The team leader assembly department

ASSIGN BUSTER

This evaluation will focus on the job of team leader assembler for the can manufacturing firm. The major components, tasks and responsibilities required for this position include: good manual dexterity, the ability to assemble components, the ability to stand for extended periods of time, ability to operate various plant equipment including conveyers and counting machines, good manual dexterity, attention to detail, ability to engage in repetitive motions.

Independent judgment is required to inspect components and visual acuity is necessary to ensure that only the best quality products are passed through the assembly line. The team leader of the assembly unit is also responsible for coordinatingcommunicationand working relations with all team members. The team leader is also responsible for ensuring the safety of all members of the team, for tracking time cards, for ensuring that all team members are cross-trained in job functions and to ensure that productivitygoalsare met in a timely fashion.

Basic job description includes assembling and performing all steps vital to product production in accordance with specifications for product design. This position can cultivate a sense of intrinsicmotivationby allowing the team leader a certain level of autonomy while supervising the work functions of other responsibilities. Team leaders are also responsible for scheduling employees, addressing minor disputes among employees and for the quality of work produced by their team.

For many the ability to lead and represent a unit of employees is in an of itself enough to encourage intrinsic motivation, depending on what factors

motivate the individual team leader. The team leader position also offers more financial incentives than other positions, which contributes to motivating the employee in this role. Company wide rewards offered all employees include a comprehensive profit sharing plan that allows all employees to enjoy the rewards the company reaps when the company is doing well.

This type of award however, many not prove as motivating for a team leader, as profit sharing awards generally appeal to higher ups in the company who have more capital to invest and are often afforded more profit sharing opportunities within the company (Greider, Logue & Yates, 2001). Management for example, often enjoys many of the benefits associated with profit sharing in the company. Real employee ownership may come in other forms including allowing employees to participate in important decision-making processes within the organization (Greider, Logue & Yates, 2001; Schneier & Shaw, 1995).

Praise recognition does exist within the company, and is currently part of the performance review system. The current performance review system is provided employees once per annum to provide employees a critique of their performance during the year. The team leader clearly would receive much praise and encouragement for meeting the goals and expectations outlined by his or her supervisor and for ensuring that his or her team succeeds during the year.

The performance appraisal system currently reflects the accomplishments and achievements of the individual team leader, rather than reflect on the

accomplishments of the team unit however. This may provide some level of motivation for the team leader, but ultimately does not provide as comprehensive a review as might a group performance review that reflects on the achievements of the team. Such a review might provide the team leader with more insight into how their actions affect the success and ability of the team, and the team's contributions to the company as a whole.

It might also serve to improve communication more among team members. Goals are used in the company for this position in many ways. The team leader meets with his or her supervisor during the annual performance review, at which time goals are set for the year. These may include for example, ensuring that all parts and products are assembled in a timely fashion, ensuring that all team members come to work on time and that absenteeism is limited, and ensuring that group communication is amply facilitated within the organization.

The team leader also meets with team members once per month to discuss their team goals. This may include ensuring that all products assembled meet stringent quality guidelines or ensuring that zero defects are realized within the scope of products assembled by the team. Generally goals are used in the company as a motivator and as an educational tool, allowing each member of the organization to realize what the company's aims and objectives are for the year, and helping individual employees realize what their place is in relation to the company's goals and objectives.

The goal system is relatively effective for this position, though it may benefit with some targeted changes. The job redesign for the position of team leader

will entail a strategic job redesign and assessment that includes contributions from employees. Job redesign can serve as a useful tool for increasing a job's motivating potential " depending on the job categorizations" that result from job redesign (Kulik, 1989). For these job categorizations to be truly motivating and encourage greater intrinsic employee motivation they must encourage participation and feedback from the employee whose job is being redesigned.

Much research including that presented by social information processing theorists suggests that employees' evaluation of their jobs motivating potential is influenced by multiple factors including clues provided by their socialenvironment(Kulik, 1989). This suggests that an environment that supports a job as worthwhile and beneficial is more likely to encourage employees to remain motivated an interested. Thus a job redesign should consider factors that lead to social evaluation of the job, such as job title.

In this case the designation " team leader" suggests that the job incumbent has some level of authority, lending itself to a certain amount ofrespectand authority, and likely serving to increase employees intrinsic motivation. Other motivating factors are based solely on job content. Hence it may be important to evaluate the job's content and determine whether additional responsibilities would add to motivation or decrease employee motivation.

