



RAISING WORKERS PERFORMANCES IN AN ORGANIZATION- A DISCUSSION OF LEADERSHIP INTERVENTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Organizations leaderships are always inundated with how to engineer persistent excellent performance on the part of employees. It is the agenda of leadership to 'think tank' on the techniques to be used. But leadership cannot now raise performance without the tacit collaboration of a multitude of others who collectively help raise performance on the part of employees. Employees are to do their part to increase performance, especially when current performance is not pleasing or palatable to leadership and other stakeholders. Raising performance must be their obsession and the conceptual spaces in their minds must be filled with the 'how' to perpetually up performance. Employees must be 'oiled and lubricated' to deliver. The piece discusses the interventions and recommendations on raising employees or worker performance in organizations. The discussion is premised on the question: why is workers in Territory A, with the same resources and the same working conditions perform far and above that of Territory B workers. Answers must be found.

Keywords: Workers performances, Leadership interventions, Organization Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Armstrong (2008) defines worker performance simply in output terms – the achievement of quantified objectives. But performance is a matter not only as what people achieve but how they achieve it. The Oxford English Dictionary confirms this by including the phrase ‘carrying out’ in its definitions of performance: the accomplishment, execution, carrying out. Working out of anything ordered or undertaken; high performance results from appropriate behaviour, especially discretionary behaviour, and the effective use of the required knowledge, skills and competencies. Performance management must examine how results are attained because this provides the information necessary to consider what needs to be done to improve those results. For Brumbrach (1988) the concept of performance has been expressed as follows: performance means both behaviour and results. Behaviours emanate from the performer and transform performance from abstraction to action. Not just the instruments for results, behaviours are also outcomes in their own right, the product of mental and physical effort applies to tasks and can be judged apart from results.

This definition of performance leads to the conclusion that when managing performance both inputs (behaviour) and outputs results need to be considered. It is not simply a question of considering the achievement of targets as used to happen in management by objective schemes. Competency factors need to be considered in the process. This is the so-called mixed model of performance management, which involves the achievement of expected levels of competence as well as objective setting and review.

What stimulate appropriate worker performance? Must the stimuli be always there for performance? A lot of factors and conditions present in the work environment, and with the necessary buttons being pressed, can trigger appropriate worker performance. The worker needs direction and encouragement from top management to elicit the necessary ‘input’ behaviour. A target has been set and the worker is mandated to achieve it. He cannot do otherwise. Either he joins the ship or sinks. There is no option. But there must be enough fertilizers for the worker to produce the required output. Appropriate worker performance is always benchmarked by top management culminating in performance management. This spells out the processes and the guidelines to be followed to deliver. Performance agreements can be signed here and those who at the end of the day are not able to conform to the agreement, shown the door. Conditions and factors preexistent to induce the required output behaviour span the ambience of the work place,

resources, materials, technology, worker conditions, worker values, corporate values, corporate ethics of behaviour, corporate history, pay structure, corporate vision, all combine to trigger performance. What does an airline pilot need to deliver appropriately? He needs the support of the cabin crew, routine or regular maintenance of the aircraft, instructions from control tower, a functioning automatic landing system, appropriate weather, the desired altitude, the necessary checks thoroughly conducted or inspected before takeoff and airworthiness of the aircraft. Flight pilot factors cannot be discounted. Both in and out factors are seriously needed for effective or desired performance on the part of the pilot.

2. LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS FROM EMPLOYEES ON THEIR PERFORMANCE

Employees are generally expected to reasonably perform. They are not only expected to perform, but expected to perform efficiently and productively. This is after the necessary conditions are in place and the employee is attuned to perform. A hospital nurse is expected to take the temperature and the bold pressure of a visiting patient and what should be done medically or pharmaceutically. The medical doctor can be called to come in. The nurse is expected to hold the fort in the absence of the doctor if the nurse has been given the necessary training and the updating professionally to perform. There is always a contract between the two, the employee and leadership and none of the two is to breach his part of the bargain. Leadership is expected to pay the wage commensurate with training, education and performance. Employees are expected to improve upon performance or shown the exit. Barring sickness or illness, the employee is to perform.

The aircraft pilot with the assistance of his cabin crew is expected to get to his destination on time with the appropriate speed and is again expected to present the aircraft to the maintenance team regularly for servicing and retrofitting if need be. There are schedules and deadline he is not expected to fall behind. What is necessary to be used to discharge his duties, he must appropriately report or request from leadership, otherwise there will be no alibi for nonperformance or underperformance.

