

Role ambiguity



Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict in an Organization Jayson R Diaz MBA-HRM

Workload, Stress and Performance Too much stress is clearly undesirable, but too little stress can also lead to unexpected problem, For Example, too little stress may result in boredom and apathy and be accompanied by low performance, And although too much stress can cause anxiety and low performance, for most people there is an optimal level of stress that results in high energy, motivation and performance. 2 types of task demands Physical Demands of a job are its physical requirements of the worker.

For Example is temperature, working outdoors in a extreme temperature can result in stress, as can working in a improperly heated or cooled office; Strenuous labor such as loading heavy cargo or lifting packages can lead to similar results; office design also can be a problem. A poorly design office can make it difficult for people to have privacy or can promote too much stress or too little interaction. Role Demands are stressors associated with the role a person is expected to play; also can be stressful for people in both formal and informal organization. Role is a set of expected behaviors associated with a particular person in a group or organization.

Example; Social roles such as child, son or daughter, teenager, college student, boyfriend or girlfriend, spouse, parent and grand parent. Roles such as a Digital equipment operator, clerk, team leader, sales person, engineer, system analyst, department head, vice president and chairperson of the board. Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict Role Ambiguity arises when the scope and responsibilities of the job are unstructured or poorly defined Example; the employee is not sure what is expected or even what to do. This is particularly crucial for new employees, whose job guidelines maybe

unclear. Adequate orientation and socialization programs for new employees can reduce role ambiguity.

If your instructor tells you to write a term paper but refuses to provide more information, you will probably experience ambiguity. You do not know what the topic is, how long the paper should be, what format to use, or when the paper is due. Three components of role ambiguity 1.

Performance criteria ambiguity- uncertainty about the standards used to evaluate a worker's job performance. 2. Work method ambiguity- uncertainty about the methods or procedures appropriate to the successful performance of the job. 3. Scheduling ambiguity- uncertainty about the timing or sequencing of work. Role Conflict arises when a disparity exist in job requirements or between the job's demands and the employers values and expectation. Types of role conflict 1. Interrole conflict- conflict between roles Example; if a person boss says that to get ahead one must work overtime and on weekends, and the same person's spouse says that the person needs to spend more time at home with the family.

. Intrarole conflict- may occur when the person gets conflicting demand from different sources within the context of the same role. Example; a manager's boss may tell her that she needs to put more pressures on subordinates to follow new work rules. At the same time, her subordinates may indicate that they expect her to get the rules changed.

3. Intrasender conflict- occurs when a single source sends but clear but contradictory messages Example; if the boss says that there can be no more overtime for the next month but after lunch tells someone to work late that

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same time evening. . Person-role conflict- results from a discrepancy between the role requirements and the individual's personal values and needs. Example; if a person is told to do something unethical or illegal such as when a sales person is asked to sell a product known to be inferior or dangerous, conflict can be developed. The sales person can quit, but the threat of unemployment may be a greater stressor. Other conflict; Interpersonal conflict- results from many factors.

It may seem from opposing personalities or simply by rubbing each other the wrong way. Four major sources of interpersonal conflict 1. Personal differences.

Everyone has a unique background because of his or her upbringing, cultural and family traditions, and socialization processes. 2. Information deficiencies- It may be that the two people in conflict are using different information or that one or both have misinformation. 3.

Role incompatibility- this type of interpersonal conflict draws from both intraindividual conflict and intergroup conflict. Example; the production and sales manager have interdependent function: one supports the other. However the role of the production manager is to cut cost, and one way is to keep inventory low. The sales manager on the other hand, has the role of increasing revenues through increased sales.

The sales manager may make promises to customers that are incompatible with the low inventory levels maintained by the production. 4. Environmental stress- These types of conflicts can be amplified by a stressful environment. In environment characterized by scarce or shrinking resources, downsizing,
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competitive pressures, or high degrees of uncertainty. Response categories of two individuals 1. Forcing (assertive, uncooperative) 2.

Accommodating (unassertive, cooperative) 3. Avoiding (uncooperative, unassertive) 4. Compromising (between assertiveness and cooperativeness) 5.

Collaborating (cooperative, assertive) Reference: Psychology and work today ninth edition; Pearson international edition, Duane Schultz and Sydney ellen, 2006 Organizational Behavior ninth edition, International edition, McGraw-Hill, Fred Luthans, 2002 Organizational Behavior seventh edition, Managing People and organization, Moorhead and Griffin, 2004