

Absenteeism in the workplace



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“ The term absenteeism means the deliberate or habitual absence of an employee from work place.”

It create a big problem in an organisation when employees misses too many days off from work and in these situations other employees have to cover their work who are off from work and the work simply does not get gone in a well manner.

The company must find out that the absence is involuntarily or voluntarily because involuntarily means any kind of illness or any unavoidable reason by which the employee is unable to come on work. Voluntarily means when an employee is absent from work without any reason manager need to worry about this kind of absence of employee need to get any documentation.

Some time the absence may be excessive in this case manager should compare the employee's attendance record with the other employees if the record of one employee is bad then the other means he was too many days off from work then it may be excessive absenteeism. So the manager should discuss all the matter to the employees very friendly to improve the performance of the company the employees must aware of this thing that their absence is affecting others. Manager should give a written notice to the employee who is absent too many days from the work to warn him/her

Basically absenteeism occurs when an employee of any organisation does not come to work due to several intentional or unintentional reasons like illness, injury, or any other habitual reason. Absenteeism affects the business in the terms of lost productivity. According to U. S. bureau of the census and U. S. bureau of labour statistic up the direct losses about \$40 billion a year

and social security administration determined that, annually workers missed more than half a billion days. <http://www.enotes.com/biz-encyclopedia/absenteeism>

Types of absence

There are many reasons why people off from work. Some those can be categorised as:

Short-range sickness absence (uncertificated, self-certificated, or covered by a doctor's 'fit note' which replaced the 'sick note' from April 2010)

Long-standing sickness absence

Unofficial absence or persistent lateness

Other absences: for example, annual leave; maternity, paternity, adoption, or parental leave; time off for public or trade union duties, or to care for dependents; compassionate leave; educational leave.

How much does absenteeism cost your business?

The workers which are absent from the work cost the business a lot and decrease the revenue of the business

Especially unplanned absence from work cost a lots to business like casual sickness of employee casual absence can affect per day productivity of business. This is a common problem of organisations in every organisation employees have 5.4 unplanned absence in 1 day.

According to Mercer, Absences," the total cost of absence can equal as much as 36% of payroll (compared to 15. 4% for health care coverage). Of that figure, 9% accounts for unplanned absences. Planned absences, like vacations and holidays, average 26. 6%. For a midsize business, this unplanned absence can account for as much as \$4. 5 million dollars per year. ([http://www. super-solutions. com/CostofAbsenteeism. asp](http://www.super-solutions.com/CostofAbsenteeism.asp))

Employer of the business must look upon the direct and indirect expenses incurred by the employee absent from work. Direct cost are the cost which are normally paid to the employee as a benefit during the absence from work it include sick absence, paid holidays or vocations. But the real impact of the absence of employee comes in the form of indirect cost which are represented by:

The absence of employee affect badly in the completion of any project or can slow it down

If the employee us absent from worker the a temporary worker or the employee's supervisor have to cover the work of the absent employee

The absence of the employee slows but does not stop bleeding

The replacement of employee is less efficient in an organisation it can be percentile as follow:

71% as efficient during unplanned incidental absences

79% as efficient during planned absences

80% as efficient during extended absences

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The work output of 4 to 8 co-workers was reduced by 19%

Normally non attendance can cost as much as about £1000 to business per employee every year one person is taking day off from work might be not seem like a big issue but when we add up the sum it cause the decrease in the productivity with the increased strain on other areas of the business. The fact is that it should not be taken lightly.

What if you need to hire in a temporary worker to pick up the workload?

What if someone who is covering the work needs to be paid overtime? What if their absence means a suggestion doesn't get in on time resulting in a lost contract?

Indeed, absenteeism can take a financial toll in several companies for that matter in different respects. The most obvious cost in the sector of sick leave benefits provided that the business offers some benefits but there are many hidden costs as well.

These are some hidden charges which cost to business in the case of absenteeism as follow:

Lost productivity of the absent employee

Overtime for other employees to fill in

Decreased overall productivity of those employees

Any temporary help costs incurred

Possible loss of business or dissatisfied customers

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Problems with employee morale

More over IHC estimates that 13. 4 million working days a year are lost to stress, anxiety and depression, and 12. 3 million to back and upper limb problems.

And the overall cost to UK industry? A whopping £11. 5bn in 2002 was paid out in wages to absent employees and on additional overtime and temporary staff cover, according to the CBI. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3563609.stm>

Numerous factors

Taking a one-off sick may not seem a problem to the employees in a organization but they all add up to a major cost to a organization as well a industry of any country So much so that according to a report by healthcare consultancy IHC, 40 million days are lost each year in the UK to workplace absenteeism. And 93% of employees was absent from work due to colds and flu IHC says that in reality at least half of all workplace absence has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with health. People decide to stay away from the office personal or domestic issues.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3563609.stm>

Motivation

Many employers attempt to clear out on unwarranted absenteeism through tighter control. They ask employees to attend a meeting with their supervisor straight away upon their return to work, they demand a note from