The mechanical, electrical, geodetic, aeromechanical, civil, geological, biomedical, all have roles purposely assigned to them and expected to perform at the end of the day. If a machine is not performing as expected, it is the duty of the mechanical engineer to have a machine fault diagnoses to locate the fault and then remedy it. The meticulous diagnosis of the fault will point

to the cause and the course of the fault. At the same time, some laboratory tests can also be done to also find out the cause of the fault and how the fault can be repaired. The mechanical engineer may need the help of electrical and computer specialists, it will be a collegial activity, because some faults cross professional lines and therefore calls for a team collaboration

The human resource manager as an employee is not to persistently complain of employees lazing around when they are to be working. The human resource manager has the mandate to ensure that all employees put in their maximum for organisational efficiency and productivity. Corporate leadership is not going to tolerate the manager complaining of employee insolence, what he has been put there to do? He is supposed to perform and that implies, he applying the whip where necessary.

Financial, cost and management accountants are to perform as expected of them. As custodians of organizations books of accounts, they are to do their assignments and duties with the highest level of professional efficiency. The financial standing of the company or organization must be properly and appropriately stated in their accounts, overstating, wrongful posting and doing innocent mistakes are not expected of them, per financial statement of accounts, standards and all the principles of posting in accounts must be fully complied with. For taxation purposes, understating or non-stating of certain transactions will involve the application of companies can not keep on attracting taxation from tax organizations. The company's license or certificate to do business can be withdrawn. Management accountants are to provide the data management needs for decision making. Management can only compel them to supply them with the finances that is needed for investment and spending decisions. When a company's level of indebtedness keeps on increasing, it will not be prudent to keep on borrowing, when other means can be sourced to raise revenue for investment. Cost accountants are to keep track of all costs data and properly record them in the cost accounts books for future decision making.

The discussion cannot leave out production functionaries, research and development. Staff management information systems hierarchy, marketing management staff, procurement management hierarchy and organizational development staff. Is production management watching on whilst production figures dwindle by the day? This is not to be expected by organizational leadership. Production management staff is to find an antidote to that. They have to task their creativity, originality, imaginativity. They are not supposed to sleep when things (in the production system) start giving awry. Research and development staff is tasked with finding

and developing new products to strengthen the organization's product line. They are to continuously research and come out with new products. They happen to be new product incubators of the organization. They are to search from around themselves, customers, suppliers, the country or the area in which they find themselves, from the competition, from the industry, and from conferences, seminars, workshops, exhibitions, etc. No organization can run without the essential information needed for leadership of the organization to be able to take the necessary decisions. The information must be timely, concise, complete, relevant, accurate and adequate. The information must be well kept and protected from contamination or pilferage. The necessary softwares must be bought and properly used to boost the organization's information systems hierarchy and efficiency.

Additionally, marketing management staff are to prospect for market, for the organization's product/services. They are to come out with products that conform to the organization's product system and also suitable in the eyes of the organization's leadership. Procurement department plays a crucial role in every organization's function. With the required materials and resources, how do organizations run? Procurement is to prudently shop around for the essential raw materials or whatever production inputs the organization needs to have on board to be able to produce. Procurement is to search for the necessary raw materials with the technical staff of the department. An organization cannot source for and buy computers for the organization without the collaboration of computer experts. An aircraft cannot be purchased without the support of pilots and aircraft maintenance staff on the ground. An organization is not to buy any physical property without the cooperation of civil engineers and real estate development experts. This is done with a view to reduce cost and get value for money organization development staff needs to improve the capacity of organizations per (D.C.I.C) Organization Capacity Improvement Consultants. Organizations as systems need other subsystems within the organization to sharpen the "efficiency" of the organization and improve upon productivity. Organizations leadership expects more from their employees or the workforce.

3. EMPLOYEES EXPECTATIONS ON PERFORMANCE

From the very day an employee is engaged, he is indoctrinated as to the dos and don'ts of the system. His topmost agendum is to produce and satisfy the aspirations of leadership. Employees therefore expect the tacit support of leadership to give them the "total enablement" that will help unleash all the potential within the employee hierarchy. In the first place, the workplace

ambience should dictate or direct efficiency from all and sundry. They “workplace friendly” environment and the workplace and managerial culture that exudes efficiency. Leadership must only put in place the codes, norms rules, laws, regulations and others generate maximum productivity from the workplace, but also the friendliness that employees need to perform. Employees expect to be praised or rewarded as and when they are due. They need all the encouragement that every reasonable being expects from the leadership hierarchy of any organization. They are to be recognized as partners in progress and also want to be counted as lillies of the organization and all what the organization stands for. When promotions are due, employees expect to be promoted and also consulted on matters that affect their survival, well being and progress in the organization. In the purchase of equipment and raw material to aid their work, their views must be sought for amicable existence in the organization.

