

Cross-functional cooperation between departments

Business



Efforts to improve the effectiveness of organizations have been around since organizations have first existed. But the concept of business management and organization development is that of the 20th century. As businesses started to compete globally, they looked to hire managers who were well-versed in business practices and management techniques and who could employ their workforce and resources effectively. These managers had to plan, organize, staff, motivate, lead and control. (McCrimon, 2008) Developing inter departmental cooperation was integral to the job of managers.

Bertrand Russell saw cooperation as a salvager of mankind. David Eisenhower saw it as a source of peace. Alexander Graham Bell believed in cooperation to lead to improvements and discoveries. Great minds wanted cooperation between individuals and countries and it was time that organizations also subscribed to this value. Team work in an organization; cooperation between individuals working in an organization, cooperation between departments, between divisions, branches and so on was directly linked to success.

Effects of lack of cooperation in the workplace The concept of business silos should be ripped off for it only results in struggle for power, lack of cooperation and loss of productivity in an organization. The ultimate loser of this is the customer. Corporate objective cannot be met if individuals and departments focus on personal affairs and agendas but they can only be achieved through collaboration between departments and individuals who share information and pursue common goals.

(Goman, 2007) Newspapers often report cases of disasters as a result of lack of cooperation. Lack of cooperation between state and federal departments prevented proper investigation of sex slavery cases. Lack of cooperation between health and farm officials in developing countries hampered the fight against bird flu. Without cooperation nothing can be achieved. Lack of cooperation and coordination between departments in an organization can jeopardize its objectives.

If the sales and production departments fail to cooperate with each other, the customers will not receive the promised goods. If the IT departments fail to coordinate with the rest of the organization, customer will not receive timely service. If the marketing department plans the launch of a new product without working with the production department, the production department may not be able to produce the right quantities at the right time. And if the accounting and finance department fail to communicate their statistics, then all departments will be affected.

If departments do not work together and build better relationships, employees will complain that other departments do not provide them with what they require in a timely manner, that other departments fail to understand what they do, that they are not treated with respect and dignity by fellow workers and other employees are often unpleasant. Such poor relationships will therefore lower the morale of the employees. And poor morale will lead to lower productivity and thus reduced profits. It is common knowledge that excellent customer service is the result of workings inside the organization.

Organization cannot provide services to customers when their employees cannot provide services to each other. Before an organization can work on enhancing its relationships with its customers it has to straighten things within the organization. Content, empowered and enthusiastic employees working in a pleasant and motivational environment where there is cooperation followed by faster decision making and sound business practices are the ones who provide the finest services to the customers.

Smooth internal service fosters excellent customer service. But in an environment with no departmental cooperation where there are frequent disputes and a high labor turnover, there will be inefficiency, low productivity and poor customer service. Implementing values in a business such as that of cooperation energizes everything. It energizes the individuals working at the organization, the customers, its products and services and everyone and everything connected with the organization.

This flowing of positive energy increases profits for the organization and improves its reputation. Negative energy released through lack of cooperation in the organization will do the opposite. As suggested above, low morale of employees in an organization can result in low productivity and inefficiency. This will push up the average cost of the business making it uncompetitive. Resolving the Problem The absence of a cross-functional team to facilitate cross functional cooperation is the sign of a losing organization.

To encourage collaboration and greater coordination among the different departments in an organization, a group from various areas such as production, marketing, finance, research, human resource, engineering etc.

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should be formed. They should work as a team to improve coordination, facilitate the decision making process and resolve potential disputes in the organization. This cross-functional and systematic approach will result in greater cooperation for the organization. It should be kept in mind that several factors should be considered before forming this team.

For example, the team members should be highly motivated and open to discussions and the team leader should be authoritative with excellent communication skills. (Kotelnikov, 2003) The cross-functional teams have been successful in organization because they bring people together from different disciplines and foster a spirit of cooperation which can achieve both the objectives of the organization and customer satisfaction. Cross-functional teams followed by other efforts Further efforts should be made by the team or by managers to reach further collaboration among the different departments.

A survey should be conducted concerning internal customer satisfaction. The survey should ask employees about the timeliness, professionalism and quality of services that they receive from other departments. (Katcher, 2004) People should be made aware of their role in the organization; how they support and facilitate the production process and how their work can influence the organization. They need to understand the importance of working in collaboration with other departments to achieve the goals and objectives set by the organization.

(Goman, 2007) Wide-ranging and transparent communication enables collaboration and encourages team work. It should be ensured that there is effective communication in an organization so that every member knows <https://assignbuster.com/cross-functional-cooperation-between-departments/>

what is expected of him. Effective communication plays a critical role in ensuring coordination and control of individuals and departments. All members of the team should have the same honest information about how the organization runs its business, the financial constraints and competitive pressures it faces and its initiatives for the future.

For instance, in 2000 Nike's earnings went down \$100 million due to a single miscommunication. This resulted not only in a loss of revenue, but also bad publicity in the media, disbelief, a fall in stock price, and harm to shareholders. The cost was huge but the dilemma: ineffective communication among the IT department of Nike, Nike's business administration team and the dealer. For cooperation to prevail in the workplace environment, it is necessary to give employees a chance to trust each other through experience and interaction.

Holding offsite parties and celebrations in the organizations and giving tea breaks during work hours can provide opportunities for employees to seek companionship in one another and develop relationships of trust. Also, when encouraging greater employee and departmental cooperation, it is important to reward any resulting collaboration. This will give employees an incentive to make collaborative efforts. Due recognition and promotion should be given to anyone who works across organizational boundaries. (Goman, 2007)

Conclusion

A department in the organization is not a single segregated unit. It should act as a whole with other departments in achieving the corporate objectives. Coordination creates the conditions for synergy and the outcome of the cooperation is greater than all the separate contributions of all the separate

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individuals. Cooperation between team members, managers and departments is necessary to reach organizational effectiveness. Without cohesive efforts between departments, corporate goals of higher profits and greater consumer satisfaction cannot be accomplished.

This is because lack of cooperation lowers employee's morale, and thereby lowers productivity and efficiency and raises costs of the business. External service will be made impossible without internal efforts to organize and coordinate the workplace. The solution to the problems generated by lack of cooperation in the organization is to encourage the employees to change their attitudes and behaviors toward other fellow employees and to critically assess their actions rather than pointing fingers at other employees.

The behaviors of the senior management should be improved which will have a trickle down effect on the subordinates. An environment should be developed where employees trust each other and where collaborative performance is rewarded. Cross functional teams should be setup which should make substantial efforts to awaken the spirit of collaboration in the workplace. References Goman, K. K. (2007). Tearing down business "silos": Business management: The side Road, Retrieved July 25, 2009 <http://www.sideroad.com/Management/business-silos.html>

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