

Promoting Jobs: Protecting People

The discussion on productivity is usually premised on the output of workers. This basically presupposes that workers are provided with a decent wage or salary, a safe and healthy working environment, good conditions of service and security of tenure. These are the main ingredients that most would expect to drive worker productivity. The plot falls to pieces where there is a divide between the perception and the reality. The genius of this can lie with the attitudes and dispositions of both employer and employee.

Starting with the employer, the usually mistake that is made, is the taking of employees for granted. In this instance, the employer can make the cardinal mistake of moving to exploit employees by way of demanding more of them without providing the requisite resources to do the job, offering an increase in pay, and/or incentives to drive employee productivity. A case may well be made that those employers who engage in such behaviour, do so considering that they hold the power of hiring and firing in their hands. As a consequence, they use this as a means to control workers who shows signs of challenging the status quo. Akin to this, employers being mindful of the growing job scarcity, take the liberty of engaging in the practice of making excessive output demands of employees.

The failure of employers to engage their employees and involve them in the decision making process, can also be a source discontent and discord. The fact that employers can sometimes be made not to feel a part of the organization, is a factor that does little to motivate them into giving of their best. The reluctance of employers to make provisions for employees to share in the profits of the organization, to engage in negotiations for improve conditions of service, attempting to deny workers their right to be unionized and to enjoy the right to freedom of association and to bargain collectively, will tend to contribute to driving down levels of productivity.

It is therefore important that decent work is promoted, for implicit in this is providing decent, quality and sustainable jobs. If a level playing field is to exist, then employers are required to respect and observe the rights and freedoms of workers. The practices standards and policies of the workplace should therefore accord with international conventions and practice; and should be applied constant with the labour laws. If employers are to attract the best workers, it would be in their best interest to offer jobs that will attract workers to jobs that are sustainable and induce them to perform at their optimum; giving that there are comfortable as the job is rewarding both in remuneration and job satisfaction.

By committing to the decent work agenda, employers can lead the charge in promoting decent jobs and offering protection to their employees. The decent work agenda implies access to employment in conditions of freedom, the recognition of the basic rights at work, guaranteeing the absence of discrimination or harassment, an income enabling one to satisfy basic economic, social and family needs and responsibilities, an adequate level of social protection for the worker and family members, and the right to participation and a voice at work, directly or indirectly through self- chosen representative organization.

For the purpose of treating to the subject, it is important that cognizance is taken of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) view on the subject of Promoting Jobs: Protecting People.

“Work is central to people’s well – being. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Such progress, however, hinges on work that is decent. Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive, delivers a fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection for all.”