Equity, fair play, justice must prevail in the total organizational set up. The rules must be applied fairly. Subjecting the workers to different sets of justice, will not only spell disorder, but can lead to anarchy. Employees expect that when they fall into trouble leadership will be by them to save them. At least, the expectation is that there is an advocate who will sympathize or take up their case and see to it that justice is done.

Listening ears on the part of leadership is another employee expectation. They need to be listened to, whenever appropriate. Having in place a suggestion box to take in complaints from employees and expeditiously taking action on the complaint is a fair deal. Leadership gets the kudos if it is very well done. This even induces workplace harmony.

4. EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCES ENHANCERS

Are employees given the same input expected to produce equal output? It is not going to be the same for very many reasons. Their skills levels may not be the same, the environments may also be different. Armstrong (2008) gives a very holistic perspective by stating that it is very multidimensional and encompasses a lot of areas starting from the entrance or gate to the top of the leadership of the organization. The organization’s core values, vision, mission, culture, worker attitude, worker emotions, the psychomotor, worker cognition workers interactions, machine layout, work naming, job description, worker socialization and indoctrination, worker aptitude, worker core values security issues, safety issues, the opportunity for advancement the possibility of a pay rise if a worker excellently performs.

The cardinal question is who creates the enhancers, drivers, triggers or facilitators? It takes the organizational leadership, the worker, the environment (the immediate) machine hierarchy, the raw material caliber or quality, the work ambience, work ethic, code ethic in productivity and company policy on worker promotion. A conducive and congenial working environment superstructure must be put in place to “provoke” reasonable maximum performance on the part of employees. Organizations issues, leadership issues, job content issues, industrial relations climate, and critical positive organisational core values. It takes everything by an organization to help employees to produce at their maximum (The World Bank, 2000).

Investments in training and development of the Human Capital is an essential factor that must be discussed. Human Capital is an essential resource that must be maximized for positive returns. Training and development programmes if well programmed is a recipe for higher performance.

Best Worker Awards, End of year parties, soliciting of inputs from employees on decision affecting their general welfare, safety and security, holding of meetings with employees to discuss new product ideas and even diversification into new businesses and sharing of projects with workers and also always leadership advising workers on the urgency to up their productivity as they will benefit not too distant future. Regular study tours and internships in similar organizations and sponsoring employees to take on programmes in tertiary institutions that will help to increase their Productivity. Educational, psychological, sociological, cultural and other techniques that will induce the employee to sit up and raise his tempo or momentum in the process of production.

5. RESOURCES PERSPECTIVES ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE

Employees of organizations engaged in the production of the item or the other require to be fully equipped and resourced and encourage to deliver. Resources in the right amount are to be supplied to them. They must get them as and when needed and the quality must also be good and usable at the same time. They are to be engaged in the procurement process for they are on the ground and know which and what raw material or plant and equipment are immediately, needed. Where are the resources procured from? For how long has the vender or supplier been in business? Where does he get his material from? What are the concessions? Are there credit facilities and do they supply quickly materials, plant and equipment to assist in production?. If employees get their take when it comes to raw material acquisition and the right quantity all

taken into consideration, the better it will be for the entire organization. To be able to complete effectively, too, your products must be standard and plant and equipment and raw materials cannot be discounted.

According to Keep (1989), to obtain the basic raw material for your workforce is a sine qua non for quality production. Quality raw materials beget quality products. There must be no compromise. Firms achieve competitive strategy by delivering quality products and the organization at the same time attracts plenty of customers.

6. ENGINEERING THE INPUT AND OUTPUT MIX

Engineering the output and input mix entails a very wide area from the industrial engineering perspective. Garvin (1998) discusses in three broad categories. They are work processes, behavioural processes and change processes. Work processes focuses on accomplishing tasks. It starts with a simple but powerful idea: organisations accomplish their work through linked chains of activities cutting across departments and functional groups. These clearing are called processes and can be conveniently grouped with two categories: (1) processes that create, produce, and deliver products and services that customers want and (2) processes that do not produce outputs that customers want, but the are still necessary for planning the business. He calls the first group “operational processes”, and the second group administrative processes”. New-product development, manufacturing, and logistics and distribution are examples of operational processes, while strategic planning, budgeting and performance measurement are examples of administrative processes.

