Organizational behavior critical thinking sample

Business, Company

Organizations function as an independent entity in the business environment. The action, behavior and culture of an organization is shaped and governed by its employee's managers and stake holders. In each organization there are certain vital components that influences the way it behaves and function. The book Organizational Behavior by Robbins and Judge examines some of these vital components and presents research to highlight their importance. The role of a manager is to identify these components and incorporate them in daily processes to improve efficiency productivity and effectiveness. In this paper I discuss some of these vital components and highlight how the part they have played in my professional experiences in the organizations that I have worked for in the past and the present.

One of the major elements of Organizational behavior discussed in the course and the book is Communication. (Robbins and Judge, 2011). In my personal experience communication is integral in running an organization and can be both internal and external. Internal communication focuses on sharing perspective policies developments, strategies goals and objectives within the organization among employees, management and various stake holders. It is regular in nature and should be conducted in frequent intervals so that everyone who forms a part of this organization is kept abreast of recent changes and developments. The assumption from a broader perspective is that a member of the organization whether it's a shareholder, an employee or a manager acts as an agent of that company in all their official interactions therefore they should be aware of recent decisions shift in policies, activities etc to adequately represent the organization effectively

to external parties such as customers, competitors etc.

One essential channel through which internal takes place in my Organization is team meetings. Most of these meetings are held monthly and can be between employees/management; various department managers as well as management and board members. Shareholder meetings are held once a year. Typically in meetings that I have attended as employee members of management will outline team objectives discuss changes and impact of management decisions, ask for input and also remind employees of proper customer service etiquette. Any breeches of etiquette or frequently committed errors are also discussed to prevent them from occurring again. In some departments such as customer service team meetings take place on a bi-weekly basis. Apart from department meetings some Organization also have certain committees that meet frequently to discuss specific agendas. In the past I worked for a bank and they had specific committees to deal with bank regulatory policies. The ALCO committee dealt with Asset Liability management while the BASEL committee dealt with changes in bank regulations.

Another channel of internal communication that I regularly encountered in my past and current organization is the company newsletter. This usually is circulated on a monthly basis and informs employees about all recent company activities changes in organizational structure, changes in policy etc. In my current organization the newsletter often discusses promotions, employee movements, new product development, employee achievements as well as a monthly perspective from the company's director. Company parties, sporting events, picnics etc sometimes are used to communicate

shifts in company policies or celebrate employee achievements. For example the bank I worked for would give out awards for best employee at yearly company parties. Senior Management would also take the opportunity to discuss shifts in company strategy and external factors affecting the company's performance.

External communication occurs between the Organization and its customers, competitors, agencies, government agencies etc. This includes all the public relations advertising and marketing activities that the company conducts using print and broadcast media. External communication often focuses on building a corporate image about the company and its products. Our organization usually promotes itself through sponsorship of events for children with special needs. The emphasis here is to communicate that the Organization cares for the community including those members who need additional resources and help to function as productive members of the community. We sponsor bowling tournaments for children with disabilities, we donate regularly to charities for disabled children, and the company sponsors an ipad for a child with disabilities on a monthly basis. Pictures and publicity of these events are posted on the company website and also used in advertisement promoting the company.

The bank I used to work for would also publish its financial statements on a quarterly basis. The purpose of this was to communicate that the bank was in good financial health and also to highlight its performance and significant gains it had made. This was also a form of external communication to customers, competitors and regulatory agencies. I am a strong proponent of communication and the above observation of both internal and external

communication channels proves how this important element can be used to increase productivity build corporate image and also improve profits. Another element that the course and the book discuss is the impact of power and politics on the organization. The chapter on Power and Politics discusses the obstructing impact of power play and political issues on organizational effectiveness (Robbins and Judge, 2011). I have actually witnessed how this plays out in a previous organization I worked for. The manager in that organization would favor employees from his particular cultural background. In the spate of three years an employee who the manager hired personally and who was from a similar cultural background received five consecutive promotions and hefty pay rises. Other employees who were more qualified and experienced and had joined the organization around the same time remained in the same position and were denied promotions and pay rises. The result was a significant drop in employee morale, rise in absenteeism and an increase in employee turnover. Employees began to perceive that they did not have real chances of advancement in the company and started looking for jobs elsewhere. Some even found more lucrative employment. The high turnover did lead to loss of productivity. Senior Management and the director of the company became involved when a disgruntled employee filed a complaint as she was about to leave. The management asked for feedback from the departments employees. They made them do a performance review for the manager and asked them to rate the manager. Almost all six employees in the department mentioned that they felt that the manager denied their requests for promotions and pay rises in favor of promoting the employee who they felt he personally favored. Senior

management understood that this particular behavior had created an obstruction in organizational effectiveness and as a result employee morale as well as productivity had diminished. They transferred the employee that the manager had been favoring to another department and asked a series of independent managers to evaluate his performance. They also positioned a senior manager to monitor the performance of the manager and gave him full authority to re-do performance reviews. All performance reviews were re-done by the senior manager and some of the department employees were given pay raises on the basis of superior performance which had not been recognized earlier.

