

# Reframing organizations research paper examples

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## **Reframing organizations: Lilly Ledbetter's treatment while at Good year tire**

### Summary

During the nineteen years she served at Goodyear tire, Lilly Ledbetter was constantly offered very low rankings with regards to annual performance, remuneration reviews and lower raises. Her fellow employees received higher emoluments than she did. As a result of this, Lilly sued Goodyear for gender discrimination. She argued that the company contravened Title VII of the 1964 civil rights. She made an argument that the firm accorded her a lower remuneration merely because of her gender. The jury awarded Ledbetter a huge pay of 3.5 million dollars, a sum that was later reduced to only \$360,000 by the Court of Appeal.

The reduction resulted from an appeal made by Goodyear. The firm argued that Ledbetter's complaint was time barred since such complaints were supposed to be made within a span of 180 days after the alleged discriminatory conduct was committed. While the jury considered the whole duration that Lilly suffered the discrimination, Goodyear held to their guns arguing that the jury should only consider the single annual remuneration that fell within the valid complaint's time frame of 180 days. The decision made by the lower court was overturned by the US courts of appeal although the court did not support the firm's position fully.

The Court of Appeal ruled that the jury of the lower court should have only examined the evidence that showed how the company had discriminated Lilly up to the period of her last salary revision that fell within the statutory 180 day limit set by the law. The court, therefore, made a ruling the only

evidence that would be considered in the case were reviews carried out within the 180 day limit. The court did not find evidence of any form of discrimination that happened to Lilly during this time period and, therefore, refuted Lilly's complaint. As a result of these findings, the Court of Appeal overruled the decision that had been made by the District court. This paper addresses Ledbetter's case through the lenses of Human resource and structural organization frames

- Gender related issues at Goodyear

Goodyear's management team is notorious for generally being constituted of male workers. For many years since joining the organization, Lilly Ledbetter's remuneration was at par with the sum her male co-workers received. However, over the nineteen years she worked at the company, her pay turned out to be lower when compared to the male managers at her level and, to some extent, lower than those below her level. Ledbetter was the only woman in the organization who had the position of an area manager. To further prove the presence of gender discrimination, Ledbetter received a salary of \$3, 727 monthly while the lowest paid male area manager received a handsome \$4, 286.

One organizational behavior factor that lacks at Goodyear is the rational system factor. Any rational organizational system should provide an incentive system that is based on employees' performance. Goodyear lacked a rational system since it failed to award remunerations according to the performance levels of its workers. Lilly generally received a lower salary than her co-workers on the basis of her gender. The company contravened Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a statute that allows disgruntled workers

to sue on the grounds of discrimination at workplace. The company never apologized to Ledbetter. Instead, it appealed against her right to be paid the arrears she had not received for the nineteen years of hard work and dedication she had spent trying to impress her bosses . This attribute portrays a bad image of the company to its employees, a fact that could lead to a high employee turnover and operational inefficiency to be experienced by the company in future.

- The human resource frame: the underlying organization theories applying to Goodyear

The human resource frame revolves around the maxim; “ Our most important asset is our people,” rather than “ Organizations exploit people- chew them up and spit them out.”. The rationale behind the existence of the Human resource frame within an organization is that the employees’ affairs must be addressed in order to motivate them towards the goals. In addition, the talents, potential, needs, and energies of a company’s have to be recognized if the organization is to achieve any meaningful success.

In the Ledbetter’s case, the human resource frame assumption, which argues that an organization exists for the purpose of serving human needs rather than the company’s interest, was greatly compromised by Goodyear Tires. The organization seemed to be more interested in making profits rather than ensuring the satisfaction of the needs of its employees. Lilly worked hard for the company for a period of nineteen years. Moreover, she had made profits for the company during her tenure at Goodyear and thus deserved a good remuneration. However, Goodyear continued to ration her salary unfairly on the grounds of her gender. This shows that Goodyear had

very little concern with the welfare of its employees.