Harrington (1991) is of the view that operational and administrative processes share several characteristics. Both involve sequences of linked, interdependent activities that together transform inputs into outputs. Both have beginning and ends, with boundaries that can be defined with reasonable precision and minimal overlap. And both have customers, who may be internal or external to the organisation. The primary differences between the two lie in the nature of their outputs. Typically, operational processes produce goods and services that external customers can have, while administrative processes generate information and plans that internal groups use. For this reason, per Harrington (1991), the two are frequently considered independent, unrelated activities, even though they must usually be aligned and mutually supportive if the organization is to function effectively. Skilled supply chain management, for example, demands a seamless

link between a company's forecasting and logistics processes, just as successful new-product development rests in well-designed strategy formation and planning processes. The work processes approach is probably most familiar with managers (Davenport, 1993). It draws heavily in the principles of the quality movement and reengineering, both of which focus on the need to redesign processes to improve quality, cut costs, reduce cycle times, or otherwise enhance operating performance. Despite these shared goals, the two movements are strikingly similar on some points but diverse on others. How does leadership reengineer to remove inconsistencies or overlappings. Hammer (1990) says inefficient processes are not designed, they just happened. To eliminate the inefficiencies both movements suggest that work processes be redesigned. In fact, both implicitly equate process improvement with process management. They also suggest the use of similar tools, such as process mapping and data modeling as well as common rules of thumbs for identifying improvement opportunities. First, flow charts are developed to throw all the steps in a process; the process is then made more efficient by eliminating multiple approvals and checkpoints. Finding opportunities to reduce waiting time, smoothing the hand offs between departments, and grouping related tasks and responsibilities.

Input-output engineering can be done from change processes approach. How does a change come about? Who changes change? What are the meticulous details? Is a change, in the first place, a good thing to do? There are many processes or sequences of actions, activities, techniques go through before ending in a change. A change is not totally self-induced or automatic, the changes are triggered and so through courses. Not all events or references which trigger change can be identified, for some just come about without an identifiable source or agent. The change process approach towards input-output modeling, has roots in strategic management, organisation theory, social psychology, and business history, focuses on sequences or events overtime, these sequences, called processes, describe how individuals, groups, and organisations adapt, develop, and grow. Change processes are explicitly dynamic and inter temporal. They attempt "to catch reality in flight" (Pettigrew, 1990). Examples of change processes include the organisational life cycle and Darwinian evolution. All change processes share several characteristics. They are dynamic, designed to capture action as it unfolds, with three components always present: "a set of starting conditions, a functional end-point, and an emergent process of change". Change processes therefore answer the question, "How did X get from here to there. Often, story or narrative is required to provide coherence and explain the underlying logic or the process.

Change processes fall into two broad categories: autonomous and induced. Autonomous processes have a life of their own: they proceed because of an internal dynamic. The entity or organism evolves naturally and of its own course. In real cases, the direction of change is preordained and inevitable. In others, transitional periods create flux, and the entity may evolve in multiple, unexpected ways.

7. DESIGNING A SERENE WORKPLACE SUPERSTRUCTURE: A MUST FOR RAISING ORGANISATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

A serene workplace to a large extent results in raising total organizational productivity. Workers need the serene work environment to produce at their maximum designing such a superstructure to induce maximum productivity on the part of the entire organisation calls for paying attention to and cross-collaborating with organisational team players who matter when it comes to engineering maximum productivity on the part of the workforce. The industrial relations officer must be consulted on the “ingredients” that make for productivity. How are workers’ grievances to be resolved? Workers and union leaders must come in. How are disputes among workers to be speedily redressed? There must be mechanisms and processes in place to attend to if they arise. What is the next time for workers to embark on a “retreat” to recuperate after working all the year. On what basis should work among employees be shared? Should it be based on seniority or rank?

What systems are in place to reward loyal and efficient workers? Are the rewards such that they induce employee to give off their best? Are employees enabled to talk on issues that affect their performance? Does the system encourage innovativity and inventivity. Designing the serene work environment superstructure calls for total organisational collaboration. Work must flow such that productivity never comes to a stand still because of workplace design flaw or role ambiguity. Information for decision making must flow uninterrupted. The space for machine used for production must be architecturally designed taking into consideration room temperature, ventilation, light, acoustics, air, etc. how is waste to be dealt with? If there are toxic waste materials, how are they to be disposed off? The design must be environmentally flexible and responsible to that communities do not use up to speak against environmental contamination on the part of the organisation. Even mechanism must be in place to deal with effluents if any. The total organisation set up must be such³ that information flow to the immediate environment is not obstructed.

