

# Examining employee dissatisfaction at verizon communications



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Verizon Communications based in New York and incorporated in Delaware, was formed on June 30, 2000 with the merger of Bell Atlantic Corp and GTE Corp. The mergers that formed Verizon were among the largest in U. S. business history. Verizon's mission is to enable people and businesses to communicate with each other. Verizon is also committed to providing full and open communication with their customers, small and medium-sized businesses and wholesale customers in 28 states, including Washington, D. C. Verizon has an estimate of about 250, 000 employees. Verizon recently just sold some of their companies such as Verizon South, Verizon North, Verizon California, GTE Florida, and GTE Southwest to Frontier Communications on July 1, 2010. Products and services that Verizon offers are landline, voice over internet protocol, fiber optic lines, voicemail, wireless, video, and high speed internet.

Verizon has provided technicians, customer service agents, operators, and others with job security, opportunities to advance and gain new skills, and sustainable wages and benefits. Yet since Verizon was formed in 2000, it has shirked its responsibilities as a public utility that has had over 25 company-wide layoffs among its employees. Because of the numerous layoffs, This is one of the causes that makes the employees at Verizon to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Verizon went from offering employees' gifts, training, bonuses and outstanding benefit packages to eliminating pensions for management staff, retirement and office parties, rationing office supplies, and providing in-house methods and procedures trainings. I can remember starting out as a Customer Service Representative hearing the many complaints among the workers about how unhappy they were and how they

were fearful that Verizon would lay them off. After four years working as a Customer Service Rep, I was promoted to Management as a HR Coordinator/Analyst. It was only when I moved into management did I hear complaints almost daily about employee dissatisfaction with the company. After noticing lots of employees getting their doctors to take them out of work due to stress on the job, I wanted to investigate why employees were so dissatisfied with the company. Because of the severity of employee complaints and issues, I decided to take it upon myself to create an in-house EAP for the employees called the MOVE Group, Motivating Our Verizon Employees until my position was eliminated in November 2008.

According to the recent OCI Survey, The two top ranking organizational culture styles for Verizon are Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative. The two lowest ranking organizational culture styles are Avoidance and Oppositional. The raw score for Humanistic Encouraging is 50 with a percentile score of 99%. The second highest raw score is for Affiliative 50, ranking in at 99%. Now for the Avoidance and Oppositional raw scores, both are 18, with Avoidance percentile score being 39% and Oppositional is 24% (OCI Circumplex, 4). According to the OCI Survey, Humanistic-Encouraging characterizes organizations that are managed in a participative and person-centered way. Members are expected to be supportive, constructive, and open to influence in their dealings with one another. I can attest to that Verizon is a company that cares about the customers, stockholders, and employees, as well as value people and processes that create useful change. Per the OCI, An Affiliative culture characterizes organizations that place a high priority on constructive interpersonal relationships. Members are

expected to be friendly, open, and sensitive to the satisfaction of their work group. The affiliative environment that I have seen while working at Verizon is one that encourages improving personal skills, being friendly, sociable and enforce the open door policy. Verizon has offered its employees the opportunity to use an intranet site that focuses on all these factors related to affiliative through a system called, Net Learn, where you receive a certificate upon completing the course. Avoidance, according to the OCI, fails to reward success but nevertheless punish mistakes. Locally, working in the High Speed Internet department, there were two supervisors who were notorious for never having a good comment to say when the employees would save a customer from going to the competitor. When it was time for annual reviews, The employees mentioned that they had to challenge the appraisals they received because the workers had proof of how many orders they created and how many came back error-free, however, the supervisors felt that the work was just average. As for the Oppositional style, OCI tells us that this style is confrontational and negative. Verizon was a company that changed their procedures often, sometimes daily, just to stay up to date with customer and business needs, so because of this, Supervisors were required to think fast and act quickly, which often times led to office conflicts.

