A Touch on Employees Motivation

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze three motivational tools and techniques namely financial, compensations and training that could help companies guide their employees toward achieving superior performance especially in Middle Eastern. Key points and recommendations are summarized.

Keywords: Employee Motivation, Motivational Theories, Middle Eastern, Hokroh

1. Introduction

Employees' motivation is a topic that has fascinated the field of management researchers on both practical and theoretical setting. It is also the focus of attention for most organizations in all levels. Furthermore, he indicates that future development of motivational theories will reveal and give more understanding of how work and motivation function. Researchers are investigating new approaches and studying several variables that contribute to the enhancement of the traditional motivational theories as well as the development of new ones. (Steers et al., 2004)

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2. Analysis of Three Motivational Tools and Techniques

2.1 Financial Incentives:

Bonner *el at*. (2002) indicate that in expectancy theory setting; monetary incentives affect effort in two dimensions. First, they are the outcome of interest, because they are instruments of obtaining things. They are also associated with prestige and status which resembles symbolic values. Second, expectancies have been found to be higher and linked strongly with monetary incentives. Furthermore, Adam's equity-theory indicates that employees will compare their input (e. g. education) and output (e. g. pay) with others in the same situation (Orgaisational Behaviour 2008).

Locke *el at*. (1981) points out three ways in which financial incentives affects task performance via goal setting. First, the degrees at which goals are set. Second, financial incentives might cause employees to set more spontaneous goals that otherwise would not be set without monetary incentives. Third, the degree of individual goal commitment. This also supports Latham *el at*. (1978) research on the importance of goal setting and anticipated rewards on job performance, where they revealed that anticipated financial incentives have positive effect on goal commitment which led to higher performance. However, even with goal factor being controlled, higher monetary incentives lead to better performance than small once as shown by (Pritchard and Curtis cited in Locke *el at*. 1981).

Company financial incentives play an effective role in employees' motivation as Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains. Money can be used to secure human physiological needs such as food and shelter. It also helps to fulfill human safety and security needs through financial plans (e. g. Savings). Moreover, it could help employees realize belonging and esteem needs through social interaction (e. g. clubs) and the ability to purchase items that might attract recognition and indicate high status level (e. g. cars and fashion). Furthermore, it can contribute to self-actualization by helping employees achieve their personal goals and objectives. (Oleson 2004)

2.2 Compensations Incentives:

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, needs for safety, security and belongingness play a major role in employees' motivation. This is also inconsistence with Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory in which he views relatedness needs as meaningful interpersonal and social relationships which contributes to motivation. Although Maslow suggests that only unfulfilled need will trigger motivation, Alderfer argues that even in such progression process a need for relatedness is created. He suggests that relatedness need would cause the employee to redirect his effort toward finding other ways to satisfy unmet needs. (Organisational Behaviour 2008)

On the other hand, Herzberg two-factor theory suggests that interpersonal relationships and job securities work as hygiene factors that do not contribute to employee motivation. However, the absenteeism of these factors can lead to job dissatisfaction. (Orgaisational Behaviour 2008)

Herzberg identification of a secure job as the provider of a good life for families inspired scholars to argue that job security is one of the dominant motivations factors for employees. (Greenhalgh *el at*. 1984)

Herzberg reveals that recognition programs work as motivators if they identified by employees as recognition for achievement which is intrinsic to the job. Conversely, they work as hygiene factors if they were perceived by employees as doing something for the company and getting awarded in return. Furthermore, Herzberg indicates that intrinsic motivators give employees competence feedback and reflects positive information. On the other hand,

Maslow identifies two motivational processes: coping and expressive. Coping mode is determined by factors that work to fulfill human internal needs by external satisfiers whereas expressive mode is derived from internal personal growth needs absence from external satisfiers. (Orgaisational Behaviour 2008)

2.3 Training and Career Development Incentives:

From Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Benson *et al.* (2003) point out that training occupies critical part on the safety and security level. They propose that a well-trained machinist would operate a machine safer than non-trained one. Moreover, they indicate that employees' awareness of the company spending resources on their training assures that they are valuable to the company. Furthermore, training helps employees meet love and belongings needs through socializing with colleagues who share the same interest. On the other hand, as employees receive more training, they become more productive and confident. This enhances their self-esteem. Training also allows employees to innovate, take risk and grow to reach the level of self-actualization.

On the other hand, Benson *et al.* (2003) indicate that e-learning has created new ways of social belongingness via virtual teams and groups without being concerned about organizational or geographical location. It also enhances self-esteem through teamwork communication, participation and decision making. Moreover, it allows employees to explore unlimited resources of learning and developing to reach self-actualization.

Herzberg's two factor theory founded the bases of Job enrichment theory which indicates that psychological needs (e. g. achievement) must be characterized in employees' job. This can be realized through learning, training and counseling. Thus, as skill variety, task identity and significance increase, the employee experience meaningfulness of work and in return he becomes motivated. (Organisational Behaviour 2008)

Hall's model of career identification indicates that task identity which resulted from training and learning plays significant role in enhancing employees' self-confidence. Moreover, task identity allows employees to identify their strength and weaknesses which in return leads them to self-actualization. London (1993)

Noe (1986) points out that Varoom's expectancy theory has particular relevance in training and development. Employees may perceive that particular outcome (e. g. promotion) could be achieved through participation in a training program. They also may perceive that attending a training program would result in mastering a particular skill. Such perceptions are related to self-efficacy expectations. According to Parcker (1998), self-efficacy is the degree to which employees are confidence that they can carry out more proactive role. Noe (1986) suggests that employees with high self-efficacy are more likely to exert additional effort to master a training program. Furthermore, Parcker (1998) suggests that self-efficacy is directly related to job enrichment. He points out that Job enrichment works in expanding the job vertically to increase roles and responsibilities as Hackman and Oldham indicate. Thus, employees can influence decision making process and have autonomy over assigned tasks.

This as he suggests will motivate employees to carry out more proactive roles.

According to Katzell *et al.* (1990), resources and methodologies on how to perform a specific task are important factors that affect the job performance. Dysvik *et al.* (2008) indicate that training opportunities increase the organization performance by having flexible, autonomous and empowered employees.

Locke *et al.* (1990) identify several factors that influence the effectiveness of assigned goals.First, they are assigned by legitimate authority (e. g. supervisors) that has influential power on employees' compliance. Second, authority figures influence employee confidence by trusting them on the assigned tasks. Third, difficult goals motivate employees by challenging them, thus improving their skills and developing their competences. Fourth, assigned goals help employees set the standards to reach self-satisfaction. Moreover, feedback plays major part in the goal sitting effectiveness by tracking performance in relation to the assigned goals.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Key Points:

a. Motivational theories provide bases on which employee motivational behavior is understood (Organisational Behaviour 2008).

b. Although monetary incentives are suggested to affect the motivational process it's not the only way (Organisational Behaviour 2008).

c. Some motivational theories are supportive of each other's and if practiced effectively, they could have a positive effect on organizations (Khoori 1996).

d. Every employee has a motivational energy that needs to be attended and aligned with organizational goals (Nicholson 2003).

3.2 Recommendations:

a. More intensive studies that address employees' motivational issues need to be attended in non-western organizations (Maghrabi 1999).

b. Organizations should learn more about employee needs in order to understand the type of motivation needed (Organisationa Behaviour 2008).

c. Although technology plays a major role in employees development (e. g. education), yet it must be self-directed enough to be effective (Benson et al. 2003).

d. Motivational reward programs should be valued by employees in order to obtain the targeted behavior (Hansen et al. 2002).

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