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a doctor or use some other ways that targets the symptoms of absenteeism rather than its underlying causes. But the problem remains the same because they must concentrate to cut the roots of the problem the only thing that must do is to motivate. They must start by creating a relaxing and secure environment in which to communicate must create a point one where the shop floor workers can meet management without any pressure and discuss the problem which they are facing. Employers must communicate it is very important task in motivation which tell the views and happiness of everyone in the business

Performance = function (ability x motivation)

There are number of different views of different people that what can motivate the workers. The most common theory of Herzberg is discussed follow:

Motivational Theory: Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

Herzberg found many aspects of that what factors please the employees or displease the employees about their work place. He developed the motivation hygiene theory in which he called the motivators and the dissatisfiers to using hygiene term in the sense of to maintenance factors which are very important to avoid dissatisfaction. Herzberg theory of motivation was based on two factors hygienic factors and motivator factors

Hygiene Factors which can demotivate when the employee is not present. Hygiene Factors influence the dissatisfaction of a person, but are rarely identified as creating job satisfaction.

Supervision

Interpersonal relations

Physical working conditions

Salary

Company car

Security

Relation with subordinates

Personal life

Motivation Factors which will motivate when present. Job dissatisfaction isn't usually caused by a lack of Motivation Factors, but they are identified as the cause of job satisfaction.

achievement

advancement

recognition

responsibility

work itself

The factors that motivated them in the workplace

These all are the factors that gave the employees an motivation to work to resultant in job satisfaction. These are also known as motivators these

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motivators increased the job satisfaction of the employee towards his work and further increase the efficiency

Those factors that prevented job dissatisfaction

These factors are those that banned the job dissatisfaction. These factors did not make the employee happy or have job satisfaction it just removed the unhappiness out of working. They are also known as hygiene factors these factors effect on the efficiency of the employees or it reduce the performance of the employee in work

Herzberg believed that all factors include into one of these categories and therefore had separate cost. Some factors include into both categories although they held a stronger position in one of them.

Attribution theory

Attribution theory suggests that we observe a person's behaviour and then try to establish whether internal or external forces caused it. If it is judged to be internal it is seen as being under the person's control if it is judged to be external it seen as a result of the situation. Attribution is said to be subjected to a number of considerations because we judge actions in a context. For example we judge how distinctive behaviour is and whether behaviour is unusual for a particular person.

If for example the person is absent from and the circumstances are that his or her attendance record is exemplary then the behaviour could be considered unusual and an external cause (that is that the behaviour is outside the control of the individual) will be attributed. If the absenteeism fits

in with the general pattern of behaviour then an internal attribution will be attached (that is it will be seen as being under the person's control).

We also judge how consistent the behaviour is if it is consistent then we are most likely to attribute the behaviour to internal causes.

(Organisational Behaviour and Work 3rd edition Fiona M. Wilson 2010)

Theory X and Theory Y

According to Douglas McGregor theory x and y is a traditional approach to control with in the organisation different sort of problems. Mostly it happens that the average employees hate work and try not to come possibly in this situation as a response from the management must be in the form of incentives and different sort of schemes which can make the work more interesting towards the employees. People need to be directed well, controlled and threatened with any punishments in order to get their attentions and efforts in work. Preferable way to direct the people is to use theory x and y.

There are four assumptions which must be taken by the managers

Employees naturally hate work and, mostly attempt to be absent when ever its possible to them to do so .

Most of the people are not motivated they have little desire for responsibility and need to be directed well.

Most of the people have low ability to participate in the organisational problems

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Most of the people are innocent and un intelligent

Most workers put security above all other factors associated with work and will display little ambition.

In difference to these negative assumptions about the nature of human being McGregor explain the more positive assumptions that he called theory Y.

Theory Y

Employee can treat the work naturally as rest or play

The employees will be more confident and self control to perform or fulfil the objectives of the business

People will be happy are work more efficiently if they being rewarded for their work.

Employees will be more creative in throughout the organisation

Employees will seek responsibilities in such circumstances

Basically in theory X management assumed that the employees are lazy and will avoid the work because of the behaviour of workers a system is need to be developed according to this theory employees will pay less attention and avoid the responsibilities and according to McGregor most of the managers must assume the theory X to know about the views of the employees. A manager who assume the theory X n think negative about the employee work automatically create a good leadership towards them to get better

results. Then in theory Y managers will consider that the rights and responsibilities given to the employee motivate them to work well and put their efforts in work. A theory Y managers will try to remove the barriers which can be occur in business.

In general this shows us that the theory X managers are going wrong and getting wrong and on the other hand theory Y managers are the best and getting best.

Measurement

HOW TO MEASURE ABSENTEEISM:

The most clear way to measure employees absenteeism is to make records of the attendance of the employees that how many days have employee not have came to work in many companies there is some sort of clock in or accountability set up to record the attendance of the employees working there when we have the proper record then we can easily know that how many employees are ill.

Another key element of measuring the absence effectively is accurate measurement and monitoring. An organisation must measure if it has a problem with the absence issue its extent and the best way to solve or control this issue. There are just a fewer organisations which have set the target to reduce the absenteeism

There are different measures that can be used to calculate the absence each of the measure provides the different aspects of absence.

