

Issues in telecommuting and strategies for intervention



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Telecommuting

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Abstract

Given the increased improvement in technology and the expanding pressure on many organizations to reduce the cost while improving the productivity of the employees, the number of the organizations using the telecommuting programs has over the years increased. Telecommuting is the arrangement between the management and the employees of an organization where the work of the employees is done from a remote area instead of being done in an office. The telecommuting programs are different for different companies. The program can be of benefit to both employers and employees, but there can also be problems and disadvantages if the program isn't rolled out properly. Any organization with the intention of using the telecommuting programs should consider the essential for to implement a proper working telecommuting program. The organization should also ensure they evaluate the telecommuting challenges and issues that other organizations may have encountered when implementing their telecommuting programs. The most vital task could be hiring skilled employees to be involved in the program.

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Lastly, the employers or the management should evaluate the social needs of the workers, personality, and values to determine the most appropriate employees to be involved in the implementation of the program.

Telecommuting

Introduction

Telecommuting is the organizational practice or behavior between the workforce and the human resource management department on the useful work design or programs. The telecommuting concept comes from the management need to expand its productiveness within the company or the organization while maintaining a proper social and personal lifestyle. Even though the work-life balance notion depends on self-preservation human nature, the telecommuting concept gained it widespread popularity in the twenty-first century amid the advent of the computer and internet technology. Before the industrialization era individual attended to their farms in their residential areas (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015).

As the technology advance and the careers diversified, this farmer tends to look for better-paying jobs and other alternatives. However, this alternatives of the posts came with a rising in labor demand which requires supervision. The Human Resource manager role was therefore confined initially to within the physically reachable vicinities or the workspace. In the word of one Steve Jobs, a founder of the Apple computers the technology role is to raise the convenience by creating a right balance between the home and work life. Telecommuting is an advanced technology that resonates with Steve Jobs

saying it allows the workers to perform their work when they are away from the office (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015).

The advancement in the information technology, software and computing have improved the communication between the people all over the world. Nevertheless, as familiar with the other channels of communication some barriers negate the efficiency of the telecommuting programs. A common fallacy about telecommuting programs is that it only makes the lives of people more comfortable. But, to the contrary, the telecommuting concept also impacts the work design aspect. Some of the issues which every manager should address while implementing the telecommuting programs include the career choice of the employees, social needs personal values and also other psychographic attributes. Hence the successful implementation of the program in an organization requires some components such as alternative working space, time in a position, appropriate technology and the ability of the employees (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015).

Who Telecommutes

According to a 2017 report that was done by Flex Jobs 3.9 Million United States employees which are 2.9 percent of the total United States workforce, work from their residents at least half the time, from 1.8 Million of the American who used to work from home in 2005 which is 115 percent increase. What this number show is that telecommuting has become quite popular and a large percentage of working class people in the United States. For the individuals who have families and those who may have to travel a lot, working from their homes can be the best option for them. Nevertheless, this

requires determination and proper discipline to get work done efficiently and promptly. The other skills that the people who telecommute may need the willingness to seek help and inquire about the necessary questions need to have are; reliability, adaptability, integrity, self-motivation, resourcefulness and organizational skills. The average age of telecommuters is roughly forty-six years of age and is generally more common for those 35 and older to engage in telecommuting. Those who participate in telecommuting have a bachelor's degree typically, and there is an almost equal share of men and women involved. " Offering the option to telecommute increases an organization pool of hiring to incorporate people who live in other states, retirees who want to go back to work and the disabled with a more flexible schedule" (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015).

Objective

The paper objective is to provide a basis for human resource managers who want to set up a telecommuting program but aren't sure of legal steps to take, drawbacks and the inner workings. The human resource manager will be informed appropriately and will be better able to understand precisely what telecommuting is and what a telecommuting program entails and how to implement a successful program with the right individuals and technology.

Components Required When Implementing a Telecommuting Program

What is a telecommuting program?

The telecommuting program involves a team of individuals who work for a company without necessarily being in the same office or workspace. The

telecommuting program is designed with a particular end goal in mind, and the workers all work together to accomplish these goals. The telecommuting programs should be well prepared and put together with various factors in mind. On the other hand, the Human Resource Managers in the telecommuting programs department have to have appropriate skills in the work distribution and employee skills. When the telecommuting program is implemented, and everything that is required is put in place, the managers wouldn't have to worry about what happens after putting into place the telecommuting program (Blount, 2015).

