

Ethical elements of human resources policies

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Technology advances in the 21st century has brought a revolution in business and organizational environment, creating an enhanced workplace that utilizes different types of technology. There is also an increased productivity, with technology playing a critical role in ensuring that there is an efficient chain of production. Despite these advantages of technology, there are different challenges that have continued to arise whose effects can prove to be detrimental to the overall workplace environment if they are not checked. Among these challenges is the use of technology among employees during the working hours and how they can be monitored to guarantee that their time on the job is not wasted on technological pieces that does not add any value to the business or organization. One of the biggest challenges that firms are experiencing today is whether to restrict their employees from the access to the internet or not. To begin with, such restrictions are not ethically sound in any organization.

While employers expect their employees to be working, their work in most cases entails the use of technology and therefore they have a right to use it. Since there is some freedom that is given away when employees join a particular firm, the employers have no rights whatsoever to take away every piece of freedom from their employees as this would make the workplace more of a prison than a place of employment (Schulman, 2008). Therefore, such restrictions would be unethical. On the other hand, it is important for employers to restrict the use of the internet to their employees. This is as a result of the misuse of technological advances by employees. For example, Schulman (2008) cites that IBM workers visited Online Penthouse Edition, an online magazine, thousand of time in a single month. This is a pornographic

magazine and it can be offensive to some employees who do not visit such sites. This will corrupt the working relationship of employees, i. e. those who visit such sites and those who do not, thus reducing productivity since there is no cooperation among them.

Thus, restrictions are necessary. Another issue of technological advances that is proving to be a challenge at the workplace is monitoring of employee activities on the internet. The question at hand is whether this is ethical or not. There are two schools of thought in the approach to this question, i. e. from the side of the employee and that of the employer.

When determining whether monitoring of employee activities on the internet is ethical or not, an employees approach reveals that it is not ethical.

According to Schulman (2008), the privacy of employees is at stake when their activities on the internet are monitored. This is particularly so when the emails of the employees are monitored to scan every message that they sending or receiving. There is no way to ascertain that employees' sensitive information will be safe in the hands of the employer. On the other hand, when arguing from the employer's point of view, it is ethical to monitor employee's activities on the internet. This is because some of the employees have been found to spend their time on the internet transmitting sensitive information that belongs to the company to the outside world.

Similarly, there is an element of using company technology to access dirty websites such as pornographic websites or websites that promote racism. It is the responsibility of the employers to ensure that his equipments do not promote such activities and this can only be done through monitoring the

activities of the employees on the internet. Different approaches can therefore be used to deal with technological challenges at the workplace depending on the setup of that place. For example, for a customer service and sales organization such as Thompson-Pritchett, Inc (BrainMass Inc, 2009), there should be restrictions and monitoring of internet activities of employees. This is because the employees of this company in most cases deal directly with the customers and any irrelevant surfing such as browsing WebPages that promote racism can affect the relationship of the organization with the customers especially if customers find employees visiting such sites. On the other hand, customers' privacy is very important and the employer has a right of checking what his employees are transmitting lest they transmit customers' private information.