts knowledge sharing among employees to have mutual relationships and build up networking. It actively promoted incremental process innovation throughout the entire organization and the ideas come from individual employees. It demonstrated concern for Thai society. In 1997, when Asian economic crisis, it tried to expand its market to attract foreign currency into Thai economy instead of selling baht. This could devalue the baht further. It encourages employees to be good citizens. This is becomes a strong part of its culture. For example, during Asian crisis, it did not seek debt reduction by proposing lay-off program.

2.2.3 Bathroom Design

It carefully transforms itself from importer to producer with its own brand. And now it becomes well known brand nationally and internally. It promotes top management team from within organization. It also considers staff. It sets a vision as to be among the world's top-five leading producers of bathroom products with innovative design, function, and technology. Even it confronted with crises; it still creates a strong bond of loyalty among its employees because it steadily grows the business in the defined vision. It contributes about 7 percent of net profit to R&D. For example, it introduced I-Spa (the world's first intelligent spa bathtub). It performs socially responsible activities, using 7 to 10 percent of its net profit. For example, employees are encouraged to donate a part of their salary to various charities. It encouraged employees to be good citizens for the general benefit of the community. They treat employees and act within the broader realm of society demonstrates that ethics is an integral part of the company's culture.

From the evidences that were discussed, it show that all studied organization apply Honeybee approach into their organization. The outcomes clearly

show that they become a success organization in local and international as a long-term success.

Since sustainable leadership has gained support in Thailand as an approach to ensure corporate sustainability and no study has been conducted into oil and gas industry, the present study adopts the Honeybee leadership as a framework to explore business practices of ExxonMobil, Thailand of the proposed industry to determine if they are consistent with the Honeybee leadership. Recommendations to improve the business practices so that the business can be more sustainable will also be provided. Methodology used for the present study is discussed in the next chapter.



CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

I conducted research by using qualitative method such as interviews and observations. Set of open-end questions were used to ask different stakeholder of ExxonMobil including, IT department manager, HR supervisor, and staff. These research methods could leverage data collection under the topic sustainable company. The question will be used to measure all 23 elements of Honeybee philosophy that are applicable to ExxonMobil, Thailand.

Secondary research is also conducted to get some input from top management of ExxonMobil. There are many information about strategy, vision, business planning that published on various sources.

Firstly, I classify the people who must be involved in the research. Since it is a big organization, it is quite difficult to conduct the research on entire organization. Therefore, this research mainly focuses on ExxonMobil Information Technology department (EMIT). There are about 400 staff under EMIT organization.

The sample is convenient as interviewees are one IT managers, one HR supervisor, one IT supervisor, and six employees who are willing to participate in the study. After I have the samples for this research, questions are developed under the topic of 23 elements of Honeybee philosophy. Each question is specified the right group of people to ask. The list of question can be found in table 3.1.

During the interviews, note taking and tape recording techniques, where permitted, were conducted to record observations and responses to interview questions (Hussey and Hussey, 1997).

Once I got all input from the samples, data analysis is conducted to gain fact regard to sustainable company measuring by Honeybee philosophy. The fact finding is discussed in another chapter.

The analysis table of sustainable leadership grid to compare Honeybee criteria and ExxonMobil, Thailand was used to show correspondence of all 23 elements of Honeybee philosophy. See table 3.2 for detail.



Table 3.1 Open-ended questions that were used for interview.

Question	Stakeholders			
	CEO	IT Manager	HR Manager	Staff
Developing people				
1. How much you allocate budget for people development each year?			✓	
2. How many training courses for individual staff to take per year?			✓	
Retaining staff				
3. What is average service year of employees?			✓	
4. What is turnover rate?			✓	
Succession planning				
5. Where do top managements come from?		✓	✓	✓
Valuing staff				
6. What are employees' benefits that the company provides?			✓	✓
7. What kind of working environment in the company?			✓	✓
8. How does company treat employees?			✓	✓
CEO and top team				
9. Who is the one who make a decision?		✓		✓
10. Who has authorization to make a decision?		✓		✓
Ethical behavior				
11. Have you been treated ethically?				✓
12. How do you feel about the company?				✓
13. Does the company promote ethical behavior to staff?	✓		✓	✓
Long- or short-term perspective				
14. What is the investment plan in the future?	✓			
15. What is your quarterly target?	✓			
16. What is the expansion policy?	✓			
17. What is the company strategy to gain competitive advantage?	✓			

Table 3.1 Open-ended questions that were used for interview. (Cont.)

