THE VALUE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE WORK PLACE

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Abstract
This paper considers the importance of relationship in our workplace. It also observes how strong public relations in our workplace can lead to better performance in our respective organizations. The paper delves into the value of building quality relationship with our co-workers and the benefit of teamwork. The paper further explains how certain communication in our workplace indicates and predicts the communication in our workplace. The paper goes ahead to emphasize that having good relationship in our workplace is of paramount importance. It concludes by emphasizing the importance of relationship between employees and their Management and how this can improve staff moral behaviour in their respective workplace.

Introduction
We shall begin by way of introduction to define Value, Public relations and workplace. According to A.S Hornby (2006) Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 7th Edition defines Value as being important, the quality of being useful. A belief about what is right and wrong and what is important in life. Moral value is what this paper is going to dwell on. Public relations is the behaviour attitude and day to day conduct towards each other or our interpersonal relationship while conducting our official assignments e.g Secretary and Executive relationship and customers/clients that visit the organization. Workplace is the office or factory where people perform their job or daily business transactions. Who are the visitors? These are the people who we see every day but are not necessarily close to us. The relations with them can be very important to your success in the workplace. If you build good relationships with the people you work with or the people that come your way, it can only be access to your success in your job or life. Great things could come from it such as promotion, a raise, or just being liked by your coworkers. But to build a real relationship we should not have our focus entirely centered on just getting a promotion or material gift from your workplace or visitors.

Importance of Relationships in the Workplace
Good relationship in workplace naturally increases productivity. Relationships are not based on those types of things such as gratification to avert the rule or laws, but
rather on inward desire to love others regardless of who they are or what authority they have over you. Many full-time employees spend more of their waking hours with co-workers than they do with their spouses and families. The opportunity to build quality relationships with their co-workers should be encouraged. This can be accomplished through the organization of informal get-togethers during working period, as well as by encouraging employee interaction. **Moral values refer to a set of principles that guide an individual on how to evaluate right versus wrong.** People generally apply moral values to justify decisions, intentions and actions, and it also defines the personal character of a person. An individual with high moral values typically displays characteristics of integrity, courage, respect, fairness, honesty and compassion Relationships between employees and management are of substantial value in any workplace. Human relations in the workplace is a major part of what makes business, work.

Start by identifying the key stakeholders in your organization. These people, as well as your clients and customers, deserve extra time and attention. Building and maintaining good work relationships will not only make you more engaged and committed to your organization; it can also open doors to key projects, career advancement. If we devote portion of our day to laying foundation of good relationship with our co-workers we shall be more productive. Even five minutes a day, if it is genuine, can help to build a bond between you and a colleague. Be honest, avoid gossip, and try to compliment people on a job well done. After all, the more you give in your relationships, the more you will get back from those around you. Employees must frequently work together on projects, communicate ideas and provide motivation to get things done. 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 (Gyere, 2013).

**What is Public Relations?**

Chika (2008) who said public relations as an area of management has not been very well understood even by its practitioners. He further stated that many feel that “anybody can practice public relations as long as he/she can speak good English, look smart or able to twist people through the ability to change their opinions or views about issues”. While some of these attributes posses some features required of a good Public Relations Officer, they do not make a Public Relations man. He reiterates that many people still go about with the wrong impression or opinion of what Public relations is not believing it to be Public Relations. In political practice, some people use Public Relations to mean a form of “Settling”, indeed bribe. Others see it as being sociable, while yet many think that Public Relations means ability to confuse the uninformed society. In practice too, many do not understand the scope of Public Relations. None of the above actually tells the story or has been able to identify public relations. Variety of definitions or explanations of what public relations is or should
be, make it difficult to pin it down precisely. One thing is clear though, and that is the fact that Public Relations is an integrated profession. For anybody to claim to be a Public Relations practitioner, he needs to imbibe a bit of each of the areas of study identification at any given time and place.

