

Study on improving team performance management essay



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Performance management includes activities to ensure that goals of the organization are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner. It also contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve high levels of organizational performance. Performance management can focus on performance of the organization, a department, processes to build a product or service or the employees. It is about the organizational long-term goals and should link various aspects of the business, people management, and individuals and teams. Performance management should involve performance improvement, development and managing behavior. Unless there is a continuous development of individuals and teams, performance will not improve.

The CIPD has identified the performance management by saying that it is:” about establishing a culture in which individuals and groups take responsibility for the continuous improvement of business processes and of their own skills, behavior and contributions. It is about sharing expectations. Managers can clarify what they expect individual and teams to do; likewise individuals and teams can communicate their expectations of how they should be managed and what they need to do their jobs. It follows that performance management is about interrelationships and about improving the quality of relationships – between managers and individuals, between managers and teams, between members of teams and so on, and is therefore a joint process. It is also about planning – defining expectations expressed as objectives and in business plans – and about measurement; the old dictum is ‘ If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it’. It should apply to all employees, not just managers, and to teams as much as individuals. It

is a continuous process, not a one-off event. Last but not least, it is holistic and should pervade every aspect of running an organization”.

Now I work on a packing line in the Farm Packhouse. My day to day responsibilities involve: making sure that the punnets packed by me have the right weight and the quality meets the supermarket standards, ensuring the right labels are being used, separating first from second class, looking for progressive and non-progressive defects. I work on a packing line with five more girls.

From my observation the problems that arise in our team come from poor communication between us, e. g. sometimes the line is overloaded and we need to stop packing, but not everyone is doing that. Also, due to poor communication and planning between and line leader and packhouse management, sometimes we have to wait for fruit or we will start packing and they will ask us to stop as we need to change the fruit in accordance to the orders. In these particular examples my responsibilities are limited as I am not the line leader and I am not responsible for planning the work. If there is a break down in the team communication, I talk to the other team members and try to explain that if we work together as one team and listen to each other we will be more productive and it will benefit us all.

Another thing that is also an issue sometimes is the quality of the fruit that we have to pack. The quality controllers will have different opinion about the same fruit and one will say that we have to be very careful and tip the fruit and the other one will say that the fruit is good and we do not need to be so accurate. Again, I am quite limited as to how I can change this. One of my

SMART objectives for the coming year is to become a QC. I am planning to talk to the QA manager and say from a packer's point of view how this is disturbing our work. I will propose that the fruit is approved for packing by two QCs before it is loaded on the line, so that issues like that are minimised.

I would say that the performance in our team is good. We work hard and make sure we do our job at the best of our abilities. Of course, sometimes our performance is not as good as it can be, but I believe this can be changed by better communication, clearer instructions, further training and more involvement.

I believe that the leader on my line will benefit from with is performance. Some of his main duties include making sure we have enough fruit of the right quantity and quality on the line, making sure we have the right labels for the fruit we are packing, motivation and increasing the team performance, coordinating our work and breaks, putting the right labels on the pallets so that the packed fruit goes to the right supermarket. He and the other line leaders meet the Packhouse Assistant Manager in the morning after the daily orders have arrived, and they make the plan for the day. As mentioned above, I think that sometimes there is a lack in the communication about the right packing order of the fruit, e. g. which fruit has to be packed first based on the supermarket requirements. Also, his communication with the team can be improved. He does not get us involved as much as we would like to be involved. He finds it really hard to work under pressure and in there has been situation when he will be really stressed and this will affect his attitude towards us.

I believe that our team leader needs to improve his communication both with us, his team and the management. He should involve us in the planning and the quality issues. Employees will only be able to perform at their best if they know their duties, obligations and rights and have an opportunity of making their views known to management on issues that affect them. Good communications is central to the management process and assume critical importance when dealing with changes in working practices and procedures. All managers need to communicate and consult with employees in order to be effective but they also need to exchange information with other managers.

