

## IMPERATIVES OF RELATIONSHIP IN A WORKPLACE

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### **Abstract**

There exists limited paper directly highlighting the relationship between value preference and its association with people's expectations from the workplace. Studying personal value preference is important because a substantial body of papers indicate that a specific pattern of value orientations predicts views and hence, it may predict behaviour in the workplace. The value of relationship in a workplace is a strong weapon in any organisation and cannot be underestimated. The relationship of workers in an organisation is core to the survival and growth of such an organisation. Every organisation is concerned with being effective, especially now in a difficult economic environment and in the face of fierce world competition. Secretary should not joke with organization effectiveness because the attainment survival and future of the organization depends on the role the secretary plays in the organization. It is important to allow employees the opportunity to build quality relationships with their co-workers. This will lead to better work, improves Morale, increase engagement and lead to greater satisfaction at work.

### **Introduction**

The value of relations in the workplace is a major part of what makes a business work. Employees must frequently work together on projects, communicate ideas and provide motivation to get things done. *Matt Petryni (2010)* posited that without a stable and inviting workplace culture, difficult challenges can arise both in the logistics of managing employees and in the bottom line. Businesses with engaging workplaces and a well-trained workforce are more likely to retain and attract qualified employees, foster loyalty with customers and more quickly adapt to meet the needs of a changing in every organisation.

Relationships between employees and management are of substantial value in any workplace. Human relations are the process of training employees, addressing their needs, fostering a workplace culture and resolving conflicts between different employees or between employees and management.

### **Concept of the value of relationship in workplace**

The concept has come to mean various things to various people, but generally it's coming to know what it right or wrong in the workplace and doing what's right – this is in regard to effects of products/services and in relationships with stakeholders. (Wallace & Pake)

*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defined value as beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is important in life. **Workplace relationships** are unique interpersonal relationships with important implications for the individuals in those relationships, and the organizations in which the relationships exist and develop.

### ***I. The Professional Secretary***

Hanna et al. in Onifade (2004) defined a secretary as “An assistant to an executive, possessing mastery of office skills and ability, who assumes responsibility without direct supervision, displays initiative, exercises judgment, and makes decisions within the scope of his/her authority. Korkki(2012)confirmed that the titles vary: executive assistant, administrative assistant, the syllable-clipped “admin,” the classic secretary. Whatever you call them, these professionals continue to keep offices running as technology and budget cuts reshape their roles.

The impression a secretary creates influence public attitude to the organization. A secretary must not forget the common saying that “First impression lasts long”. This impression may take a long time to erase. The secretary is the office worker in whose shoulder the success and failure of the organisation depends upon his relationship with customers, clients and the public.

Secretary is a worthy ambassador of the organization. Human relations refers to the interaction that exists among people that are of different backgrounds and culture. The secretary portrays the organisation as being effective, efficient and productive through his good human relations. It is the secretary that builds the famous name of the organization through his/her rapport with customers.

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**The secretarial role is interesting, challenging and undergoing many changes etc and charges have made the secretarial profession even more appealing.**

### ***ii. Good human relation in the office***

Nmodu (2013) revealed that as secretaries we must maintain good reception to the visitors to our offices, as she is the image, maker of the organization. Image can be described as the impression, feeling or opinion, which somebody has about an organization, product, service or individual as a result of his contact with any of them. The attention you give to the visitors will tell the type of secretary you are. Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help to become what they are capable of being. This will bring value to your organization.

### **Human Interaction**

Billikopf (2012) highlighted that the most basic unit of wholesome human interaction is the

*stroke*—a verbal or physical way to acknowledge another person's value. A *ritual* is a mutual exchange of strokes: a sort of reciprocal validation of each person's worth promoting a sense of trust between people.

Montes (2011) stressed that as adults, people generally do not go around patting, caressing or pinching other adults (except in the sports arena), but they may shake hands, wave, or say hello. At work most stroking takes place in the way of verbal communication and body language. Examples may include waving, smiling, a glance of understanding, shaking hands, saying hello, or even sending a card or flowers.

### **What are the workplace values?**

Susan (2010) agreed that **values** are traits or qualities that are considered worthwhile; they represent an individual's highest priorities and deeply held driving forces, which the professional secretary has. It involves ambition, competency, individuality, equality, integrity, service, responsibility, accuracy, respect, dedication, diversity, improvement, enjoyment/fun, loyalty, credibility, honesty, innovativeness, teamwork, excellence, accountability, empowerment, quality, efficiency, dignity, collaboration, stewardship, empathy, accomplishment, courage, wisdom, independence, security, challenge, influence, learning, compassion, friendliness, discipline/order, generosity, persistency, optimism, dependability, flexibility

Value of relationship in workplace leads to better work. Not only will create relationships with customers, management or colleagues that often lead to more sales, it can also create more business through word of mouth.