Question	Stakeholders			
	CEO	IT Manager	HR Manager	Staff
Organizational change				
18. What change do you have to improve internal process?		✓		
19. What investment do you have to anticipate the change?		✓		
Responsibility for environment				
20. What are company activities to address environmental issue?	✓			
21. What kind of process to protect environment?	✓			
Social responsibility				
22. What is the budget per year for CSR activities?	✓			
23. What kind of CSR activities that you participate with the company?				✓
24. How the company involves in community?	✓			✓
Stakeholders				
25. How do you treat all individual people in the company?	✓			
26. How have you been treated by the company?				✓
Vision's role in the business				
27. How do you see your company in next five year?	✓			
28. What is the vision of company?	✓			
29. How do you share the vision to employee?	✓			
Decision making				
30. How decision has been made in the meeting?		✓		✓
Self-management				
31. How have you been managed?				✓

Table 3.1 Open-ended questions that were used for interview. (Cont.)

Question	Stakeholders			
	CEO	IT Manager	HR Manager	Staff
32. How do you manage yourself in the organization?				✓
Team orientation				
33. How is the team managed?		✓		
34. How the managers empower the team?		✓		✓
35. How do you feel about the team?				✓
Culture				
36. What is organization's culture?	✓	✓	✓	✓
37. How do you align yourself with organization's culture?				✓
Knowledge sharing and retention				
38. How the knowledge has been shared within company?		✓		✓
39. How do you store knowledge?		✓		✓
Trust				
40. How do you see your company?				✓
41. How do you trust in your organization?				✓
Innovation				
42. What are the new products/services in this year?	✓			
43. How often does company launch a new product for each year?	✓			
44. What do you involve new technology in the company?	✓			

Table 3.1 Open-ended questions that were used for interview. (Cont.)

Question	Stakeholders			
	CEO	IT Manager	HR Manager	Staff
Staff engagement				
45. Are you willing to do others job beyond your R&R?				✓
46. Do you volunteer yourself to company's activities?				✓
Quality				
47. How are the products/services of ExxonMobil?	✓			
48. In which area do you pay most attention to deliver product to customer?	✓			

Table 3.2 Sustainable leadership grid comparing Honeybee criteria and ExxonMobil, Thailand.

Honeybee Elements on the Sustainable Leadership Grid		Typical Thai Firm	Extent to conform		
			Least Evident	Moderately Evident	Most Evident
1.	Developing people				
2.	Labor relations				
3.	Retaining staff				
4.	Succession Planning				
5.	Valuing staff				
6.	CEO and top team				
7.	Ethical behavior				
8.	Long or short term perspective				
9.	Organizational change				
10.	Financial markets orientation				
11.	Responsibility for environment				
12.	Social responsibility (CSR)				
13.	Stakeholders				
14.	Vision's role in the business				
15.	Decision making				
16.	Self-management				
17.	Team orientation				
18.	Culture				
19.	Knowledge sharing and retention				
20.	Trust				
21.	Innovation				
22.	Staff engagement				
23.	Quality				

Total elements in conformity

Legend: / = conforms; - = does not conform; ? = not known

Most evident = exactly like Honeybee

Moderately evident = somewhat like Honeybee

Least evident = somewhat like Locust

Does not conform = exactly like Locust

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING

The result of the research shows that ExxonMobil, Thailand's leadership philosophy is largely consistent with the Honeybee approach, except for the element of labor relations, since they do not have a union. And the element of financial market orientation, since it is not listed in Thai stock market.

It can be seen in the table 4.1 which summarized the fact between the data and each practice in the sustainable leadership grid with the degree of conformity: least evident, moderately evident and most evident in the data.

It reveals that ExxonMobil, Thailand mostly has a strong fit on 23 elements of Honeybee approach. Only three criteria: CEO and top team, and decision making, and self-management that have a degree of moderate.

The qualitative data and in depth details in each element are also discussed next to support the fact finding and explain more on the table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Analysis table comparing Honeybee criteria and ExxonMobil, Thailand

Honeybee Elements on the Sustainable Leadership Grid		Typical Thai Firm	Extent to conform		
			Least Evident	Moderately Evident	Most Evident
1.	Developing people	✓			
2.	Labor relations	N/A			
3.	Retaining staff	✓			
4.	Succession Planning	✓			
5.	Valuing staff	✓			
6.	CEO and top team	✓			
7.	Ethical behavior	✓			
8.	Long or short term perspective	✓			
9.	Organizational change	✓			
10.	Financial markets orientation	N/A			
11.	Responsibility for environment	✓			
12.	Social responsibility (CSR)	✓			
13.	Stakeholders	✓			
14.	Vision's role in the business	✓			
15.	Decision making	✓			
16.	Self-management	✓			
17.	Team orientation	✓			
18.	Culture	✓			
19.	Knowledge sharing and retention	✓			
20.	Trust	✓			
21.	Innovation	✓			
22.	Staff engagement	✓			
23.	Quality	✓			

Total elements in conformity 21

Legend: ✓ = conform; - = does not conform; ? = not known

4.1 The result of Honeybee leadership 23 elements

1. Developing people

High quality workforce is one of the key principles of ExxonMobil – “We will strive to hire and retain the most qualified people available and to maximize their opportunities for success through training and development”.

