

Maintaining Employee Relevance in the Workplace

For whatever reasons, a sense of complacency sometimes exists amongst workers who have been employed at a particular establishment for a period of time. This may arise where they feel very comfortable in the job, to the point that some may fall into a sense of complacency. They come to believe that they are indispensable. Some managers and supervisors may be contributing to this feeling, as they tend to depend heavily on a particular employee or a group of employees in more ways than one.

It is usually these employees who know the operations at the enterprise better than most, and who play a motivating role in helping to stimulate higher levels of productivity on the part of their work colleagues. Those who have what is termed as 'institutional knowledge' are often treated as value members of the organization. It is for this purpose that these persons are often entrusted with a measure of responsibility.

By virtue of this, there are some fundamental reasons why employees should do whatever they can in order to make themselves relevant within their workplace. Those who show no initiative or fail to become involved in the life of the organization may tend to contribute to their own demise. At the time of the laying off or retrenching workers, it is those employees who shared the greatest concern. Employees who take the position that their qualifications or experience primarily will place them within a comfort zone, may want to think again. It is best that employees work towards possessing a particular skill or talent, along with the appropriate qualifications, knowledge and experience. While these present a formidable combination, there none the less may not constitute any safeguard to secured employment. What this does, is to cause the employer to seriously consider the employee's value to the organization, when it comes to the trimming of the staff compliment for whatever reason.

It is amazing that an employee should entertain the thought that he/she is indispensable. It is likely that such a view might be promulgated by an individual who is self employed. Even then, such can be referred to as wishful thinking. In the event that the services offered by an self employed person are no longer in demand, the possibility exists that the individual may virtually become irrelevant. It is also for the self employed person to recognize that it is through the delivery of quality service, good customer service and the display of a high level of professionalism, that a customer base is developed and maintained; and the business is positioned to attract new customers.

Irrespective of whether the employee is part of an enterprise or is a self employed person, there are some basic things which can place the individual in the category of a valued and quality worker. It starts with the displaying of a good work ethic and attitude. The profile of the employee can be enhanced by the fact that he/she has a particular skill, shows interest and initiative in their work and is willing to go the extra mile. Whereas the developing this profile is important, maintaining it is equally the same. To become complacent is to laid the basis for one's downfall. This comes about where there is over confidence and a sense of apathy becomes apparent. Both younger and older employees could find themselves in this trap.

This brings us to important question..... How can older workers remain relevant? It is to be reemphasized that they should not become complacent. The major hurdle that they may be called upon to get over is the fear of change. This is where there must be a resolve to eliminate the fear of change and instead, to embrace change. Older workers should always maintain a positive outlook. It is important that they are not intimidated by the younger employees who may bring new knowledge, skills sets and ideas; and who moreover, may also be more highly qualified. Whereas this is to be expected, older workers maintain the distinct advantage of having the necessary experience. Since nothing can replace experience, this positions older workers to be competitive and not to fear that they can be easily disposed of. Older workers can use this is a platform to earn the respect of other employees. They are to be encouraged to speak out and not to be afraid of doing so.

If there is one thing that older workers should remember and strive to maintain, is to ensure that they remain current with their practice (profession or vocation) by assessing training and retraining opportunities. Since the world waits on no one, it is best for every employee whether young or old to seize the opportunity to cement their place within the enterprise. Although there are no guarantees, it is certainly a positive way to approach the whole idea of job retention.