8. LEADERSHIP INTERVENTIONS TO RAISE PERFORMANCE

A lot of research are carried on by organisations to find out how to raise organisational performance. A number of organisations do organize retreats for employees at the end of the working year for employees to “reflect and abstract” in their performance and find out how to move forward. Bill Gates Microsoft, Motorola, General Motors Proctor and Gamble come in handy. Some retreats follow a rigid curriculum and to enhance performance at the workplace and the “modus operandi” to be put in place that will induce high performance on the part of employees. The “mixed ...” and “rescue missions” are part of the curriculum. The agendum is always: What must be broadly institutionalized as the guide to increase employee productivity (HBR, AUGUST 2013).

The Economist (2014) catalogues what go on at the annual retreats of Samsung of Korea. In a report in annual retreats organized by the electronic giant in Korea, employees are grouped and each group is given an assignment to do and they report back after finishing the assignment and do a presentation to their colleagues and they also ask questions all in a mood to come out with new product ideas.

Jeremy and Wind (1995) stress on the need for leadership to provide more flexible working conditions, more opportunities for workers, provide the right support and structure to encourage workers to use their talents. Authoritarian Japan according to the authors (ibid) became the first to enlist the brains of its workers in a large scale with the establishment of Quality Circles.

Leadership perennial insistence in the fact that organizational-wide production improvement system is the route to upping the performance of employees is bound to raise organisational productivity. The entire organisation must be indoctrinated to the assertion. But organisational-wide production improvement system as a dogma or creed, is the tools to be used and not the only panacea to low productivity, (Crainer, 2000). Leadership ingraining in the employee the culture of always one giving off his or her best ups performance. The culture must be gradually transmitted to have a bite. It takes years to plant a culture to blossom eventually. It is technology that to a large extent speeds up production and possibly productivity if the resources are there. Leadership is to make available the technology in their right amount for employees to be able to increase performance. Employees need the technical brain to boost production, but leadership must be in the forefront to provide the technical brain. Excellent medical services at the workplace for workers, will all things being equal, boost performance. It takes a healthy worker

to increase performance. This is not to say that employees must behave any how, they have to live lives that will prevent them from falling ill any how. Providing recreational facilities at the workplace engenders performance increase. The following fall into the repertoire of the interventions leadership can use to raise employee performance. Attending to the nutritional needs of employee performance, making internships, attachments, study tours, providing services, workshops, and conferences for employees to broaden their horizon, motivation scheme put in place by leadership, designing work flow engineering properly, Job design and redesign if jobs do not meet the work needs of employees, institutionalizing the use of work teams and leaders, having in place a code of ethics for employees, encouraging employees to play entrepreneurial games Having at the workplace a diagnostic centre to diagnose employees deviant attitude toward work and providing a treatment regime or therapy and providing a congenial work environment.

Organisations leadership must find the time to assist employees to identify their true selves and the many selves of workers. The median concept of ‘I’ and “me” must not be lost on employees. A lot of tests and techniques can be used to help employees to ascertain their true selves. The selves of employees are not static, they are dynamic and they change as the ‘work’ environment also changes days. Every individual is an infant, adolescent and adult. Where the employee is, at any point in time, must be pointed to the employee.

Making home visits a routine of leadership is an excellent project. An employee recovering from an operation must be visited and wished a speedy recovery. This will enable the employee to recover very fast. At least, he comes to the realization that he belongs to a family and the family has his well-being at heart. Encouraging employees network worth is not out of place. The social networking leads to an improvement or increase in productivity. Mentoring employees is the duty of leadership. Followership must be tutored, mentored and encouraged to follow the footsteps of leadership.

Conducting employee productivity audits is crucial. Who is not performing must be known and the proper remedies given to the problem. If a worker underperforms the reasons for the underperformance must be known. Institutionalizing on-the job training and the transfer of skills must be emphasised. Regular worker-technology updating to improve upon productivity is a process that must not be lost on leadership. The workplace must be made a near classroom.

Leadership is to subscribe to journals and provide libraries for employees to study whilst working.

CONCLUSION

Improved performance spearheaded by leadership brings the performance of long-term survival, achievement of objectives Less waste and operating costs; a competitive advantage and higher sales; better financial results, higher profits, income and wages (Waters, 1999). Raising the performance of employees through raising or improving upon production superstructure is mandatory for any forward looking leadership.

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