(<http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

In ExxonMobil, all staff is equivalent to attend the training. From the people development plan of the company, staff has to discuss with their supervisor to register training course each year. Each individual have to take at least 10 days of training per year. ExxonMobil effectively develop training road map for staff to ensure that staff is developed in both technical and soft skill.

ExxonMobil clearly show their emphasis on developing people from the excellence training framework. They provide both internal and external trainings to enhance multi dimension of skills. For internal training, they provide five modules to enhance skills and knowledge that create professional workforce. For external training, they are a partner of many training providers such as, SAP, Microsoft, Oracle, etc. to provide in depth technical skills.

“During my six years in the company, I have found a great framework to enhance my skills and knowledge that helped me define the career path I wanted to pursue. I have gain many knowledge and both technical and soft skills. I am really confident that the developed skills and knowledge that I have gained could shape me to be a professional IT analyst.”

(Wichanart Wangkiat, system analyst)

“One of my jobs is to ensure that all associate under my supervision have opportunity to develop themselves through company training program. I also help them to grow their knowledge to align and support with their career path. I believe that ExxonMobil invest a lot on their people comparing to others.” (Supasasapon Promkittipas, Supervisor)

In 2012, our major business units together spent more than \$88 million on training, reaching more than 76,000 participants. To strengthen our technical capacity, more than 70 percent of our investment was directed to professional technical training.” (<http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

2. Labor relations

ExxonMobil does not have labor union

3. Retaining staff

At ExxonMobil, staff retention can be observed from service year award program. The purpose of this program aims to recognize staff who has been worked with company for a certain period of time. It is an award and recognition program that could win employees' heart. They feel that they get acknowledgement from company. They also feel that company value on their contribution to the company. They set up a ceremony and invite all eligible staff to receive award from management on the stage. Other evidences can be seen from corporate culture to promote management from within. Therefore they have to retain staff to stay with company because it takes time to fully understand and integrate oneself to corporate culture. That is why ExxonMobil put very important on their employees.

4. Succession planning

Since, ExxonMobil has a unique and strong corporate culture. It might be difficult to hire management from outside to fully understand company legacy. Therefore, ExxonMobil is the company that 100% grow their own management. The obvious evidence show that current CEO of Exxon Mobil, Rex Tillerson started his career from an engineer after that he was assigned to various positions before becoming the top CEO of ExxonMobil.

In ExxonMobil Thailand, all management levels are elected from within. They have distinctly clear career path starting from analyst, team lead, supervisor, manager, vice president, president, and CEO. Staff has to discuss with their supervisor to plan their career. They are free to choose whether they would like grow their career path in managerial or technical. Once supervisor know subordinates' career path, their responsibility is to support and plan in term of individual development through training and job assignment. Another clear evidences is job rotation system, this allow staff to expose their knowledge in broad through different job assignments. Staff are prepared to work for next assignment in management level. "All the managements (supervisors and managers) encourage each employee to have both short term and long term plan. As an IT organization, we have 'Managerial' and 'Technical' paths. And it is significant for us to know which one we want to pursue,

and which position we would like to be in the future in order for our supervisors to assign appropriate assignment to help develop us in the right direction.” (Wichanart Wangkiat, System analyst)

Moreover, high potential staff can be assigned to be expat in another country for a few years to gain more experience in diversity environment as ExxonMobil is a global company. When they become a manager they will not only supervise local but also global team as well.

5. Valuing staff

ExxonMobil care and treat their employees well. It is easy to notice when enter into the company. The sign of safety and ergonomic warning are posted in the restroom wall and pantry. This raises awareness in safety workplace to employee. One of the ExxonMobil’s philosophies is to commit to safety environment.

“ExxonMobil remains steadfast in its commitment to excellence in Safety, Security, Health and Environmental (SSH&E) performance, referred to collectively as Operations Integrity.”

