

Example of argumentative essay on employee involvement

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Introduction

While there is no consensus on the exact definition of employee involvement, most scholars agree on the fact that employee involvement entails all processes aimed at having the workforce of an organization participate in such important roles as decision making, which was traditionally associated with the top management only. Langton et al (2013) argue that transformational leadership is among the most important and preferred leadership styles in contemporary organizations. At the core of transformational leadership stands the pillar that eliminates the differences between the management and the workforce - employee involvement. Langton et al (2013) further argue that involving the employees in making critical decisions comes with more merits than demerits. While some gurus in management advocate for employee exclusion, they forget that such exclusion widens the gap that traditionally exists between the management and the employees. They argue that employee involvement is overrated, and that leaders must lead, employees must follow. This paper is an endeavor to oppose this idea, by elucidating the merits associated with employee involvement in great detail.

The Argument for Employee Involvement

According to Langton et al (2013), there is a close connection between employee engagement and employee involvement. The relationship between the two concepts is a causal relationship, whereby employee involvement brings about employee engagement - a concept that is beneficial to both the organization and the employees. Employee engagement refers to a situation

where the employees are entirely committed to the organization. When an organization's workforce is engaged, it is likely that the labor turnover rate will be low, and productivity will be high. The argument here therefore is that in the long run, employee involvement leads to an organization having an enthusiastic workforce, whose performance is above their ordinary capacities. Such performance is beneficial to both the organization and the members of staff, because typically, the members of staff are motivated by good performance.

Langton et al (2013) argue that in a decision making environment, two heads are better than one for a number of reasons - creativity being the most prominent. Along with creativity come high quality decisions. Perhaps the most important thing to note is the reality that a decision made by one individual may at times needs to be polished and corrected to perfection. This is only possible where the leaders and the employees work together. Involving the employees introduces an aspect of diversity and differential thinking. As such, the leaders are put in a position to get ideas from the pool of knowledge that is created through involvement. As opposed to a situation where the leader is the ultimate decision maker, involvement can solve a situation which appears practically impossible to the sole leader. It is important to point out at this point that leaders are human, and just like any other human beings; they have inherent weaknesses which may be reflected in the quality of decisions made. By involving the employees, such weaknesses are complemented hence eliminating a potentially embarrassing situation.

According to Langton et al (2013), conflicts are inevitable within an

organization. The most common conflicts occur between the employees' unions and the management. While this is the case, there is a need to iron out the differences. According to research, the main differences that cause bitter relationships between the two groups lie in the fact that the employees feel that the leaders impose decisions on them. This causes ideological differences and possible resistance. By involving the employees in the decision making process, collective decisions are made, the employees feel affiliated with the organization, and make the change their own. This way, resistance remains minimal, making it possible for things to run smoothly within the organization.

Employee involvement is arguably the most important factor in strengthening cooperation and communication within an organization.

Langton et al (2013) explain that involvement is one of the uncommon ways of creating an arena for social interaction, fun and limitless exchange of ideas. Essentially therefore, involving the employees in the processes of the organization's leadership will, in most cases, break the tense relationships between the leaders and the employees, creating powerful communication channels. In straightforward terms, employee involvement shortens the organizational structure and eliminates the bureaucratic procedures that hamper effective communication. It is a matter of common knowledge that once communication has been enhanced, cooperation will be strong.

Langton et al (2013) explain that among the many sources of motivation in an organization is the involvement of employees. While the relationship between the two concepts may not be direct, it is a matter of common knowledge that when an employee is allowed to participate in making key

decisions and setting goals, they feel affiliated with the organization. They feel like they own part of or the whole organization. Organizational psychologists explain that such feelings and perceptions motivate the employees to give the best in terms of ideas and actual effort. Such motivation brings about exceptional performance, in terms of production and innovativeness (Langton et al, 2013). Along with motivation, the interactive sessions that are associated with involvement are fun and provide potent grounds for team building. Teams - both formal and informal - are quite a necessary ingredient in any organization since they provide a breeding ground for future leaders.

Typically, the relationship between the leaders, supervisors and departmental heads and the employees are not positive. In other words, there is characteristic enmity between the two groups. According to modern human resource management research, the solution lies in servant leadership. A servant leader is one that will fold their sleeves, pick up the tools and get down to work together with the employees (Langton et al, 2013). The most notable example of such leadership is transformational leadership. A servant leader, who is arguably the most efficient in the contemporary human resource management arena, relies entirely on employee involvement. The essence of servant leadership is to give the employees power and authority. With such power and authority, they are less likely to feel undermined and used. They will do away with such feelings as the one that comes when decisions are imposed on them. An empowered workforce will prominently identify themselves with the organization. This boosts employee retention - arguably one among the most difficult tasks in

the contemporary business environment, where the dynamics are too strong due to high levels of competition.

The Counterarguments

Those of contrary opinion argue that involving the employees slows down the decision making process. According to the critics of employee involvement, having to listen to and sample out the decisions of many people definitely slows down the decision process. This, they say, makes employee involvement a poor approach, especially when the decisions to be made are urgent. As a matter of fact, the process of convening a meeting, creating the agenda, and going through the entire discussion process may be time consuming, especially where the subject matter relating to the process is one that requires tough debates (Langton et al, 2013). In such a case, decisions made by leaders without consulting the employees are the only potent solution.

Employee involvement means that the workforce is involved in setting goals and conducting the control process. The controlling function of business is one through which the actual performance of the organization is compared with the predetermined goals. By involving the employees in the decision process, it is likely that they will set goals that are too low, so that they can effortlessly achieve them and receive credit for the same (Langton et al, 2013). This will no doubt derail organizational performance and progress; as such progress will be directly affected by the attitudes of the employees. Again, in such a case it is better if leaders lead and the employees follow. Critics argue that through involvement, the leaders will be forced to share

very sensitive information with the employees. Once they access such information, the bargaining power of the employees' unions is strengthened. The presence of powerful trade unions is a threat to the resilience of the organization because such unions will always antagonize the management at the slightest opportunity (Langton et al, 2013). Such antagonism renders the management inefficient because the fight between the two parties diverts the focus of the management. Related to this point is the fact that once the employees become committed to a decision, changing such a decision will be quite difficult. With the dynamics of the current business world, change is inevitable and any institution that is not receptive to change is doomed to extinction.

Rebuttals

While the above counterarguments hold water, it is important to point out that the arguments in favor of employee involvement carry more weight. For instance, while critics argue that collective decision making is time consuming, it remains a fundamental fact that high quality decisions are better than quick decisions. The quality of a decision is higher when such a decision is made through a consultative process. Secondly, urgent decision making situations rarely arise. About the possibility of resistance to change, the organization can overcome this by continuously engaging the employees in thorough training on change management. Such training will make them flexible as to change those decisions that they had committed themselves to.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear that from the foregoing, employee involvement is quite important if good performance and employee retention are anything to go by. From the arguments above, it is clear that employee involvement motivates the employees, reduces chances of conflict, enhances communication and coordination, enhances creativity, gives the members of staff power and authority, improves management relations, reduces resistance to change and provides a ground for the creation of powerful teams. Those opposed to the idea of employee involvement argue that it slows down the decision making process, empowers the trade unions, enhances resistance to change core decisions, and raises the potentiality of setting low goals. Even so, it is clear that the arguments in favor of employee involvement are stronger than the counterarguments.

References

Langton, N., Robbins, S. P. & Judge, T. A. (2013). *Organizational Behavior: Concepts, Controversies, Applications* (6th ed.). Toronto, QC: PEARSON education Canada.