**Skill For Secretary And Public Relation**
We have examined the meaning of Public relations and the required attributes, features or expertise to be able to do it well as explained below. The fundamental requirements to be able to do a job well can be called requisite skill. Hyeladi (2014) states that skill means dexterity, adroitness, expertise, proficiency, competence, finesse, mastery, professionalism or excellence. Kantiok (2014) defines skill as the ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job function, involving ideas, things and people. Longman Active Dictionary explains skill as the ability to do something well after you have learned it and practiced it. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary again explains skill as the ability to do something well; a particular ability or type of ability. Secretaries therefore need to learn and practise to relate in order to develop expertise or proficiency and become professionals. It is an integrated profession requiring knowledge and ability in many fields because the practitioner deals with the human being who is a very difficult and complex being to handle. He needs the depth of knowledge so as to avoid or reduce mistakes to the barest minimum. Public Relations is a service which is very sensitive to human sensibilities.

**Human Relations**
Human Relations deals with the way and manner a person relates with people at home, workplace and everywhere he goes. There is power in interpersonal relations. Anyone who has the skill will no doubt get a lot of problems resolved easily. What you must know about people:

1. People are not the same, they are usually different
2. Some are nice and jovial, others are difficult and quarrelsome
3. Some are highly placed, but you may not notice that from their looks
4. Some are militant and dangerous
5. Some people are well educated while others are not
6. Some are always happy and relate well wherever they go. Others are troubled and they transfer aggression

All these are characteristics that affect the way people behave and the way they relate with people. However, in most cases, your comportment and interpersonal relations skills will assist you in relating well with any kind of person, (Oyeneye, 2008).
Strategies for improving your interpersonal Skills

- Get close to people who have good relationship skills
- Listen to audio tapes on relationship skills
- Always wear a smiling face
- Be willing to assist people
- Learn to throw healthy jokes
- Appreciate little assistance and favour
- Be willing to forgive people easily
- Be ready to apologise if you are wrong. It does not reduce you.
- Try and talk at meetings and be audible enough to be heard
- Always control your temper. If your temper controls you, you are not likely to be successful in your profession and in personal endeavours
- If you are always looking moody, you will send away or discourage people who may help you. And no one can succeed without people (Oyeneye, 2008).

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED

For a secretary to be able to function as a Public Relations Officer he is expected to possess some relevant skills and knowledge, including.

1. **Information Management:** We should realize that today's global world, “the new source of power is not money in the hands of a few, but information in the hands of many. And of course, information is increased not by labour but by knowledge”.

2. **Ability to Understand and manage Human Element in the Face of Technology:** Never neglect the human being. Appreciate the fact that all the gadgets you use (technology) were made by him and that he can decide to misuse them. Human understanding is therefore a key element in this quest.

3. **Proactive:** You must be proactive and not reactive in disposition.

4. **Prospective Public Relations:** must acquaint himself with the terminologies in the business world, society and sciences. He can work with or for any type of organization.

5. **Academic qualifications alone are not enough:** Certain human and general features are also very imperative. We must apply the following:-

1. Common Sense
2. Good judgment
3. Objectivity
4. Ability to appreciate the other person's own view point.,
5. Lively inquisitive mind
6. Positive personality
7. Flexibility and ability to deal with many problems at the same time.
8. Use pleasant voice supported by ability for public speaking and persuasive presentation.
**Relationship as Motivation in Workplace**

Motivation is at the heart of how to encourage co-worker to get things done at work place. If you believe that motivation can make people to *perform better*, just because it is expected, or because they are intimidated, or compelled simply by information, you need to check out the latest thinking on motivation. And even when people are compelled to act based on these reasons, the *quality* of their response or performance will often match how they feel.

The stories that we mostly do not hear, the heart of the engine that makes most work happen is that people **DO CARE**. They care about their work and they care about their co-workers. Actually, given the hardships that so many workers endure these days, it is amazing that people produce what they produce. Imagine what productivity would look like if most workers trusted that their co-workers and organizations really cared about them.

To those who still say we do not care, we say – *we know* you care about something that touches both you and your colleagues. Let that be the bridge. Find the common ground. Reach out. You do not have to love your co-worker to treat them with respect and kindness. Treat them in the way you would like to be treated when someone does not care about you. But most important, remember your lack of caring is not helping anyone. How good are the relationships that you have with your colleagues? Kindness is the ability to think and say nice things to others. It is also the ability to help others who are in need of help whether they are our co-workers, visitors and friends or neighbours (Oyeneye, 2008).

