

## Manage the Tension Between the Needs of Organization and Employees

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**Abstract** - Employer and employee come to the workplace with a set of aims, needs and wants, which are hoping to have achieved and fulfilled. However, it is not easy to find the balance to reach these needs for both sides. This paper is exploring the role of Human Resource management (HRM) in helping to relieve and manage the tensions that arise between these needs of the organization and the employees. Furthermore, it extends the role of HRM through the practices in job design, involvement and training to be succeed in its role.

**Key words** – needs; job design; involvement; training

### I. INTRODUCTION

Employees come to the workplace, they are doing things, accomplishing tasks, even busy, in order to achieve their needs. The organization increases in pay, bonuses, and praise creating a healthy work environment to produce higher employee satisfaction and engagement. In return, organization hope employees can show their loyalty, commitment, values and high productivities to achieve business goals. However, to manage the tension between the needs of both sides is not an easy way. This paper will focus on HR practices like job design, involvement and training, to deal with the issue, and will give some suggestion to get satisfaction for both organization and employees.

### II. THE NEEDS OF ORGANIZATION AND THE EMPLOYEES

Mullins (2001) summarizes the numerous needs and expectations of employees into extrinsic and intrinsic factors. Needs of an extrinsic nature are related to 'tangible' rewards such as salary and benefits, security, promotion, contract of service, work environment and conditions of work. Intrinsic needs are those of a more psychological nature. For example, the opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, the opportunity for personal growth and development, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate manner.

The organization's set of needs is very much characterized by the bottom line – it looks to achieve profit, growth, productivity and competitiveness. For such successes, organizations need loyalty, commitment and trust from their employees, along with hard work, high attendance, engagement with work and maximum effort. Deadlines and targets need to be met and increasingly the workforce is

being recognized as the key factor organizations need to have on board in accomplishing such goals.

With the rapid change in economic environment, organization focus more on profits and see a constant striving to keep costs down and maintain a competitive edge, this can bring an organization into conflict with its employees. The organization looks to gain a great deal from its employees for as little as possible, whilst employees are asking for an increasing amount of investment today. On such grounds, many scholars view tension and conflict between the needs of employers and employees as inevitability. For example, an organization may wish its employees to devote a great deal of time in work. However, the emphasis for employees today is maintaining a work-life balance, and they may not be willing to do overtime work.

It seems that it is difficult to deal with the conflicts between organization and the employees. Guest's model is clever in that its basis is on concepts that are valued and appreciated by both employer and employee. High commitment, high quality and high flexibility enables the needs of both parties to be realized. For example, with regard to commitment, it "can result not only in more loyalty and better performance for the organization, but also in self worth, dignity, psychological involvement, and identity for the individual". (Guest, 1999). This paper will take the HRM practices of 'job design', 'involvement' and 'training' to explore how to manage the needs of the organization and individuals through this three pillars of commitment, quality and flexibility.

### III. HR PRACTICES

#### A. Job design

Initiatives such as compressed working hours, working from home and self selected hours, for example, employees can choose eight hours working time like 9.00am – 5.00pm, 8.00am - 4.00pm, or 10.00am - 6.00pm, which can be observed to facilitate employees' desire for an effective work-life balance, and ensures in turn that the hours they are at work they can be fully committed to and focused on their task. The use of temporary and part time variable contracts enable organizations to make more efficient use of staffing, to have them as and when needed. This allows an organization to be more responsive to change and demand. Devolution of power from management to employees can be a rather crafty practice that fulfils a number of needs and expectations for both parties. Whilst nurturing feelings of empowerment amongst employees, providing challenge, a sense of worth and respect, and the notion of management

investing in and having faith in the individual, it also sees management being able to free up their workload to concentrate on wider 'big picture' issues, and results in the organization getting more out of their workers for little extra cost.

#### *B. Involvement*

Next is involvement. This is very much associated with the promotion of commitment. There is the argument that if the organization is to have such a great deal of involvement in its staff's work practices, the staff should be able to have a say in and inform the organizations operating procedure and ideas. It is suggested that, in these ways the organization can see how employees value their commitment, and employees can appreciate how the organization values theirs'. It is all about transparency and allowing employees to learn more about their place of work and have an opportunity to influence it. Staff forums, 'surgery hours' and troubleshooting sessions come to mind. It is all about letting the employees have a say. By listening to them an organization has an opportunity to realize the value of its staff. They can take on board concerns, needs and ideas and work with them to achieve more effective, relevant and synchronized strategies, which once again will impact on productivity and performance. Again the notion of giving employees more responsibility can be recognized. By giving them a greater stake in determining an organization's success and good performance become meaningful to them. In return, self identity and self esteem needs will encourage the individual to strive to carry out their job to the best of their ability in order to promote organizational success. Continuing with this line of thinking, by making employees feel part of an organization and involving them in its success, like bonuses, profit sharing, they are given a reason to demonstrate organizational citizenship.

#### *C. Training and Development*

Third is the issue of training and development. If the organization is seen to put a lot into an employees' workplace experience, it is generally regarded that they will return the gesture by making the effort with their work. It can be suggested that all the effort to acknowledge employees' needs is just part of organizations aim for high performance, profit and competitiveness. Training can take numerous forms, on the job experience, basic skills training, development courses, coaching and mentoring for example. With 'employability' being the new currency of work opportunities, expanding skill bases, knowledge and experience is warmly received by individuals. In turn the organization ensures its workforce are capable, confident, up to date and informed, which lends itself well to providing a competitive edge.

## IV. CONCLUSION

HRM practices are fulfilling rather than demeaning. If an employee sees the workplace as a place in which self esteem needs, personal development and achieving a strong identity can be met, then he will value its goals and work towards achieving the organizations aims and championing its growth. A workforce that exerts a significant contribution to its organization provides an organization with a great competitive advantage. This approach is argued to breed a culture of motivation, organizational citizenship, and job satisfaction, with regards to the organizations this has been observed to result in greater performance, productivity and reliability, and for the individual it provides self fulfillment, recognition, development and job satisfaction.

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Organizations are running a business, so employer's interests will always be put first. It would require a giant leap of faith on their behalf for it to be conceived that a genuine concern for the needs and expectations of employees. On the other side, it is asked to achieve the same profit margins and bottom line competitiveness. So, to what extent and how does HRM manage the tension between the needs of the organization and the needs of the employees? There is a movement to accommodate the needs for organization and employees through HR practices, and seem to be scope for keeping both sides happy. While sometimes used by management to claim to give greater emphasis to employees' concerns, in practice HRM seeks to incorporate employees within a management - determined system of control, built on careful management of organisational culture. However, the extent to which the concern with keeping employers happy is genuine is questionable. Perhaps a valuable conclusion would be that the extent to which HRM currently manages the tension is small, operating instead to manipulate it.

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