

True life experience of value conflict in an organization

Business, Organization



The following narration is a true – life story of value conflict issue that occurred in Exxon mobile some years back. The value issue conflict happened in a whole lot of issues that greatly affected the productive capacity of the employees. The company has what it calls “ contract staff” and “ staff”, the former are not direct employees of the company while the latter are. Company policy was that this contract staff as they were called were not allowed, entitled to use some facilities of the company that were enjoyed by the staffs.

The senior staffs that are natives raised an objection to this, arguing along a rational path insisting that since the facilities are located in their country and they are citizens of such country and workers, working for the good of the company they should be entitled to such facilities. Such discrepancies resulted to value conflict. Apart from this, there was also the problem of senior staffs that are natives who employed their friends and relatives in the place of those who are more qualified, such acts are against company values because on the long-run, it will result to low level of outcome.

According to Kanter, Organizational cultures or organizational value systems are usually founded by a strong charismatic leader, who is usually the founder of the organization. In the short-term, these strong leaders use charismatic leadership to pass their values, culture, and tradition throughout the organization. Once the charismatic leader's values permeate the organization, the organization moves on to the more traditional forms of leadership and cultural maintenance systems that are necessary for long-term success (Kanter, 1983)

From the above, it can be discerned that when unqualified workers are employed, they will not make good charismatic leaders in such an organization. Another value conflict that occurred during that period was the issue of senior staffs who use company vehicles for unauthorized operations and such things are against company values and it resulted to conflicts between management of the company and senior staff members that are natives. Finally, another area that brought about conflict was in the area of “lunch time”.

The company policy that represented their values mandates that no-one should be in the cafeteria once it is 1: 30pm, but most of the employees tend to disregard these instructions and hence value conflict arose as many lost their jobs as a result of this. The above mentioned conflict was told by a participant in the whole scenario and below was the way it was resolved. The value conflict was resolved through series of meetings that was organized by the management.

After series of discussions, the following points were presented to the workers to re-orient the company's values, they are as follows: •

Presentation of goals and objectives of the firms

- Job specification for various departments
- Reconcile contracting goals
- Analyze reports of past performance and project for the future
- Involve team language [the use of “ WE” instead of “ I”]

- Give every member a sense of belonging
- Feel with all members by helping them work out their weaknesses
- Build a relationship based on trust and mutual respect

After the above agendas were duly implemented, the value conflict was successfully resolved and this had a positive impact on the attitude of workers towards their jobs and on the outcome. Another value conflict that occurred in an organization was one of great magnitude that had a devastating effect internally. One of the senior staff named smith, who was in charge of the marketing department, had an affiliation with another company. This was not known to the management, and when a contract came up, which ran into millions of dollars, smith's initial company was asked to submit a proposal, which they did. Read about personalized conflict

There were also bids from other companies. When it was time to submit tenders for the job, he was now looked upon as an industrial spy, who could give away classified information to competing companies. This situation ended up costing his first company the contract, and after an investigation that revealed that smith was indeed involved in what could be termed industrial espionage, he was summoned to a board meeting, and was consequently sacked. He also implicated some other workers, who had collaborated with him, and they also lost their jobs.

In this situation, the value conflict that arose was because of smith's conflicting goals, and the fact that his goals were in conflict with those of his

organization. In order to preserve the values and goals of the organization, he had to be fired.

From all that has been said thus far, it is obvious that human value plays a very important and significant role in the working behavior of workers, it determines the approach they take in reconciling opposing situations and resolving them. Moreover, it can be seen that “human value conflict” can be successfully resolved and its outcome positively improved upon.