(Rex Tillerson, CEO, quoted in <http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

“ExxonMobil offers a full range of benefit to all employees because they believe that employees are a key driver of the company and they are valuable resources of the organization.” (Sutanya Khongsawatkiat, Policies & Benefits Supervisor)

ExxonMobil provides support programs and services to help employees’ live healthier lives. They consider workforce and community health issues to be key aspects of project planning. They provide healthcare insurance for staff to help them manage their health care issues and reduce related financial concerns. All employees could get health care service by using BUPA card at any registered hospital. They also get dental health care plan covering up to 6,000 baht per year. This benefit also cover employees’ spouse that is recognized by law.

Another benefit is house loan program. All employees with at least one year with the company are eligible to get this benefit. Company wants to support in financial and increase wellness of employees. They subsidize up to 5 % of interest of house loan.

In addition, ExxonMobil has flexible work environment. They allow employees to handle personal needs and with their supervisor's approval, they may be eligible to modify your schedule, work from a different location or work part-time. Personal time is also available for jury duty and pressing matters of personal importance such as doctor's appointments and school-related events.

6. CEO and top team

In ExxonMobil, top manager act as a top team speaker. They are not decision maker. Manager at all level is representative of the team. They usually, seek for input from their subordinate to help them making a decision. It can be seen from meeting room available in the office. This allows the team to have a meeting to brainstorm an idea and get some input from everyone in the team. They also have a big meeting room for a big team. They have a monthly meeting. This is also one of the channels for manager to deliver messages to all members. They also listen to all voices from member.

7. Ethical behavior

ExxonMobil highly commit to ethical standard of business conduct. It is a key competitive strength of the company because they need to maintain global license to operate. Since it is a global organization, ExxonMobil operate in many countries around the world. They have to comply with all applicable law in each country. Employees are highly encouraged to comply with ethical standard as well. Employees have to take training on ethic policy and anti-trust. They developed a computer-based training for these. Employees also need to refresh their knowledge on these every year. They have a clear message that there is no exception to the standard. Disciplinary is taken into action for those who violate the policy.

Moreover, they also have regular internal audits and self-assessment to investigate noncompliance to the standard. It will take place across all function in the company.

“I think ExxonMobil ethically conduct business to the standard. I never feel they violate any policy and law. Company also promotes this ethic behavior to all staff. I feel like everyone has to follow the same rule without any exception to anyone.” (Tanes Jedsadawaranon, System analyst)

8. Long- or short-term perspective

As an oil company, there are a lot of high risks to operate business in this industry. We might see many news about oil leakage that cause tremendous hazard to environment and affect many creature lives. Working in refinery plant also has high risk from machine. Therefore, to prevent lost time incident and environmental issue, ExxonMobil have it a site on long term planning on risk management.

“ExxonMobil is focused on the long term. Our projects – and their impacts – span generations, not business or political cycles. Our long-term perspective helps us focus on our responsibilities for environmental protection, social development and economic growth. That’s why we are committed to providing our employees and contractors with a safe workplace, and we expect everyone to strive to reduce safety incidents.” (Rek Tillerson, CEO, quoted in <http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

Even if facing the global economy downturn, ExxonMobil realize in higher demand of energy consumption. They expect global energy demand to increase by 30 percent by 2040, compared to 2010 levels. Demand for electricity will make natural gas the fastest growing major energy source and oil and natural gas are expected to meet 60 percent of energy needs over the next three decades. In order to meet this expected growth in demand. They invest approximately \$185 billion over the next five years to develop new supplies of energy.

“During challenging times for the global economy, ExxonMobil continues to invest to deliver the energy needed to underpin economic recovery and growth.”

(Rek Tillerson, CEO, quoted in <http://news.exxonmobil.com>)

9. Organizational change

In ExxonMobil Information Technology (EMIT) department, they reorganize to anticipate the change to improve internal process. Before, they divided into three main teams, IT operation, Business Line application, and SAP Application support. Each team has their own manager. They saw that the latter two teams have some overlapping and it could be flatten the hierarchy and enhance the process. Therefore, they decided to merge those two into one, Application team.

Other evidence is to develop mobility concept into organization. Since the mobile application become popular and all users adopt it into their daily life. They also notice this uprising trend and respond to the upcoming paradigm shift from work

station to mobility. Therefore, EMIT invest a lot to develop mobile application to gain competitive advantage and tailor the needs of customers. They also promote this trend and gain high capability of employee from mobile app competition. Staff who interested in the new trend registered to develop an innovative and value added mobile application. They also have been trained to know how to develop it.

Moreover, they also huge invest on a new mobile technology from SAP to apply into their ERP system. This shows that they are prepare and fast respond to the change. This could help them to gain competitive advantage from competitors.

10. Financial markets orientation

ExxonMobil is not listed in Thai stock market.