For all the organization The telecommuting program is unique. Hence the Human Resource Manager work is selecting and determining the best components that are fit in implementing the telecommuting program. Some tools can help to identify the external and internal position of a company before implementation of any work option designs. Among the tools is SWOT analysis which enables the marketing department to develop a strategic plan that aids in the implementation of the telecommuting program of the group. A situational study of the organization internal environment conducted by the Human Resource Manager showed some of the common component essential to the success of the telecommuting program plan in a company's market department (Blount, 2015).

One of the components of an effective telecommuting program is the employee ability. A telecommuting program should have benefit to both the employee and employer while resonating with the goals of the organization.

Hence the Human Resource Manager has a task of striking a balance

between and develops a policy which is fair and that addresses the
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objectives of the program. Effective strategic policies according to organizational behavior study are those that are aligned with the goals, traditions, and cultures of a company. The first Human Resource Manager task is to ensure all the stakeholders are involved in the company's departments to make sure they are certain the employees are best-fit for the functions. The process requires extensive consultation with the leadership and reviews of the employees'. Communication at this stage is vital, and hence the barriers that impact the effective communication should be eliminated (Blount, 2015).

Some of the telecommuting policy elements for employee eligibility include defining the terms and conditions of the program. For example, the policy should elaborate on the responsibility and determine the working situations and payment terms with the employee (Dutcher, 2012). If the conditions are not agreeable to both parties, then both parties can compromise or seek alternative programs. The challenge with telecommuting within the marketing department is supervision of field agents and others working from home using the company materials. Some employees might decide to work for the competitors and reduce the productivity of the host organization. The contract must, therefore, clearly state the terms of employment. HR determines the number of people who can telecommute without compromising accountability, quality, productivity, responsibilities, and performance (Allen, Golden, & Shockley, 2015). Besides the type of marketing job performed by the employee, other eligibility criteria include performance level, time, position, and availability of appropriate workspace.

The second component that is required for the effective implementation of a successful telecommuting program is appropriate technology. A telecommuting policy that is not enhanced by technology is bound to fail in this highly technological Era. Importantly, the relevant technology must be convenient, communicative, timely, and flexible with updates performed periodically. Since a telecommuting arrangement involves the employee working from remote locations, there must be an open channel of communication. There are multiple channels in the digital world through which employees can relay up to date information in real time (Beauregard, & Henry, 2009). Because of this, the eligible employee for a telecommuting program must possess the relevant technical skills besides the professional insight. Furthermore, they must be in areas with a stable and reliable internet connection. For example, video conferencing is a significant innovation through which the company communicates with telecommuting employees in real time. The advantages of real-time technology are that it is equipped with time, location, and movement of the company staff (Blount, 2015). Some of the approaches that HR can adapt to ensure that their team is equipped with up to date information include periodic training, collaboration with IT firms, outsourcing technology, and managing communication procedures and policies. These technological training requirements should be available for both the teleworkers and leaders (Nilles, 2014). Ultimately, the acquired technical knowledge benefits both the company and the teleworkers. It enhances problem-solving skills, works planning and management and expectations of the organization's goals.

Technology drivers are equipment such as computers, internet, and mobile phones while supporting infrastructures are roads, rails, water, and internet connectivity. A successful telecommuting program needs an effective communication method and skilled technical support to work. The internet technologies such as e-mails, web- conferencing, networks, and other digital platforms are part of the most crucial IT infrastructure within an organization. Since this research focused on implementing a telecommuting network within the marketing department, the objectives of the program align with brand and product promotion. Emerging technologies in marketing such as e-commerce and digital system working depend on social networks. Social media marketing platforms are some of the avenues that rely on social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Emerging businesses and service provider companies rely on applying telecommuting technology to create a competitive market. For example, the taxi application, Uber, is a successful business venture that does not own vehicles. The teleworkers for this company are required to possess a smartphone and an Uber application that links customers to drivers. Such claims have increased in usage in every sector of the economy including domestic services, accommodation, and transport (Dutcher, 2012).

