Ethics and the issue of tardiness, especially in the workplace

Business, Work

The Oxford American College Dictionary (2002) defines the word " ethics" as " moral principles that govern a person's or group's behavior" or " the moral correctness of specified conduct" (p. 463). And, " ethics provides cultural guidelines – organizational or societal – that help decide between proper or improper behavior" (Sherman, Bohlander & Snell, 1998, p. 541) and, thus, governs decision-making. According to Managing Human Resources (1998), ethics impact all aspects of the American workplace – from the establishment of corporatecultureto employee performance assessments.

One of the key indicators of employee ethics is timeliness, whiletardinessis one of the most common and costly forms of performance deviance (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). This document is written as a guide for addressing the issue of tardiness in the workplace. The following is a summary of the main points of this document. • Defining tardiness and what causes its occurrence. • Identifying possible workplace solutions for tardiness. • Cataloguing the socioeconomic benefits of workplace solutions for tardiness.

• Summarization of the document. Implementing this guide will ensure that any American organization achieves the goal of minimizing workplace tardiness. Problem Statement America has a highly developed economy and technologically advanced society, where punctuality is assessed a high value (Dizon, 2003). Despite that, many Americans struggle with timeliness. According to researcher and author Diana DeLonzor, tardiness is a complex issue that is often a long term habit and has deep psychological roots (Dizon, 2003).

Tardiness, particularly " on the job," can be indicative of a number of issues: low self-esteem, job dissatisfaction, corporate culture and more (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). The socioeconomic implications of lateness are staggering. This form of misbehavior can cause loss of jobs or promotions, loss of reputation, increasedstresslevels and more, negatively affecting the productivity and profitability of any organization. Additionally, research indicates that workplace lateness is closely linked with absenteeism and the number of grievances/complaints that employees submit (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007).

Thus, lateness is often tied to employee perceptions of unfairness on the job (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). Possible Solutions Creating a fair and balanced workenvironmentis essential to addressing tardiness and other forms of unethical, nonproductive behaviors. According to " The Journal of Management Development" (2007), the following is a basic framework designed to eliminate lateness: 1.) Develop and enforce a comprehensive ethics program with clearly communicated expectations for behavior, and the ensuing rewards and punishments.

2.) Provide easy access to resources, whether they are production tools, benefits, counseling or training. 3.) Demonstrate respectful behavior – address employees with dignity, but also provide them with a grievance process. 4.) Develop opportunities for advancements via promotions, higher wages, etc. and provide all employees with equal access to them. And communicate the basis for rewards –equality, equity or need. 5.) Insure that corrective action procedures are fair and unbiased. 6.

) Provide consistent and constantcommunicationabout any major organizational changes. 7.) Properly train managers on the corrective action, grievance and rewards' processes. Benefits of Eliminating Tardiness Studies show that an employee who is ten minutes late for work every day causes his/her employer to loose two weeks of productivity annually (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). Consequently, developing a comprehensive plan for eliminating tardiness can yield a number of benefits. First, there is an economic benefit to timeliness.

People who are timely are generally more productive, increasing corporate revenue via additional customers, greater production of goods and/or services, increased sales and more (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007). Secondly, there is a sociological/psychological benefit to timeliness. Timeliness increases confidence, engendersrespect, minimizes resentment, improves credibility/relationships, leads to higher levels of productivity, and demonstrates an adherence to and respect for accepted standards of behavior (Everton, Jolton & Mastrangelo, 2007).

Summary In conclusion, ethics, or the set of standards that guide acceptable behavior and moral judgment, include timeliness. Tardiness is in direct violation of ethical behavior. The causes of tardiness are, however, complicated, indicating any number of issues – from individual psychological problems to unfair workplace practices. To combat tardiness, employers must develop an organizational environment that is fair, with clearly-defined rules for acceptable behavior.

The workplace should offer easy access to resources, equal opportunities for advancement, an unbiased grievance process, a well-trained managerial team, and respect in all aspects of the employment process. The benefits that ensue include higher levels of productivity and profitability and employee compliance with workplace expectations – namely timeliness.

References

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