11. Responsibility for environment

Environment responsibility can be obviously observed in ExxonMobil. With the nature of conducting business in this industry, it could generate risks and impact to environment. ExxonMobil has a high concern on this and develop many programs to protect environment such as air pollution reduction, ecosystem services, water conservation and recycling, waste management, and environmental stewardship through responsible management.

“Reliable and affordable energy is essential to human progress. At the same time - like all industrial processes - energy development involves risk. ExxonMobil considers risk at every stage of development, and we continuously work to reduce environmental impacts. Rigorous standards and good practices that consider the needs of the communities where we operate guide our efforts.” (Quoted in <http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

12. Social responsibility

ExxonMobil recognizes the importance of education and has supported a number of educational initiatives. They supported the operation of the Satellite Education Foundation in expanding its reach to community education and lifelong learning through e-learning. Their flagship ‘Knowledge is Light’ magazine has been in circulation since 1959 while TV documentary program has been on air since 1979. ExxonMobil also sponsored the construction of several school buildings in remote areas of the country.

They also set up scholarship funds for underprivileged students and procured volunteer English teachers for a school. They also donated educational supplies and equipment to Pattaya school for the blind and orphanage, and made available some of our refinery engineers at Burapha University to coach engineering students and transfer expertise.

For the refinery's surrounding communities, they launched a youth camp in support of environmental conservation, supported a marine environmental study center, launched the rally for environmental conservation, and sponsored a training camp for the monitoring of marine environmental quality with a marine science institute at a local university. They also launched a project to train environmental youth leaders together with Khao Khiew Open Zoo. (Public and Affair manager)

In EMIT, they also contributed to society through teambuilding. All staff participated in this charity event. It was held at Wat Pho School in Ayutthaya that is the first school built by ExxonMobil Thailand. This time they gather to help school recovering from flood disaster in 2011. They organize the charity activity as an annual teambuilding. Staff separated into different team to do different kind of mission including chair & table repairing, room cleaning, computer assembly. Staff also donated money to school for needed.

13. Stakeholders

ExxonMobil, not only pay attention to shareholder, they also put important on stakeholders including employees, customers, communities, suppliers, governments and academic institute. It is obvious that they really pay attention and treat their staff very well. We could find the evidence from many programs they set up for their staff. For example, promote health and wellness in office through ergonomic program. This program encourages and prevent staff from any injury that cause by repetitive work habit. They provided ergonomic work station for staff including chair, table, and computer accessories. They also encourage people to do stretching two times a day. This shows that they care their staff.

“We have ergo stretching competition. So, every team has to actively stretch themselves during break. I think the company launched this program because they do care about their employee to ensure everyone work with proper ergonomic

posture to prevent from any injuries that may occur.” (Nisa Patanaponganan, System analyst)

Moreover, they also involved all stakeholders to engage in company CSR activities. They usually organize annual Kratin and invite customers, employees, business partners, and suppliers to be a part of this event together.

From the vision of the company "Exxon Mobil Corporation is committed to being the world's premier petroleum and petrochemical company. To that end, we must continuously achieve superior financial and operating results while simultaneously adhering to high ethical standards." They have guiding principle to archive this vision below:

- **Shareholders:** we are committed to enhancing the long-term value of the investment dollars entrusted to us by our shareholders.
- **Customers:** success depends on our ability to consistently satisfy ever changing customer preferences.
- **Employees:** the exceptional quality of our workforce provides a valuable competitive edge.
- **Communities:** we commit to be a good corporate citizen in all the places we operate worldwide.

14. Vision's role in the business

ExxonMobil set it vision "Exxon Mobil Corporation is committed to being the world's premier petroleum and petrochemical company. To that end, we must continuously achieve superior financial and operating results while simultaneously adhering to high ethical standards." To archive this goal they pursue it in the way that could be described below.

They ensure to supply reliable and affordable energy to business and customer. They also have a vision of energy over the next 30 years will include expanding renewable energy – wind, solar, and biofuels. And they expect these energy sources to play increasingly visible roles in the world's overall fuel mix.

Due to the high risk of energy industry including geopolitical risks, economic risks, financial risks, regulatory changes and the supply-and-demand volatility inherent to commodity markets. In addition, they are committed to reduce emissions and protect the environment.

Therefore, they have to manage these risks and set a long-term plan, and long-term investment. Applying a new technology need to be play in this as well.

The long-term plan in the next 30 years must, therefore, be to encourage technological advancements at every link in the energy chain and in every sector of society. The greatest technological changes may take years or even decades to emerge.