Lost time rate

This measure show the overall percentage of the total time available which has been lost due to the absence of the employees of organisation

For example:

10 one-day absences: $10 \times 10 \times 10 = 1,000$

1 ten-day absence: $1 \times 1 \times 10 = 10$

5 two-day absences: $5 \times 5 \times 10 = 250$

2 five-day absences: $2 \times 2 \times 10 = 40$

The trigger points are normally different in many organisations. As for all types of absence, the underlying causes will need to be identified.

This measure shows the percentage of total time available which has been lost due to absence of employees:

Total absence (hours or days) in the period $\times 100$

Possible total (hours or days) in the period

For example, if the total absence in the period is 124 person-hours and the total time available is 1,550 person-hours, the lost time rate is:

$124 \times 100 = 8 \%$

1,550

It can be calculated separately for individual departments of the organisation or groups of employees to reveal particular absence problems.

Frequency rate

The measure assesses the average number of absences per employee, it assesses as a percentage. It does not give any sign of the length of each absence period, nor any sign of employees who take more than one spell of absence:

No of spells of absence in the period x 100

No of employees

for example:

If we take the record of organisation of one month so employed on average 80 workers, and during this time there were a total of 16 of them was absence, the frequency rate is:

$$16 \times 100 = 20\%$$

80

by counting the total number of workers who take at least one day absence in one period rather than the total days of absence this measurement will show the individual frequency rate

Bradford Factor

The Bradford Factor identifies the constant short range absence for individuals, by measuring the number of days of absence, and is therefore a useful measure of the disturbance by this type of absence. It can be calculated using the formula:

$$S \times S \times D$$

S = number of absents in 52 weeks taken by an person

D = number of absents in 52 weeks taken by that person

For example:

10 one-day absences: $10 \times 10 \times 10 = 1,000$

1 ten-day absence: $1 \times 1 \times 10 = 10$

5 two-day absences: $5 \times 5 \times 10 = 250$

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the trigger points will be different for all of the organisations. As for all types of absence, the underlying causes will need to be identified.

Steps to Control Unauthorized Absence

There are different theories which explain the causes of the absence and by which we can realize that we cannot solve the casual absence issues and other types of absence but we need a comprehensive approach to reduce the issue of absenteeism. There are three steps on which the company or employers must concentrate to avoid or control the absenteeism

Step 1:

The employers must make a absence policy in an working order. Not only the absence policy but also they must use other systems to make sure the rules and regulations of the absenteeism policy are implemented to employees in well manner such as:

We must train the manager about the cost of the absenteeism and how to overcome it

Make an policy or more rules regards to reduce the money if the employees gone absent and communicate with them that how much money they have lost it will force them not to be absent without any reason but the most important thing we have to check the local legal regulation and policy before this method

Must record the attendance of the employees and there should any kind of reward for the employee who was on work all the days in a period or who containing the maximum attendance let all the employees chose the winner for that

We must make an absence policy align to the other policy specially which is related with the employees benefits. Such as we can create rules to not to give any kind of incentive or any loan to the employee whom attendance is not good

Step 2:

We must make sure the employment system and the selection system consider absence issue such as:

The recruiter for employees should mention the medical and health conditions as an main concern

We must make sure in interviews or in start that the candidate has an positive attitude towards the attendance importance

It is very important to check not only for competency fit he must be checked for job fit which includes the interest and personality of the candidate according to the nature of the job

Step 3:

Some of the problem of absenteeism is related to the job problem. If there is any poor performance of any employee then we must take action:

We must make the elastic working time arrangements like if employee have any kind of problem to go on Monday for domestic demands they can easily replace Monday to Saturday or any other day or if the employee attend the half day then he can work additional hours tomorrow to cover the missing hours

We must put some interesting aspects in the job by enlarging the responsibilities by changing the nature of the job by making it challenging to the subordinates or by providing the additional trainings or coaching.

What actions a manager should take for absence

The important challenge for managers is to make people happier at work.

This is a fact if the people are happy on the work then there will be less day off from work every time they wake up with a stuffy nose. Managers need to become more tuned to their employees they have to take care of several things like emotional needs and find out what really motivates them. To reduce the amount of absence they must take some good decisions:

Pick the right person for job by interviewing and selecting people

Give more time to or pay more attention to the applicant's human side other than the qualifications.

Find out what makes the employees happy and make sure about the views of them that they think positive and sure about it that job suits them

Should motivate your people and coach them in different ways

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As with all theories there is not even any guarantee that it will work very time but the majority employees are responsible people and if the we treat them in a good manner then they attitude towards the work will be positive manner. Mostly some of the employees need to know about their performance in the organisation if we want to really motivate them then we must give them the feedback and must guide them how they can improve their work more efficiently.

Managers can make the job more interesting to employees by giving them the responsibilities, challenges, giving them new projects for work, or

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trainings. We should regularly communicate with them formally and informally and must involve or organize the staff meetings.