#### **i. Good relationships Lead To Better Work.**

*McFarlin(2010) added that;* our relationships with colleagues in the workplace are important, to a large extent that can determine the level of our success. Good workplace relationships will not only help you do your job better, but also make your daily work more enjoyable. In turn, bad relationships with colleagues can be very distracting and can cause a great deal of anxiety.

#### **ii. Motivation and Productivity**

The values of relationships at workplace provide a source of employee motivation, which is important to maintaining productivity. Employees who are interested in their work and in the well-being of other employees tend to be more productive than those who are not. This productivity pays obvious financial dividends to the organisation, as it can get more done in less time with fewer costs. Nichols et al (1995) noted that building relationships, by both recognizing an employee's value to the organisation and a concern for their need, often goes a long way.

#### **iii. Improved Teamwork**

When people know one another well, they are much more likely to work well together. Watch teams who have a new member; typically, that new member will remain somewhat isolated until everyone else gets to know him/her. If you have several employees who are barely on speaking terms and you throw them together into a project, it will take some time for them to break the ice and begin to work well together. Conversely, team members who already know, like and respect each other may be more willing to collaborate for the betterment of the project.

#### **iv. Improved Employee Morale**

Given how much time employees spend in one another's presence, the development of good relationships in the workplace can increase employee morale. *Petryn (2011)* added that Co-workers become friendly and look forward to spending time with one another while they do their jobs. This may also make work more fun for these employees with the end result not only being a more positive workplace but also improved overall morale. Conversely, a stiff and unfriendly work environment will have the opposite effect.

##### **1.4 Valuing Employees**

Berne(2013) portrayed that the employees' value on each other's *inputs* (or "contributions," such as a person's job, education, skills, or efforts). The best way of preserving the value of our own inputs is by valuing the inputs of others. The value placed on a person's time is a good proxy for power, and this helps explain why quality time spent with employees by every organisation is so meaningful to employees.

Susan (2010) noted that values are visible through the actions people take, not their talk.

Values form the foundation for everything that happens in workplace. If you are the founder of an organization, your values permeate the workplace. You naturally hire people who share your values. Whatever you value, will largely govern the actions of your workforce.

##### **1.5 Boss subordinate relationships**

Kohn and O'Connell pointed out major habits of highly effective bosses. '*Golden Rule*'. This habit is fundamental in many relationships stating that you should treat others as you wish to be treated. If workers know that their bosses are treating them with the same respect and dignity then they feel less of a condescending subordinate relationship.

Ehinmoro (2010) mentioned that Boss-subordinate relationship defines the level of dependency and interaction between the boss and the subordinates. This relationship is important and can be a pointer to subordinates loyalty and commitment to the organization. Subordinates who have positive relationship with their boss are likely to be more committed to the organization than those who do not (MANAGESMART, 2010). Boss-subordinate relationship can range from high quality to low quality relationship. Factors that contribute to the type of relationship between boss and subordinates include mutual support, trust, liking, attention, performance, and loyalty. Teach (2013) proclaimed that "If you can make your boss look good, they will be happy—and if they're happy, you'll be happy."

Hockett (2013) further remarked that "At all times, displays a level of professionalism that not only benefits you personally, but also reflects highly of your boss,". You're a reflection of their leadership."

The relationship between boss and subordinates also depends on the culture of the society and the organization. Culture is defined as the shared values, beliefs, and behavioural norms of the society or organization which guide behaviour and how

things are done in the society or organization (Youker, n.d). The effect of culture on boss-subordinate relationship depends on four basic characteristics of the society; power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and achievement orientation (Youker, n.d).