### Problem Statement

Employee satisfaction is an emotional position that an employee experiences while at work. If employees are unhappy or dissatisfied, despite their best efforts, it is difficult for them to conceal this factor when interacting with their co-workers, the management staff, and Verizon customers. One of the primary reasons for evaluating employee satisfaction among the Verizon <https://assignbuster.com/examining-employee-dissatisfaction-at-verizon-communications/>

employees is to identify problems and try to resolve them before they impact the customers. According to Mary Rau-Foster, president of Foster Seminars and Communications LLC in Brentwood, TN, Employee satisfaction – or lack of it – hinges on a productive, fulfilling relationship between staff and management; indeed, the success of any organization depends on staff members who enjoy their jobs and feel rewarded by their efforts. When companies put employees and customers first, their employees are happy, their customers are loyal, their profits are increased, and their continued success is sustained. Employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction are mutually reinforcing.

One possible reason for employees to not be satisfied while working at Verizon is low morale. Low morale is attributed to lack of communication and trust, negative feedback from supervisors, inflexible working conditions, and departmental layoffs and closures. The purpose of this paper is to address some of the issues that cause employees to be dissatisfied with Verizon, its effects on customer retention, and possible solutions to improve employee satisfaction. As such, the following research question is posed: What are the factors affecting Verizon employees satisfaction and motivation and how do these factors affects their performance?

### Literature Review

In a recent publication, the Conference Board reports that more than half of U. S. employees are dissatisfied with their jobs, while a study by Salary. com indicates that 60 percent of current employees are likely to be searching for a new job within the next six months (Leader to Leader, 53). According to Ian

Davidson (2004), employees are the most valuable assets a corporation has. Employees are the catalyst of any organization. In Gallup polls taken every August from 1989 to 2009, 85 percent to 94 percent say they were either completely or somewhat satisfied with their jobs (Morello, 2010).

### Motivation and Job Satisfaction

There are several theories related to motivation in the workplace. Maslow (1954)

organized five needs into a hierarchy, and Maslow stated the lower order needs must be met

before higher order needs could be met. The hierarchy begins with physiological needs such as

thirst and hunger at the lowest level. Once these needs are satisfied, the safety needs emerge

such as shelter and protection. The third level is the social needs associated with love, affection,

and belonging. The fourth level is that of esteem; the need for self-esteem, self-respect, and

respect for others. After these four needs are met, the last need is that of growth or self-actualization. In order for a person to move to a higher level of growth, all lower order needs

must have been met. Herzberg (1966) based his research on Maslow and presented his motivation-hygiene theory that presented to two basic needs of man 1) animal needs related to the environment and 2) human needs related to the work to which man is involved. Through his studies, Herzberg found five factors that are strong determiners of job satisfaction and several items that cause dissatisfaction. The job satisfiers all relate to man's relationship to what he does, including achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement. The dissatisfiers described man's relationship to the environment. The items found to cause dissatisfaction and to produce short-term changes in job attitudes included " company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions" (Herzberg, 1966, p. 74). Thinking back to some of the conversations with the employees at Verizon, the factors listed by Herzberg are parallel to what the employees made complaints about as it relates to them being dissatisfied.

### Work/Life Issues

Work/life issues are used to describe the everyday events of someone's life and the way

these issues are affected by work. The work/life issues include burnout, stress, balancing work

and family, and carry-over between work and home. The job description for the employees at Verizon requires them to be available to work from 8am-10pm Monday through Friday and Saturdays from 8am-2pm. Once people begin to work, they can become overwhelmed

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with the amount of time they are away from home and their families (Kutilek, 2000). Because office procedures change from day-to-day, The employees are often times in training weekly. Some employees, depending on their performance, are asked to travel with the managers to different workshops on how to create high speed internet orders in formats only understood by technicians so when they are assigned to install, disconnect, or change high speed internet orders, they are processing the orders correctly. They are also required to work mandatory overtime and if they do not work the overtime, it will lead to disciplinary actions. Being away from home this amount of time can result in difficulties balancing work and family.

Commented by Kalliath and Brough (2008), Achieving a good balance between work and family commitments is a growing concern for contemporary employees and organizations. Challenges in balancing work and life are becoming more complex for employees in the public and private sectors, including work schedules, child and adult care concerns, time concerns, and work expectations (Kutilek et al. 2002a).

### Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is the number of permanent employees leaving the company within the reported period versus the number of actual active permanent employees on the last day of the previous reported head count. When an employee leaves a company, the employee takes with him knowledge and experience, that which cannot be monetarily measured and that cannot be easily recreated.