

IMPROVING WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND PERFORMANCE THROUGH MOTIVATION

Motivation can be best described as the means of getting people to exert a high degree of effort on the job. It is to be understood that different factors are required to motivate different people. What is known is that the actions of the management can serve to determine the level of motivation that is generated amongst employees in the workplace; as employees tend to be driven by the expectations of management.

It is incumbent that management seeks to address the issue of motivation by developing initiatives that are directed at more accurately diagnosing performance problems, understanding what makes effective performance possible, designing Human Resources Development programmes to motivate employee performance, and to enhance drive that performance through a shared vision of the organization. Through these initiatives, management would be surely driving a process that is aimed at securing the survival of the individual organization, and to generate higher levels of productivity.

The important question that remains to be answered is, what can management do to motivate employers? There is an inexhaustible list of initiatives from which to choose. Management ought to recognized that the participating of employees in the decision making process makes for a bonding between management and

employees. There is the need to show appreciation for work done. The payment of a good salaries/ wages, job security, good working conditions, providing safe and interesting work, providing a safe and healthy working environment, fair disciplinary procedures and a systems of recognition and awards.

Management ought not to loose sight of the fact that the satisfying of employees' needs, the setting of work related goals, its personal loyalty to employees, and its general interest in the personal welfare of its employees become paramount, if the expectations of management are to be realized, and growth and the survival of any organization are to be assured.

These apart, management needs to focus on the workplace orientation of its employees as one way of stimulating them into action. Orientation may be pitched at the level of 'Overview Orientation' or 'Job Specific Orientation.'" In the instance of Overview Orientation, focus is to be placed on the basic information an employee needs to understand, inclusive of the system (s) under which he/she works, an introduction to the policies and general procedures to be followed, information on rights and responsibilities, entitlements- compensation and benefits, information on safety and health practices, and on the physical facilities at the workplace.

As it relates to Job Specific Orientation, the purpose of this is to help employees understand the function of the organization and how he/ she can best be

integrated into his / her role. The focus in this instance is placed on job responsibilities, expectations and duties, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, the layout of the workplace, and introduction to coworkers and other people in the wider organization.

Based on the importance attached to the motivation of employees, it requires that management remains conscious of the fact that job satisfaction is reflected in the happiness of each employee. However, there are no short cuts to achieving this, and hence management must remain mindful of the need for it to meet the below expectations. To begin with, it needs to treat employees as individuals, for this is a sure way to raise the esteem of any individual, Employee participation and cooperation is to be encouraged as a means to ensuring their commitment to decisions to which they were party. Every effort ought to be made to make work more interesting, which can be achieved through the process of job enrichment. The providing and accurate and timely feedback from management to employees on issues, and the demonstration of transparency will surely reduce levels of frustration. If the issue of providing proper remuneration and valued rewards is carefully addressed, it will certainly serve to be a disincentive to employees.

The key to the motivation of employees should therefore be driven by the knowledge that individual dissatisfaction leads to organization commitment, whilst dissatisfaction can lead to actions that are not in the best interest of the organization.