“By understanding the broad and sustained need for technology, we can create policies that support the people and technologies that will shape the energy markets of tomorrow and in the process we can increase opportunity for billions. We can create new jobs and prosperity. And we can protect the environment for the generations to come.” (Michael Dolan, Senior Vice President, quoted in <http://corporate.exxonmobil.com>)

ExxonMobil also share the vision to employee. It can be clearly seen in ExxonMobil Information Technology department (EMIT). When they just introduced a vision of their department, they apply many strategies and tools to share this to all employees. For example, they set up employee forum to deliver this vision to employees. They also communicate through internal website, email, and poster. This shows that not only they have a vision but also they communicate the vision to all employees to have a mutual understanding.

15. Decision making

Consensual decision making can be observed in ExxonMobil. During the meeting decision will be made base on consensual agreement from all members. No matter they are analyst or manager, they are equal to introduce their own idea and solution to make a decision.

One of the programs that can be evidence is Act on IT session. When EMIT want to seek an idea from all level of staff to improve organization performance and processes. Every team organized brainstorming session to hear voice from every member in the team. All of the messages that got from this program will be passed to management team to help them making a decision.

16. Self-management

ExxonMobil is very systematic. They have a clear processes and workflows that are systematically defined. Therefore, staff can manage themselves. It can be observed from flex hour, employee can manage themselves to work in their convenient time because they concern on result-oriented not much rely on process-oriented. As long as they could manage to get the job done, coming to the office at 9.00 am sharp is not a matter. Manager just be responsible to advice and guide their subordinate.

“Some time I have a late night meeting to discuss on project with colleague in US. So, I just inform my supervisor about this, if she has no concern. I am free to manage myself to adjust my working hour. I can come to the office late and stay at the office until late instead. “(Tanes Jedsadawaranon, System analyst)

17. Team orientation

In ExxonMobil, it is a team based. Each team consists of 10-30 members including manager, supervisor, team lead, and analyst. Manager is responsible for managing team to achieve team goal and plan team strategies. He/she look at a big picture. Supervisor acts as a person who develops people in the team. He/she focus on people. Team lead manager all work and assign job to the right person. Analyst act as a contributor, work in operational job or project.

Empowerment can be observed in the team. From the team structure, it can see that manager is not the one who controls everything. Work and decision making are empowered to all staff in all level. Analyst can help team lead to lead some project. Everyone also have opportunity to initiate new idea to improve team performance and processes.

18. Culture

ExxonMobil has a strong corporate culture. Safety and health in the work place can obviously be observed in the company because they are a core value of ExxonMobil. It is their vision that “No body get hurt”, which helps them to ensure long-term sustainable performance. They try to set a record of zero lost time incidents. At ExxonMobil, Thailand, currently they reach up to 2million hours of no lost time incidents. There are many safety programs that help to raise awareness on safety and try to prevent any safety incident. For example, they formed up a safety team to

organize safety program such as, safety forum, safety week with a lot of activities. In the office area, signage related to safety is posted. They also have computer based training about safety in various topics ranging from food safety, car safety, office safety, etc.

“I think for ExxonMobil “Safety” is set as priority to ensure that all employees are secure and be well while working in ExxonMobil environment.”
(Kannaporn Saengjakara, Accounts analyst)

19. Knowledge sharing and retention

At ExxonMobil, knowledge management system is developed effectively. They believe that knowledge is valuable asset because it is intangible asset. This could help them to gain competitive advantage in the market. Therefore, there are many effective methods to retain and share the knowledge within organization.

Knowledge is stored on intranet. Different teams have their own internal site to store data. This platform could help them to easily store and share knowledge because data could be accessed anywhere and anytime.

Moreover, they also have knowledge sharing session called Lunch & Learn. The session is organized during lunch time. They organize the sharing session in different kind of topics and invite others to attend. Those interested person can enjoy lunch and gain useful information at the same time.

20. Trust

In energy industry, risks are involved. ExxonMobil, therefore, considers risk at every step of development and conduct business. They continuously work to reduce environment impact and concern on community around the place where they conduct business. They have many projects to manage the risks such as, air emission reduction, ecosystem service, and environmental stewardship through responsible management. With understanding the local environment is critical to superior performance and do business, it helps ExxonMobil has a goodwill from external and internal party. Therefore, it creates trust to all stakeholders including, employees, shareholder, suppliers, and customer.

Trust also comes from the company performance in the market. ExxonMobil rank at the top in the industry. They remain well-positioned to meet growing long-term global energy and petrochemical demand. Even though, they

succeed to deliver strong result for shareholders by leveraging financial performance. They also put important on their employee. Employees are treated ethically. It can be observed from many program and activities that they organized to ensure health and wellness in workplace of staff.

