

Conflict and stress management

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Supervisory roles are varied and diverse in any business organization. As a supervisor one may be required to portray some basic management skills like problem solving, to be involved in the organization of teams, delegating duties to employees or teams, hiring and training new employees, management of employees' performance and ensuring that employees conform to the personnel policies as well as other internal rules and regulations. Managing other individuals is very rewarding and demanding at the same time and transition from one job to another as a supervisor may pose a great challenge to many people (Drake, Mecker, & Stephens, 2002)..

As a new supervisor in a new job, the two greatest challenges may be on how to manage employees stress levels at workplace in order to improve their productivity and how to deal with the age-old issue of counseling and support for staff members undergoing numerous challenges and problems both within and without workplace. This paper will discuss the two challenges in details as viewed by new supervisors in new jobs. Conflict and Stress Management Conflict may be considered as the struggle within one's self or between individuals as a result of lack of compatibility of ideas, opinions, thoughts, needs or demands.

Conflict between people is always inevitable in a business organization because people tend to hold different views due to their differences in socialization and cultural background. As a new supervisor would realize, one cause of conflict in a team would be the change in leadership. One of the main reasons why employees would conflict in their workplaces is change (Larson, 2010). And because change is hard to overcome and accept, most

employees would simply resort to resisting the change and the new developments.

A new supervisor may be the face of change the employees would not accept and would simply resort to sabotage or noncommittal to their work duties. Conflicts may also occur as a result of struggle for positions and power within the organizational hierarchy. A new supervisor may be seen as an obstacle to attainment of the aspired positions in the organization and as a result there bound to be a conflict between the supervisor and his or her staff. Again, employees may clash because of their diverse interests or choices for procedures in carrying out duties (Larson, 2010)..

Striking a balance to satisfy the diverse needs and interests of the staff with those of the organization would be the greatest challenge to a new supervisor in a new job. Conflict may have either positive or negative effects on the business and workenvironment. It is how we handle the conflict that will determine the outcome of the conflict at workplace. However, a new supervisor has a lot of challenges to resolve especially considering that it a new environment where nobody is an ally yet.

A closely related issue to conflict is stress at workplace which is sometimes brought about by the conflicting interests, views and demands at the workplace. Job stress is considered one of the contributors to poor employee performance. Stress cut across all levels of our lives and is not confined to those in management positions only. As a multifaceted issue managing stress is not a simple task (Larson, 2010).. Stress is not only caused by the

stressful work environments but also factors like poor economic environment, disasters and other changes in our day today living.

Identifying and managing stress in a new environment as a supervisor is not only a challenging task but also a sensitive issue as most people would not be ready to confide in their new leader. Gaining the trust of the employees might take longer as the leader and the supervised try to familiarize with one another. During this long period, employees undergoing stressful lives would be difficult to identify which therefore makes management of stress a difficult task to a new supervisor. This would result into poor work performance and by extension conflict between the supervisor and the supervised due to lack of understanding.

Counseling and Support to Employees Counseling role is required of a supervisor when an employee's problems are found to impact on his or her performance. Its intended purpose is to mitigate any further disciplinary measures, including a formal one. The supervisor is required to help the employee seek ways of solving the problem by not only being positive and supportive but also encouraging in the entire process. Counseling would call for identification of the problem early on so as to help the employee concentrate and improve on his or her work performance (Hanger & Cooley, 2003).

While it would be easier to notice employees with problems, it is quite challenging for a new supervisor to identify the problem in an employee. For example, a supervisor may notice that one of his staffs is always late for work and therefore do not meet deadline when carrying out his duties. Good

supervisory skills call for seeking any answer from such an employee so as to find out what could be the reason for late coming, after which, the supervisor is suppose to counsel the employee out of that problem.

But few employees would readily confide in the new employee which would hamper the counseling efforts. This would be the greatest challenge to the new supervisor as he tries to solve some of the sensitive issues which employees might not be ready to share but are affecting their work performance (Drake, Mecker & Stephens, 2002). Closely related to the issue of counseling is support to the employees. Employees just like any other individuals live in the society where problems are bound to hit anyone and everyone.

Problems may range from having to care for sickfamilymembers, to dealing with death of one of the family members. Organizations may also have some sick employees in their staffs as well as disabled persons. Dealing with these varied and diverse problems may pose a great challenge not only to any supervisor but also to the general management of the business organization (Drake, Mecker & Stephens, 2002). Supervisors are required to identify various issues and problems affecting their employees and to look for resources and necessary benefits that would most suitably help their employees.

Constant support is needed to help employees strike a balance between the high demands of work and life. The necessary support would not only increase an employee's productivity but also his or her commitment to the work and the company (Hanger & Cooley, 2003). However, a new supervisor

would face a daunting task in implementing some of the necessary benefits and resources needed to support the employees. Employees might need flexible working time so as to take care of other pressing family needs like caring for the sick or taking the sick to the hospital. Read about personalized conflict

The new supervisor may be ready to allow his or her staffs take up such flexible times but because he or she is new in this organization and do not know each employee well enough, it would be hard to grant such an employee a flexible time. This is because some of the employees may just take advantage of the change in leadership to avoid and attend to personal issues. Conclusion Problems are everywhere in our daily lives from home to workplace. It is the aim of every business organization to maximize the productivity of its employees so as to be able to reap profit.

A good supervisor and management must know that the key to increasing employees' productivity is by turning the negatives into positives. Every problems faced by the employees must be handled in such a manner that it would produce a satisfactory outcome both for the employer and the employee. And this would only be possible if we help our employees strike a balance between work and life.

Reference

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