My thoughts can be supported by ACAS view on that topic: Employee communication and consultation offer many benefits although, done well, they require time and money. In particular good employee communications and consultation can:

improve organizational performance

improve management performance and decision making - allowing employees to express their views can help managers and supervisors arrive at sound decisions which can more readily be accepted by employees as a whole;

Improve employees' performance and commitment - employees will perform better if they are given regular, accurate information about their jobs such as updated technical instructions, targets, deadlines and feedback. Their commitment is also likely to be enhanced if they know what the organization is trying to achieve and how they, as individuals, can influence decisions

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help develop greater trust – discussing issues of common interest and allowing employees an opportunity of expressing their views can engender improved management/employee relations

increase job satisfaction – employees are more likely to be motivated if they have a good understanding of their job and how it fits into the organisation as a whole and are actively encouraged to express their views and ideas.

encourage a more flexible working environment – employers can help to promote a good ‘work-life balance’ within the organisation by talking to all their staff about developing flexible working policies and practices

Communications and consultation are not, and should not, be an end in themselves. Nevertheless, used properly they have a key role to play both in ensuring the business success of organizations and in involving and empowering employees.

In our case, if we trust the instructions given to us by the line leader, if we know exactly what is expected from us, if we know that the instructions will not change, if we are involved in the decision making, if our ideas are considered, we will feel motivated and our performance will increase. Never the less we work on piece rate and our performance is measured by the output, which means the more we pack the more we will earn, a job satisfaction and fulfillment will give us a long lasting motivation and performance drive. This is supported by Herzberg’s motivation according to which people are influenced by two factors:

Satisfaction and psychological growth are a result of ‘motivation factors’.

Dissatisfaction is a result of a lack of 'hygiene factors'

Examples of Herzberg's 'hygiene' needs in the workplace are: relationship with supervisor, work conditions, salary, status, security, relationship with subordinates. Herzberg's research identified that true motivators were other completely different factors, notably: achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility. Most managers realize that a happy workforce leads to improved performance which holds equally well for leadership and training.

Performance counselling is a powerful motivational tool and can be defined as a formal discussion between a manager and a subordinate for the purpose of discussing the subordinate's current job performance, determining why the performance is at its current level and outlining ways in which the subordinate can perform better in the future – to the ultimate benefit of all: the subordinate, the manager and the organisation. The key is to focus on the future. The challenge to the manager is to provide a climate in which employee growth is actively encouraged.

The team leaders at Hall Hunter Partnership are offered and attend different trainings. To help improve our team and our line leader's performance HHP can organize communication training and performance management training for the team leaders. At these courses things like improving communication, involving the workers, motivation theories (Maslow, Herzberg, equity, expectancy and goal motivation theories) should be discussed and examined in details. Also there should be regular meetings between the team and the leader, at which responsibilities, daily planning, weak and strong performance issues must be discussed.

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Another issue in our team is that in some situations our line leader does not treat all workers in the team equally. If there is a problem with the quality he might focus on couple of people from the team and constantly check their trays. This de-motivates these particular works and their performance becomes poor. The above is supported by Adams equity theory, according to which motivation is about the perception of fair and unfair treatment and distribution of resources between the employee and the employer.

In order to improve our team performance and to deal with the performance issues our team has, I believe the following should be done:

Have better communication both between the team and the line leader and the line leader and the packhouse management- this can be done by weekly meetings (on a Monday) at which the whole team meets and we discuss issues from the previous week and share ideas. These meetings will also help us build a team spirit so that we all feel involved as being part of a team.

Have better planning- at the beginning of the day our line leader should meet the management and ask for the plan for the day. As we arrive at work he should share that with us.

Attend training courses- the line leaders at the Packhouse should attend training courses which will improve their performance, which will also lead to improved team performance. Suitable courses I believe can be motivation, communication, stress management, planning courses.

Treat all workers in the team equally- when the line leaders knows that we will be packing a poor quality fruit, he should have a meeting with all of us, describe the problem and monitor everyone's performance in the same way.