### 1.6 The Challenges and The Role of Secretaries In Creating Value.

- ❖ **Show value.** “They employed you for a reason, so make sure that you're adding value to the organization, Hockett (2013) opined that “Bosses want employees not only to agree with them, but also be willing to speak up about the realities and challenges in the business that need to be addressed. Be the person that speaks with facts, confidence and reasonable suggestions that produce results. This builds your organisation confidence in you.”
- ❖ **Show respect.** Even if you don't like your colleagues, respect them, Teach (2013) advised. “Chances are they've earned their position for a reason. Whether you like it or not, they are your co-workers. They're your seniors/juniors or maids in the office, if you disrespect them in any way, this will definitely hurt your relationship with them.”
- ❖ **Stay above office politics and gossip.** Your behaviour reflects on your management, Maroney attested that so avoid snarky commentary, “and when it doubt, be circumspect.”  
Hockett (2013) concurred: “Whether you think you can trust coworkers or not, it's best to never engage in gossip about your coworker, nor anyone else for that matter. Word always gets out when you do, which can weaken your relationship with your boss and peers.”
- ❖ **Establish a line of open communication.** If you are honest and communicate openly with your colleagues, this will help build transparency and trust in the relationship, Mazur (2010) explained that “at the end of the day, it's all about building trust within the relationship between you and your colleagues.” Also, if you're working for a supervisor that lives and believes in the values of the organisation and recognizes and rewards their employees for adhering to those values, then it will be a successful relationship.

### 1.7 Different types of values provided by the Secretaries.

**Professional Values:** Good relationships enhance the secretary *competence, excellence, efficiency, objectivity and impartiality in performing his/her duties.* (Values and Ethics, 2003)

- The secretary work within the laws of his/her organisation/ministry/company.
- He/she will endeavour to ensure the proper, effective and efficient use of organisation's money.
- How ends are achieved is as important as the achievements themselves by the secretary.
- The Professional secretary constantly renew his commitment to serve his/her organisation/ministry/company by continually improving the quality of service, by adapting to changing needs through innovation, and by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government programs and services.

- The secretary also strives to ensure that the value of transparency in organisation is upheld while respecting their duties of confidentiality under the law.

**People Values:** *The secretary demonstrating respect, fairness and courtesy in their dealings with both customers and fellow colleagues.*

- There is respect for human dignity and the value of every person will always inspire the exercise of authority and responsibility.
- People values will reinforce the wider range of organisational values. Those who are treated with fairness and civility will be motivated to display these values in their own conduct.
- Employee, organizations will be led through participation, openness and communication and with respect.
- Employee values will play a key role in recruitment, evaluation and promotion.

**Ethical Values:** *Acting at all times in such a way as to uphold the public trust. (Values and Ethics, 2003)*

- Employees will perform their duties and arrange their private affairs so that public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of government are conserved and enhanced.
- Employees will act at all times in a manner that will bear the closest public scrutiny; an obligation that is not fully discharged by simply acting within the law.
- Employees in fulfilling their official duties and responsibilities will make decisions in the public interest.
- If a conflict should arise between the private interests and the official duties of an organisation, the conflict will be resolved in a good manner.

### **To the secretary**

- **1. Respect your Colleagues:** Ekot (2010) believed that respect is the foundation of all good relationships, including those you have with your colleagues and Boss. There will of course be the occasional prickly co-worker who is easily offended, but there is little you can do about that. Always do your best to avoid offending those with whom you work. Respect is reciprocal!
- **2. Take your job seriously:** Regardless of your position, others in your workplace will respect and value their jobs. Consequently, if you undermine the role that you do, you are undermining their roles too. This is a sure-fire way to annoy your colleagues. Ensure that your colleagues understand that you know your job and are happy doing it.

### **To The Management**

Careful selection, training, and appraisal of employees is one way for management to show it values its human resources. So is paying good wages, providing safe and sanitary working conditions, and communicating policies. Equally critical are factors affecting interpersonal relations such as involving workers in decision making, effective communication styles,



listening to employees, and avoiding one-way communication.

### **1.8 Recommendations**

- Staff in the organisation should be allowed to demonstrate and model the values in action in their personal work behaviours, decision making, contribution, and interpersonal interactions.
- Management of the organizations should help members of staff to establish priorities in their daily work life.
- Rewards and recognition should be given to members of staff whose work embodies the values the organization embraced.
- Organizational goals are grounded in the identified values.

### **1.9 Conclusions:**

Many full-time employees spend more of their working hours with co-workers than they do with their spouses and families. As such, it is important to allow employees the opportunity to build quality relationships with their co-workers. This can be accomplished through the organization of informal get-togethers away from work, as well as by encouraging employee interaction. There are many benefits that can be reaped by every organization owned by government or private which allows and foster good relationships in the workplace.

It has become common to extol the value of human relationships in the workplace. We all agree that managers need to connect deeply with followers to ensure outstanding performance, and we celebrate leaders who have the emotional intelligence to engage and inspire their people by creating bonds that are authentic and reliable.

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