The other component is the need for the telecommuting program. Before the execution of a telecommuting program, a Human Resource manager would need to choose to begin a telecommuting program; it must be resolved the purpose behind doing as such. A few things to consider are regardless of whether the program is being set up to build efficiency or to lessen costs for the business. The manager will then need to decide whether the laborers will

emerge from those as of now in the organization or if new individuals will be employed to be a piece of the telecommuting program. The manager should mull over, every individual's hardworking attitudes, auspiciousness and what particular assignment they'll be performing outside of the work environment. The Human Resource Manager ought to have a comprehension of how to deliberately oversee individuals who telecommute. There is more self-assurance, self-bearing and freedom included. It is alright for representatives to ask for or designate themselves to be a piece of a telecommuting program. However, it is up to the human resource manager to make the last determination and appointing of parts for an individual from the program (Nilles, 2014)

The program also needs to have the appropriate necessities that are, the program needs to have the right team, the proper technical support, and even the right equipment and tools. It is within the HR managers' duty to make sure that some internal networks and websites can be accessed remotely by the employees that there are phone conferences, web-conferences and communicating Emails for the employer-employee' communication.

Telecommuting Issues Encountered by Other Organizations

A well established and planned telecommuting program can be hard to maintain and sometimes it requires hard work to be put in by the parties that are involved. Among the drawbacks that are faced by the telecommuting programs are; decrease in the culture, strict schedules, career advancements, and communication. The communication between the

workers reduces as they are no longer in the setting of an office, individuals can't take lunch or breaks convers or together between job assignments.

Where the face to face communication is more comfortable and aids individuals to be comfortable, employees have to be considered with getting familiar and able to share tasks over instant messages and skypes set up by their employers.

Communication

An individual might be over the level of work that they are as of now doing but since they are not in an up close and personal workplace, their achievements are not being perceived, and their upgrades are not being noted, and this does not generally work out well for the remote worker as they are making due with a position not as much as what they can do.

Schedules

Another issue that may accompany telecommuting programs is scheduled that are exceptionally requesting. Some remote workers may require time to become acclimated to their schedules and if they are in an alternate time zone than those that work in an office at that point endeavoring to work when every other person works can be exceptionally requesting and incur a significant injury on the efficiency of the remote worker.

Culture

Finally, telecommuting detracts from the culture of a business. The culture is thought to be " the earth of the business". A few organizations have yearly occasions, celebrate birthday events in the workplace, or even the little <https://assignbuster.com/issues-in-telecommuting-and-strategies-for-intervention/>

triumphs of specialists on a month to month or quarterly premise. A man who is a piece of a telecommuting program would not be a piece of these work exercises.

Laziness experienced by employees

Telecommuting programs cause results for the specialists required, as well as the business too. However, if a representative is slacking off and not being as self-persuaded and as proactive as they should, efficiency will diminish, and the doled out work might be dismissed. Human resource managers must make sure that their telecommuting employees are being kept an eye on routinely and the work they are given is being done on time and effectively.

Lack of enforced management

Issues in the telecommuting program don't have to originate from the laborers as well as those put above them. It is inside the human resource manager's obligation to guarantee that their employees require are met, and concerns are being tuned in to. The administration needs likewise to guarantee that they furnish employees with the essential devices to legitimately work from home. At the point when eye to eye gatherings occur, they should join efficiency audits to demonstrate specialists their advance and what should be moved forward.

Addressing the issue and coming up with ways to solve it

For a telecommuting program to appropriately work the employees and the managers, have to acknowledge first that there are issues which they need <https://assignbuster.com/issues-in-telecommuting-and-strategies-for-intervention/>

to address. As discussed in the previous section on the problems that impact the telecommuting program we see that most of the problems lie within the workers and the way their actions affect the company's productivity.

The employers can try to tackle the best portions of these issues by ensuring they involve the telecommuters more in the activities of the business. If the invitations are going out for any events, then they should go to the telecommuters as well as involve them. Telecommuting includes a lot of innovation and they will at times breakdown. Remote workers should likewise have the capacity to organize as this is essential in completing work in an auspicious manner. Before starting the program, managers need to consider the individual needs of each remote worker and what the organization expects of them. The rollout of such a program will take a ton of work on the business' part and furthermore the worker. It will be useful as long as all gatherings included know their roles.

Effective Telecommuting

Employee Selection

Not all marketing and organizational positions are suitable for telecommuting. Similarly, not all employees are eligible for this work option. Given the rising need for employees to spend more time with family, friends, and participate in social events, most people prefer flexible work schedule. However, a successful telecommuting program upholds the workers' needs while assisting the organization in cutting costs and increasing productivity. Because of this, not all employers will be eligible for a telecommuting program despite giving his or her requisitions (Nilles, 2014). A successful <https://assignbuster.com/issues-in-telecommuting-and-strategies-for-intervention/>

telecommuting performance review is on a case-by-case basis rather than using a collective approach. Under such an arrangement, employee performance records indicate their eligibility for these programs. Moreover, teleworkers must demonstrate the ability to deliver timely and work independently with minimum supervision. Other psychographic features for a teleworker are values, personality, organizational, management and leadership skills. Ultimately, both demographic and psychographics must resonate with the employer corporate culture and behavior.