The second principle of the Human resource frame argues that companies need talent, energy and ideas. On the other hand, workers need opportunities, salaries and careers. In the case of Goodyear, the organization was more interested in meeting its own ends without considering the needs of the people who work for it. All Goodyear cared about was the large figure profits they made each year and had little concern about the welfare of the people who contributed to the achievement of such huge profits.

The third Human resource frame principle states that whenever there is a bad correlation between a human resource system and its employees, one of the two parties will suffer. The truth of this theory clearly unfolds where Goodyear struggles to meet their end and while neglecting Ledbetter's rights. As a result of this neglect, Ledbetter ended up not receiving full compensation on her complaint.

## **Recommendations**

Goodyear should ensure that the human resource frame ensures a symbiotic relationship between the organization and the employees. Employees need opportunities and avenues to showcase their talents and express their skills. The organization has to strike a fit between the two, in order for an increased productivity to result from the relationship. The human resource has roots from several past works e. g. that of Abraham Maslow. Maslow came up with a hierarchy of needs that could be exploited by an organization in order to get value from their employees. The needs are arranged in a hierarchy of successive superiority as one move up the hierarchy. The achievement of a lower level need prompts the motivation to satisfy the next level of needs.

By satisfying these needs, Goodyear could motivate its employees to perform better.

- structural frame: the underlying theories and aspects relevant to Goodyear

The organizational structural frame stresses on the importance of a clearly outlined pattern in relations to roles and relationships of employees within a firm (Bolman, 1991). The structural frame tends to only consider issues that fall within the range of the firm's tasks, organization's chart, policies and procedures. A firm with a strong structural frame should be able to divide and coordinate its functions. A structural frame is designed to avoid confusion over authority.

Goodyear lacks a good structural frame since when assigning its roles; it tends to prefer men's output to women's efforts and hard work. The tendency to award male managers, higher salaries than their women counterparts ' acts as evidence of the lack of a proper structural frame within the organization. A good structural frame should not discriminate against employee's gender or ethnicity.

One of the assumptions of the organizational structural frame states that an organization exists for the purpose of achieving goals, target and objectives. As much as Goodyear makes good profits, it fails at fulfilling its human resource obligations (Bolman, 1991). The firm seems to have misplaced priorities when focusing on the organization's larger goal at the expense of the short-term goals that qualify the firm's overall objective.

Another assumption that relates to structural frame argues that. “

Organizations function at their best when rationality exists between personal preferences and external pressure” . Goodyear lacks rationality when it

comes to extraneous pressures such as legislations. From the above discussion, the firm seems to ignore the authority and importance of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a statute that obliges the firm to act in the best interest of its employees. Instead, the organization seems to purely focus on its goals while disregarding any external pressure that faces it e. g. the law.

Goodyear has a poorly constructed structural frame. The evidence of this can be seen in the manner with which the organization handles female workers especially in salary-related matters. Such structural inefficiencies eventually translate to performance gaps perpetrated by the affected employees like Ledbetter.

## **Recommendation**

With regards to the structural frame, Goodyear should design working structural arrangements that concur to the organization's goals, strategies, tasks, and its environment. A good success study on this theory would be the Hammer & Champy case of 1993. The case reengineered radical organizational resigning that achieved tremendous improvements in quality of service and speed of service. This was achieved through adjusting processes, business strategies, information system and most importantly the organization structure with an aim of creating an efficient organization

- Conclusion: Reframing recommendations

My overall recommendation to Goodyear Tires is based on the Adams' Equity theory. The theory states that a balance should be struck between the inputs and the outputs of the employees with respect to the organization. It argues that employees are either motivated or de-motivated depending on the

weight balance between the inputs they give to the organization and the outputs they receive. Some of the inputs and outputs includes: skills, tolerance, hard work, and enthusiasm and output being: recognition, benefits salary and so on while the output to the organization being.

In our case, there is clear evidence with regards to the lack of balance between the inputs and the outputs of the employees at Goodyear.

Ledbetter dedicated nineteen years of her career in trying to give her best to the organization that failed to recognize her efforts. If the firm is to succeed in the future, it has to ensure it motivates its workforce appropriately.

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