21. Innovation

The nature of oil industry is high risk due to many factors; limited resources, financial risk, demand-supply risk, and etc. Therefore, they have to continue develop themselves to handle all the risk. That is why we can easily see the innovation always play important role in this industry.

ExxonMobil have many innovation programs both incremental and radical. One of the biggest innovation programs is Algae biofuels program. It is a long-term alternative fuel investment to seek a new source of energy from biofuels. They try to study the possibility to extract oil from Algae that is some kind of seaweed in a shallow sea.

The innovation can also be clearly observed in EMIT. They are responsible for bringing IT-enabled innovation to corporation. For example, they organized mobile application competition that opens for all staff develops mobile application to improve business processes or add value to organization. The top five finalized application will be implemented for real in the future.

The winner application could bring a lot of value added to organization. It is an application for staff who works at barge. Normally, when they stop at the dock they need to capture all events on the paper and update it into system. The longer they stop at the dock, the fee they need to pay. With this application, they can automatically capture all events on mobile and directly update it into the system. It could save time and money for company.

22. Staff engagement

At ExxonMobil, staff engagement can be observed. They have many volunteer activities such as, club activities, safety team, team building, and year-end party. These require voluntary from staff. There are many staff are willing to do this activities all the time even if these require extra effort outside normal working hours. They commit to do it because they want to do it, not be forced to do it. Doing these

activities will not increase their performance. All they could get is experiences and building their network in the company.

“I volunteer myself to be a committee of EMIT team building because I think it is fun to do. I can get to know other people from different teams. Some people I used to work with them but don’t know them personally. This activity helps me to know more people and helps me to work with them easier after I know them personally.” (Weeraporn Rattanagate, System analyst)

23. Quality

At ExxonMobil, they have developed a product quality management system to control quality across all of business lines. They ensure to deliver quality product to customers.

“Aligned product quality management systems contribute to customer confidence in ExxonMobil and help us meet our commitment to providing high quality Fuel to our customers around the world.” (Quoted in <http://www.exxonmobil.com>)

In EMIT, they set its vision as the following:

EMIT, turn idea into solution

EMIT, treat everyone as a customer

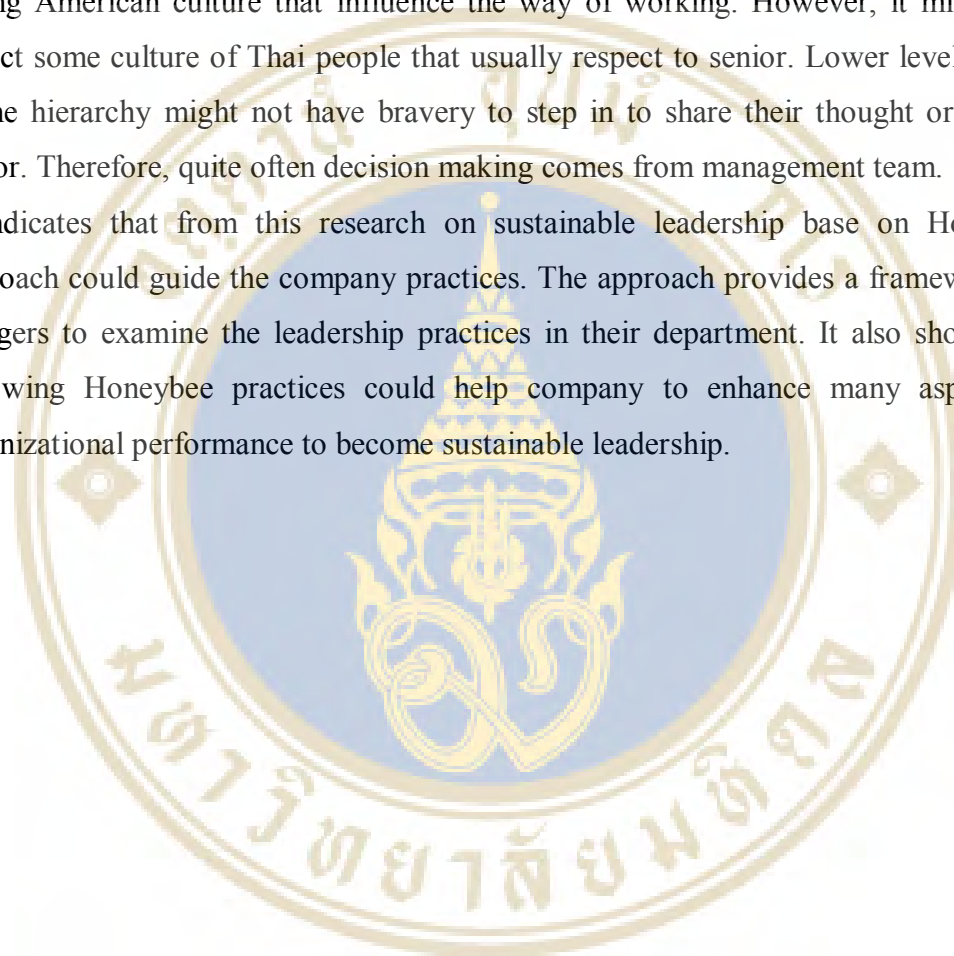
EMIT, deliver quality

The message in vision statement shows that they focus on deliver quality products/services to customer. This message has been communicated to all staff to understand the vision in order to archive a same big goal of organization.

4.2 Conclusions

Like others sustainable leadership company, overall result of ExxonMobil, Thailand's management practices consistent with 23 elements of Honeybee approach. It reflects 21 of the 23 Honeybee criteria. 18 of them show strong evident from the data. Only three elements show moderate evident which are CEO and top team, decision making, and self-management. Even though, it is a global company and has a strong American culture that influence the way of working. However, it might still reflect some culture of Thai people that usually respect to senior. Lower level people in the hierarchy might not have bravery to step in to share their thought or idea to senior. Therefore, quite often decision making comes from management team.

It indicates that from this research on sustainable leadership base on Honeybee approach could guide the company practices. The approach provides a framework for managers to examine the leadership practices in their department. It also shows that following Honeybee practices could help company to enhance many aspects of organizational performance to become sustainable leadership.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Discussion

ExxonMobil, Thailand shares some similarity with previous studies. Like SCG, even though SCG used Rhineland model to do research. The results show the same degree of most evident in all elements under the criteria related to employees: retaining people, training and staff development, succession planning, and valuing employees. These results emphasize that both of them highly invest in staff and look at staff as valuable asset of the company. True and Bathroom Design also share the same degree of most evident in some elements of investing in staff.

In term of organizational culture, ExxonMobil, Thailand shares the same results with SCG, True, and Bathroom Design. They all have the degree of most evident in corporate culture and shared vision.

Since, the studied organizations are one of the top positions in the industry; innovation is evitable to embed in organization. ExxonMobil is also placed in the top position in oil & gas industry. One of the reasons behind this success is that they gain competitive advantage from their innovation that include in every single process until finished product. The results also show the same degree of high evident on the elements of innovation.

Environment and society are highly concerned by ExxonMobil through their responsible management. Like SCG, they also highly focus on these two impacts. The result clearly shows that they have the same degree of high evident on environment and social responsibility. Due to the fact that ExxonMobil and SCG operate in Oil and Building material industry respectively, these have a high risk on environment and society around the area where the business operated. Therefore, as sustainable organizations, they have responsible management on these two issues to ensure that there is no harm to others.

Comparing to True and Bathroom Design, Their industry may have a less risk on environment. The research has slightly different results from ExxonMobil and SCG. They have a degree of high evidence on CSR but moderate evidence on environment responsibility.

Ethical behavior is integrated in ExxonMobil culture. They ethically conduct business with transparent behavior. They also promote this to all employees to act the same. The result show the high evident on this ethical behavior. Like other Rhineland and Honeybee company; SCG, True, and Bathroom Design, they also show the high degree of evidence on this criteria.

The results show similar thing for ExxonMobil and all studied company on the criteria; top team speaker, decision making, and self-management. There is no one fall under the high degree of evident on these criteria. ExxonMobil and Bathroom Design share the same results that have moderate evident on those three criteria. SCG and True are the same that have moderate evident on decision making and self-management. But they have least evident on top team speaker, because their CEO perceived as a hero. We can evidence it from CEO appearing to public, TV, magazine, newspaper of these two companies.

5.2 Recommendation

In order to enhance ExxonMobil, Thailand to perfectly fit with Honeybee leadership, they have to close the gap on those three criteria: Top team speaker, decision making, and self-management. Those three are line under moderate evidence. To promote a top team speaker, they should reduce their dependence on all powerful CEO (Avery, 2010). Organization should support more team-based approach and the CEO should keep a low profile. Another suggestion can be the CEO as speaker role rotates among top management, because it can help to prevent individuals to gain their profile during their time as CEO.

Decision making are relevant to top team speaker. If they can enhance previous criteria, it also promote consensus on decision making in organization. Having team-based and empower staff could also help on this, because everyone have a chance to get involve on decision making.

Having team-based could help to promote self-management, because everyone are representative of the team. There is no one take control on others. So, they have to understand their role and responsibility well. Then, they will know what they need to do by themselves.



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