Group Dynamics

If the Human Resource want to ensure the effectiveness of a telecommuting program, then they need to be concerned greatly with the involved group dynamics. A telecommuting program can't be completed with one remote worker; thus administration needs to make sure that the general population put on groups will function admirably together and share the duty of the program they are responsible for. Effective telecommuting includes building up a superior work framework with individuals who all become alright together. Gatherings can get delicate and however, they are not in an up close and personal circumstance they are pooling resources together and cooperate frequently. There should be a comprehension of parts of the telecommuting program. Along these lines, when work is to be done, when data is to be traded or when a choice should be made, clash won't emerge because of miscommunication of parts and statuses inside the telecommuting program (Beauregard, & Henry, 2009).

Describe how you can best determine the fit of the individual for a telecommuting program

In seeking out somebody that is perfect for telecommuting, a manager should hope to make specific inquiries. He or she ought to be worried about regardless of whether the individual has worked from home before as this will be exceptionally useful in picking applicants. The human resource manager needs to likewise be worried about the workplace of the conceivable remote worker, on the off chance that they have kids who are not going to class up until now or deal with an elderly individual in their family then they may not be the perfect individual in light of the specs of the activity (Beauregard, & Henry, 2009).

On the off chance that the activity requires being on the telephone for the vast majority of the workday, at that point, a situation that is always boisterous and being irritated would not function admirably. A remote worker ought to have the capacity to dedicate their designated time to the jobs that need to be done, and there should be a decent level of correspondence with the business and representative if worries are to emerge or if work fulfillment should be expanded (Dahlstrom, 2013).

There are a couple of identity characteristics to consider while choosing people for a fruitful telecommuting program. One should have the capacity to design and sort out well and act naturally restrained so they will have the ability to steal out undertakings without slacking away and without requiring somebody always instructing them to continue working. A remote worker additionally should be professional, resourceful, intrinsic and assertive. If

something somehow happened to happen to thwart their profitability, they should have the capacity to make sense of how to take care of the issue if conceivable (Noonan & Glass, 2012).

Work Teams and Telecommuting

A significant challenge with telecommuting is a collaboration of distributed work. In a conventional teamwork environment, groups share and discuss ideas in a vertical progression. On the contrary, telecommuters working in teams allocate roles and responsibilities among the members. Although advances in technology such as teleconferencing, face timing, and live chats sustain group discussions, other communication barriers can affect contribution by members. Some of the obstacles include physical challenges, language differences, time location differences, and hierarchy and leadership problems in the digital communities (Noonan & Glass, 2012).

Teleworkers communities are made of members from different population demographics such as social class, religion, and cultural background. The other barrier to effective telecommuting is vulnerabilities of data in the digital platforms. Corporate espionage is among the leading threats within modern organization. Microsoft and other network providers often upgrade their systems to avert risks of access to information by unauthorized persons. Nevertheless, hackers, cyber terrorists, and internet bullies often invent ways to circumvent the security measures in place (Dahlstrom, 2013).

Conclusion

Telecommuting is a futuristic organizational tool that is useful for cutting cost and increasing workers' productivity. Successful implementation of a telecommuting program within an organization depends on components such as employee ability, technology, and equipment. Challenges in the implementation of the telecommuting programs are related to the three components. Telecommuting presents both employers and employees with an avenue for balancing work and life issues. However, as with any technology, there are challenges with the implementation of these programs. The ultimate objective of any initiative is reducing costs while improving productivity for both managers and employees (Blount, 2015).

It is well within the right of a human resource manager who is in charge of setting up a telecommuting program to select the right employees to carry out the job. The Human Resource manager should be knowledgeable and well experienced enough to choose employees based on their qualities and personality traits and their qualifications to be a part of a telecommuting program.

Telecommuting programs require that those involved be self-sufficient and self-motivated when working from home. Just like every job, there are drawbacks to telecommuting. Communication among workers and management comes into question, the demanding schedules of telecommuters can be overbearing at times and the culture of an organization can suffer (Blount, 2015).

A human resource manager can make the necessary changes to the possible drawbacks caused by the telecommuting program. The effectiveness of a

telecommuting program relies heavily on the parties involved and how well it has been put together and is being managed (Blount, 2015).

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