The book and the course discuss the characteristics of effective management. Effective management seeks the satisfaction of their employees along with full commitment and exemplary performance (Robbins and Judge, 2011). In consequent chapters it also defines different types and categories of management styles and leadership characteristics. According to the essence of what is presented in the materials discussed in the course Effective managers facilitate employee productivity by helping them do their job in a timely fashion while ensuring quality and personal satisfaction. They communicate goals and help employees achieve these goals by organizing workflows allocating resources and soliciting input. Another characteristic of effective managers is leading by example. They should not expect employees to do anything that they themselves are not prepared to do. Monitoring performance is a control measure that most effective managers use to ensure that goals are met and that employees are working at levels that are needed to maintain productivity.

In the bank I used to work for I noticed another very important element of effective management that is not discussed in much detail in the course: using employee input to increase productivity and profits. The bank regularly held employee contests to suggest ideas for new banking products. It solicited input from all levels. The contest was a brilliant brain storming exercise in which the bank management got invaluable input from employees who understood customer needs based on their interactions from them. In one of the contests a bank clerk suggested introducing a fixed deposit which also entitled the account holder to enter a draw which if they won would double their deposit. If they won the customer had a chance of doubling their investment. The bank liked the idea of a non interest bearing account that gave the customer a chance to double the profit. The clerk won the contest and got a trophy and 500 dollars in gift vouchers. The bank got a high selling product which increased its sales profitability and productivity immensely. The clerk later received a promotion and a pay rise. Other employees were motivated by the success story and the bank received many other similar ideas

The course also mentions how a characteristic of effective management is to increase motivation (Robbins and Judge, 2011). Managers in that bank also realized how important motivation was to improve productivity. They instituted a monthly " Thank you" award in the bank which recognized exemplary performance and extra commitment exhibited by employees in different departments. Employees got an award to display at their desk and $ 200 in gift vouchers. The award was a major booster in employee morale and also productivity. It was also an acknowledgment of appreciation by

management which most employees valued than the actually monetary or physical award.

The book and the course also discussed the impact of the employee's personality and how it should match the organization or job that they perform. The book mentions how a mismatch would lead to loss of productivity and also high employee turnover for the organization(Robbins and Judge, 2011). In the bank I worked for I actually saw this in action. An employee was recruited as a trader in the foreign currency desk. She was educated and qualified but did not have the killer instinct to close foreign currency trades. Despite two years on the job never developed a feel for the foreign currency market. She was a capable hard working employee but lacked the natural instincts that the particular job required. Since there was a personality mismatch the employee was not happy in the job and did not achieve satisfaction. After a particular dismal performance the management decided to shift her in another position which suited her personality. The position involved a lot of scrutiny of documentation and this suited the employees attention to detail skills. The employee was happy and this reflected in her performance.

The book and the chapter also discuss cultural diversity and how it shapes both the behavior of the members of the organization and organizational behavior as a whole(Robbins and Judge, 2011). The discussion on Hofestede's cultural dimensions was very enlightening for me. I had no idea how cultural diversity shaped or impacted organizational behavior. From a professional stance I have never received diversity training nor have the organizations I have worked for conducted any. However in the current

business environment this concept has now gained popularity and many organizations have now realized that a diverse workforce can generate global perspective and lend them a competitive edge in the global environment. The bank I used to work for had used the power of diversity to set itself apart from its competitors in the industry. The bank's emphasis on hiring a culturally diverse workforce and understanding local culture in the countries in which it operates has helped it gain competitive advantage in the international banking industry. My present company has begun to realize how a diverse workforce can make their product and company more responsive to catering to the needs of a culturally diverse consumer population. Currently my present company is spending a lot of money on researching the tastes and preferences of its target populations many of whom are predominantly Asian in origin. During the course of this research its seeking lots of input and clarification from its Asian employees in better understanding the needs of its consumers. The research teams are also researching the Asian culture in an effort to make the new product range more attractive to its clients.

The readings from this course have made me understand how different components of organizational behavior impact productivity and profitability. It has also helped me realize how important it is for managers to both understand these components and recognize how the play out in the work environment. A greater understanding would help managers increase effectiveness reduce absenteeism, increase employee morale and also solicit positive employee input which can help the business grow as well attain competitive advantage.

Works Cited

Robbins, S., & Judge, T. (2011). Organizational Behavior (15th ed) Prentice

Hall