

GOOD RELATIONSHIP IN WORKPLACE AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING ORGANIZATIONAL OBJECTIVES

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Abstract

On daily basis the world is becoming a global village through technological advancement. Notwithstanding, the issue of human involvement and participation in workplace can only be minimized but not eliminated. This paper would examine the need for good relationship among workers in workplace in order to achieve the aims and objectives of setting up an organization. It would look at what Human and Public Relationships are; how to relate with superiors, peers, subordinates and clients. Based on findings and conclusions, recommendations were made to solve possible problems or challenges found. Amongst these are, that organizations should always draw the attention of staff on the need to maintain cordial relationships among themselves and with visitors, that employees should avoid being the “black sheep” in the organization.

Introduction

Henry Ford once said that “coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.” That is what team spirit is about. Office work all over the world is team work and all teams are made up of people working towards a common goal.

Team work must of necessity, involve interaction between the respective members of the team. This imperative interaction between people (in the office or anywhere) is what Human Relations is all about; that is how people should relate with other or behave to each other or speak with each other with a view to achieving the goals for which the organization was set.

This discussion is therefore based on the premise that interaction in the office is compulsory, irrespective of caliber or status of workers involved. With this in mind, the paper will thus dwell on issues such as whom we relate with in the office, how we should relate with them and the benefits of good Human Relations. This discussion is important because a weak link in every chain (team, if you like) will invariably lead to

a breakdown in a system. Every employee is a link, and it is in order, therefore, therefore for us to discuss how we can avoid being “weak links” so that we can contribute our quota towards the success of our organization.

Who do You Relate With?

It can be derived from what has been stated above that every office worker relates with one office worker or the other, depending on the nature of his/her work and status. Remember also, that the office must have visitors. You will of necessity therefore interact with:

Your superiors

To be favored by your boss, you must get to know him very well – the way he thinks, acts, his reaction to people and situations, his likes and dislikes, his relationship with other people both inside and outside the organization, way of expressing himself both verbally and in writing, and the image he likes to present of himself. You are a representative of both your organization and your boss. You must think for him, speak for him, write for him, and act for him. Per-adventure a situation arises you must know what he would do and do it for him. You are expected to be your boss link and shield; listening and criticizing when necessary; be his memory; liking and respecting; loyalty and trust worthiness.

If you are looking for trouble in the office, try looking down on your boss. In fact, you can very easily lose your job if you have no respect for your superiors. Some people even make the mistake of trying to “overshadow” their superiors for either of these reasons:

- They think they know better
- They are richer
- They have godfathers/mothers
- They have more fancy dresses (women)
- They are like that.

No organization will or should allow this type of attitude to exist and in any case, no employee will take kindly to it. It is so dangerous that Greene (2000) opined that in the “Power game”, the first rule is that you “never outshine the master.”

Your peers

Office workers will engage in interaction most frequently with equals in status and position in the organization, otherwise known as peers. Harmony within the peer group will be enhanced when workers remain cheerful, co-operative, frank, respectful and understanding. Workers should not expect an ideal work atmosphere for human beings fall short of perfect behaviors from time to time. Each member of the work group must strive to create a pleasant work environment and that requires dedication, patience, trust, and tolerance. These traits will enable the workers to overlook faults in others, as they also could be at fault themselves sometimes.

Your subordinates

Being a subordinate does not signify being inferior. Every senior needs the cooperation of juniors if they wish to do their job satisfactorily. A word of praise for

work well done, appreciation for extra help given, constructive criticism aimed at enabling the person overcome weakness and improve work, all pay dividends in increasing respect and willing co-operations. To command respect from your subordinates there must be self-discipline. Avoid public criticism of your juniors but try to find out why any mistake occurred just between you and your subordinate.

Visitors

Relation with the public means the efforts made by an organization to bring itself into the eye and mind of the public – customers. This involves creating an image. To relate with customers, workers should know every aspect of his own organization – what it stands for, what its aims are, what it does and how it functions. Impression created on customers last long in their minds. In interpersonal skills certain factors are responsible for the way people relate to each other. These factors include; attitude, behavior, and appearance.

How should We Relate?

Chapman (1989) rightly observed that the relationship we should cultivate, whether in the office or outside should be one that we will always cherish. Of course, there is no gainsaying that we cherish only good things. Chapman went on to say that “when relationships are healthy, open, fun and mutually rewarding, they can enrich your life far beyond material possessions.”

It is in line with the above, that Joshua (1999) further insisted that we should relate well with the people we meet “whether in the office, market, in the taxi, bus, train or plane or anywhere at all.” We shall now go on to discuss specific issues that make for good Human Relations.