HHP has clear disciplinary and grievance procedures. Both of them are displayed in the farm office and in the induction. All workers are made aware of the policies as soon as they arrive on site. To make sure that they all understand them well, the company has translated them in four languages- Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian and Polish. The stages of the disciplinary procedure are verbal warning, written warning and dismissal. If a worker needs to be dismissed he is invited to a disciplinary meeting. All workers can be accompanied by a representative at the meeting. After that the worker can appeal if he does not agree with the outcomes of the meeting. The minutes of the meetings are always recorded and signed by the employee and the manager. It is really important that all meetings are recorded and an investigation is carried first. The consequence of making the wrong decision, or not following procedures, could lead to a claim to an employment tribunal and a subsequent award. In addition to any award, there are the costs of legal fees, poor productivity, lost management time and any effect on morale.

In the summer I am a team leader on the field. I am responsible for monitoring the quality, making sure the lines are picked well, motivating the team to increase the performance, monitoring the workers performance. On our farm the workers are paid on piece work and set daily targets for them which they need to achieve. The first week they are in training period and we teach them how to pick. After that they start working on piece rate and their

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performance is monitored and they are given the targets- picked trays per hour. If they fail to achieve the rates they go through the disciplinary procedure.

I, as a team leader, am responsible for the early stages of the disciplinary process. If there is a worker in my team who is not meeting the targets I will first try to find out why is that, check his picking technique, try to show him how he can pick fast. I will use counselling, will have “ a quiet word” with the worker in question. If the performance is still poor and there is no improvement I will speak with the harvest manager. At that point the disciplinary procedure will come in force. The worker will be invited to a meeting at which both I and the harvest manager will be present. He will be issued with a verbal warning for poor performance.

In more serious situations where the worker has conducted a gross misconduct- stealing a tray, changing the labels on a tray, fighting, coming drunk to work I will contact the harvest manager straight way. The worker will be dismissed by the harvest manager and no work will be offered to him.

I always encourage my workers and tell them that if they have a complaint or a grievance they should come and talk to me first. Depending on the issue I will either try to solve the problem or get the harvest manager and the HR manager involved. The farm has also a worker council lead by the worker welfare representative. The workers know that they can discuss their problems there. The HR manager is involved in their meetings. The HR manager visits the sites regularly and speaks with the workers. Her

telephone number is displayed on the notice board and the workers know they can contact her with any issues.

I always encourage my workers to come and talk to me first. I try to have an open relationship with them, to treat them well and equally, to support and help them. If they have a complaint against me, I hope they come and talk to me first and try to resolve the issue together.

The employees have very important part and a crucial role of running the business smoothly and efficiently. Using performance management can ensure that the employees not only fulfill their responsibilities, but do so to the best of their abilities and up to the company expectations.

Performance management makes sure the employer uses the full potential of the staff. It is a process starting from monitoring and developing the desired traits to rating their progress and rewarding them for their achievements.

The mere making of plans alone will not help a company to run business successfully. Focusing on the appropriate ways to get business tasks done is really important. One way of doing this efficiently is to involve the employees in the planning process. This will not only boost their morale and confidence, but also help avoid any communication gaps in the process.

Measuring the performance of every employee is also important. This ensures that tasks are efficiently completed on time and on or under budget. It also points out any shortcomings of either the staff or business plans, and helps to take the appropriate corrective actions.

Performance management gives the tools to instill the desired qualities in the employees in order to get the job done. Development is not limited to only individuals in the workplace, but also addresses the performance of the team as a whole.

Evaluating and rating the performance of the employees on an individual basis is essential. This gives them a clear picture of where they presently stand, areas that they need to work on and what they are good at. This way, they can focus more on their weaknesses and work to strengthen those areas.

Rewarding and appreciating the employees' efforts ensures that their level of their performance and consequently the performance of the business is not compromised. It ensures optimum productivity, performance and maximum profitability.

Rewarding the staff for a job well done not only enhance their performance but also serves as a tool to keep them motivated. Therefore, performance management is an effective system that allows companies to achieve their strategic and financial goals.