Thus the content and responsibilities of the team leader must also be assessed as part of this redesign. Schippmann (1999) suggests redesign that focuses on the concept of " strategic job modeling" a job redesign process that focuses more on people working in jobs and encourages employers to

collect information about the people working in their jobs to help guide efforts " to select, build or modify the components of a human resources system to achieve an organizationally relevant outcome" (3).

This theory suggests that more accurate information to help guide decisions regarding job redesign may be gathered when individuals working within a position are consulted about the job redesign process. Cronshaw (1999) along similar lings suggests that it is important to consult with employees as much as it is management to ensure that job redesign occurs in a functional manner and works to enhance employee motivation.

One important component of job redesign in the manufacturing environment includes providing a performance measurement and rewards system that supports the use of teams (Schneier & Shaw, 1995). The current performance review system adopted by the company still works too diligently to review the individual performance of the team leader rather than address the collaborative efforts of the team. There is much to be said however of measuring the performance of teams (Frohman, 1995).

For the position of team leader, the following recommendations are necessary to help promote intrinsic motivation and boost the productivity of the team leader and his or her underlings:

(1) the performance review process for team leader must be modified to reflect the contributions not only of the team leader but also of the team (2) the job should include cross training for the team leader with assemblers but also supervisors and managers within the assembly department to promote

greater knowledge sharing and understanding of how other job roles influence the assembly line (3) the team leader should be provided an opportunity to participate in a rewards based program that promotes bonuses for achieving goals established at the annual performance review (4) the team leader should be provided the opportunity to engage team members more fully and participate more in their performance review processes and (5) the team leaders job should be benchmarked with other team leader or supervisory positions within other companies to ensure that the job content matches similar job descriptions, titles and pay within other industries.

Let's examine each of these components more thoroughly. First, it is vital in a team-oriented situation that the performance review process reflects not only the achievements and accomplishments of the person assessed, but also the rest of the team. This will encourage the team leader to actively engage team members and participate more fully in communication efforts, knowledge sharing and strategic planning at the team level. It also encourages the team leader to be more accountable for the actions of the team as a whole.

If the team for example, performs poorly during the year despite good attendance and performance on the team leaders part, it is still important that the team's performance is reflected in the performance appraisal process so recommendations for improvement may be made. Second, team leaders should be provided the opportunity to learn more about the inner operations and workings of the company as a whole. The best way to

facilitate this process is through cross training, allowing the team leader a birds eye view of what other supervisors and front line employees do in the organization, how their work affects the assembly line, and remind the team leader of the importance of interpersonal communication and knowledge sharing among all levels of the organization. The team leader should also be provided more rewards incentives for work well done.

While a profit sharing program is beneficial to higher ups as discussed earlier, it provides little intrinsic motivation many times for front line employees (Frohman, 1995; Greider, Logue & Yates, 2001). A more appropriate rewards or incentives program may focus on providing the team leader with annual performance based bonuses. This can be achieved by establishing a set of goals or expectations that provide opportunities for bonuses when the team leader meets or exceeds expectations. Bonuses do not have to come in the way of financial compensation to be effective either (Cronshaw & Fine, 1999). The company may opt for example, to provide bonuses that include extra vacation days or paid time off to team leaders for meeting or exceeding their goal expectations.

Presently the team leader provides a brief summary or dialogue as part of the review process for team members. The team leader may realize more motivation and have more desire to participate in performance reviews if afforded the opportunity to actually sit in on performance appraisals or reviews with team members. This will allow team members more feedback from their lead and help them realize the authority and status as well as the common interests the team leader has with them. Lastly, it is vital the job

content of team leader matches that of other jobs in similar industries. At minimum annually the company should reevaluate the job content so that it accurately reflects similar jobs in the industry.

On the same token it is important that the company elicit feedback from the incumbent so they can provide more detail regarding the job's functions and responsibilities, and so that the job can be modified to reflect actual responsibilities more fully (Cronshaw & Fine, 1999). This type of analysis will allow greater participation from the team leader in the redesign process and will therefore serve to increase motivation and enthusiasm for the job (Kulic, 1989; Frohman, 1995; Schippmann, 1999). This helps promote employee ownership in job functions and encourages more intrinsic motivation because the employee recognizes that they are an active participant in the job redesign process. It also helps stimulate interest in the job redesign process and ensures that the company is redesigning the job in a way that meets the employees as well as the company's needs, wants, goals and expectations.