Be Friendly

Being friendly generally attracts friendliness (Austin: 1989). It goes without saying that work thrives under a friendly atmosphere rather than one where people are individualistic in attitude, aloof and everyone is by himself. A “family” atmosphere helps in bringing out the best in every employee.

However, this should be within reason for as someone rightly observed overfamiliarity may result in indiscipline.

Be Ready to Render/Accept Assistance

It must always be remembered that there is no one who knows everything, especially as things are becoming more and more dynamic to the extent that what we know today may be obsolete and therefore useless tomorrow; we must invariably seek and or accept help. Also, the person you help will always remember that he succeeded by literally riding on your back. Hence it is said that we should be nice to people we meet on our way up the ladder as we can meet them on our way down.

Be a Role Model

Superior officers should always bear in mind that their subordinates may learn a lot from their behaviors, actions or in-actions. If we behave well, we would have taught our subordinates to behave well. If we dress decently, we would have given them good dress sense. If we are always early to the offices we would have taught them

punctuality (Horns: 1972). This suggests that subordinates should always strive to copy or emulate the good behaviors of their superiors, who should always bear in mind that they have a moral/ethical obligation to influence the younger ones positively.

Avoid Being Destructive and Difficult

Some people can be really difficult to work with. They are sadistic, hard to please, uncompromising and unforgiving. This attitude poisons the organization and affects morale and more often than not, leads to low productivity. We must be mindful of Williamson's (1992) admonition that "if we contribute to any person's pain, it will always come back to haunt us."

Always remember that "to err is human and to forgive is divine." We must therefore avoid continually bearing grudges and nagging. You benefit a lot from having a forgiving spirit. (Yousef: 2011).

Respect other Peoples Belief and Culture

It is not possible to have the same belief system both religiously and culturally. Similarly our likes or tastes can never be the same. A lot of heat is generated in the office when some people insist that everybody also must follow their path and or talk derisively or derogatively about other people's beliefs, mode of dressing leading to disharmony and working together harmoniously becomes very difficult, if not impossible under that kind of situation. Also, we should not discriminate on account of religion, tribe or gender.

Extend courtesy To Visitors

Anyone who visits an organization expects to be treated with respect, otherwise he/she may not return and the organization may lose out at the end. Visitors should therefore be received in such a way that they would look forward to coming back.

Exercise Discretion

How we say or do something in the office (or even outside) may be as important as or even more important than what we have said or done. We could hurt a colleague more by how we say something rather than what we say itself.

We should therefore learn to read people's moods and temperament and know how to convey unpleasant messages.

Do not Pre-judge

Pride and prejudice is a title of a book but it says a lot. In our warped thinking, we consider our tribe to be the best and consider all others as "22nd class". We take our profession to be the most important and above others. With this type of mindset, a division of "we" and "they" is created and we always expect that those in the "they" group are non-starters.;that nothing good can come out of them.

Also, because a member of a certain tribe or community is into what we consider as bad or wrong, we ascribe it to the whole tribe or group – taking part for the whole. It is interesting to note that the other group may have the same opinion of you but for a different reason. The presenters are therefore in agreement with Mason (1971) who posited that this attitude of being judgmental and looking down upon other people has been the cause of conflicts.

Avoid Anger

As human beings, we must feel bad for one reason or the other and at one time or the other but we should not let that feeling linger on for too long. People tend to avoid us if we tend to explode even over minor issues. Certainly, Tump (2007) was on target when he said that we should “not give in to anger...sure, you have to be tough but out-of-control anger is not toughness. It is weakness. It destroys your focus and goals and ruins your concentration.”

Benefits of Good Human Relations

The following are some of the benefits to be derived from cultivating and maintaining Good Human Relations in the office:

- It enhances work flow
- Discipline is maintained
- Personal relationships are built for life
- Help in attaining organizational objectives.

Conclusion

We have discussed how employees should or should not behave towards each other and visitors. The bottom-line here is that no organization will succeed if there is rancor, misunderstanding, lack of synergy and cooperation occasioned by poor human relations.

Consequent upon the above, therefore, organizations should ensure the existence of healthy relationship among its workforce from the top to the bottom.

Recommendations

The presenter believes that suggestions/recommendations have been incorporated or included in the main discussion and would therefore cap it up with the following:

- Organizations should always draw the attention of their staff on the need to maintain cordial relationships among themselves and with visitors.
- Employees should avoid being the 'black sheep' in the organization.
- Employees who try to poison the system should be flushed out of the organization.

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