**Building Quality Relationship**

For quality relationship to be achieve in our work place we must be patience and forbearing one another. If we have patience and forbearance we will not quarrel or misunderstand each other in our working place. When we are patience we endure the attitude of our co-workers. To build quality relationship we have to be humble and respect others and obedient to our management and chief executive. This means that when we have problem and we find it difficult to solve we should not give up in annoyance. We should take our time to work out the solution. We should relate freely without prejudice with everybody that comes our way and we will also be liked by everybody. We should be peacemakers and bridge-builders. A peacemaker settles disputes and misunderstanding among co-workers. A secretary who is a peacemaker, your role is to help to bring about understanding, peace, love happiness and unity among the workers and build a good relationship between the workers and the organization (Obinna, 2011).

**Peaceful Co-existence in Workplace**

We must cultivate the right and positive attitude to life and governance in our work place by co-existing together with people of different background, culture, tradition
and religion. We must live with others in peace, understanding and unity. We are people from different families in Nigeria and ethnic tribes some from rich families, while some of us are from poor families so we have our differences in background and we have to co-exist in work place. We should help those we meet on our way no matter which part of the country they come from we should share with those that are in need of our assistance (Obinna, 2011).

**Communication as Means to Achieve relationship in Our Work Places**

Communication is a means to achieving the aims and goals of an organisation and the society at large. The ability of human beings to disseminate information, ideas, or feelings to other people rapidly, accurately and fluently has always been a primary factor in man's evolution. It is an essential feature of development in all its ramifications and is central to all fields of human endeavours such as sociology, philosophy, cultural studies, politics and economics. The history of communication is as old as the world itself. From a general perspective, communication is believed to cut across every aspect of human life. Communication process is what bridges the gap between different individuals and groups with different attitudes and personalities within the society. It provides the means whereby meanings and understanding may be passed from one person to another (Ezeokoli, 1984).

In the course of time, various behavioural scientists and communication experts have attempted to define communication. Our intention here is to survey on few of these definitional perspectives before we take a stand. According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, “communication is defined as the act or action of communicating, the exchange of information, news, ideas and opinions”. Here communication takes into cognisance the sharing of feelings as a form of interaction. Also Ezeokoli (1984) defines communication as any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another.

In its simplest form, Mozammel and Schechter (2005) see communication as the transmission of a message from a source to a receiver. For more than fifty years now, this view of communication has been identified with the writings of the political scientist – (Ezeokoli, 1984). Mozammel and Schechter (2005) quote the communication specialist – Ezeokoli, as saying that a convenient way to describe communication is to answer these questions; who says what? To whom and with what effect? Though these questions are very crucial in communication process, but we strongly believe that there is more to a communication process than asking the above questions.

Balit, (2004) in his own view, emphasises on shared experience as a key element in communication. In democracy and education, he notes that communication is a process of sharing experience till it becomes a common possession and modifies the disposition of both parties who take part in it. To Herman, and Zelda(1973),
communication is concerned with all the ways in which information, attitude and ideas are exchanged and shared.

Thinking in the same way, Kline (1976) perceives communication as any process in which people share information, ideas, attitudes and feelings. That process involves not only the spoken and written word but also body language, personal mannerisms and style, the surroundings – anything that adds meaning to a message. Adding to the above, Kline remark that communication is vital to all areas of our lives. We use it for persuasion, to influence relationships, to inform, to educate, to share, discover and uncover information. Effective communication is the most important key to success in human interaction and relationships.

Communication is a vital tool in the hands of humanity as it plays a tremendous role in our day to day activity and development. In its broadest sense, therefore, it should not be termed only as the exchange of views and messages, but also as an individual and collective activity embracing all transmission and sharing of ideas and data in any social system for improving the well-being of mankind. Communication connects people, groups, communities and societies. It can be seen in virtually every aspect of human society (Ezeokoli 1984).

**Human Relation Question**

Before Conclusion I will ask this Human Relations Question to help us to Improve on our Human Relations. Let us kindly consider the following questions and adjust accordingly:

1. Do you greet people?
2. Do you greet people warmly and politely?
3. Do you share jokes with your colleagues and neighbours?
4. Do you offer someone a lunch once in a while?
5. Do you give gifts?
6. Do you know your colleagues birthday?
7. Do you visit people?
8. Would you go the extra mile for somebody's sake?
9. Do you get easily annoyed
10. Do you forgive easily?
11. Do you appreciate little assistance?
12. Do you reply text messages?
13. Do you write appreciation or congratulatory letters?
14. Do you find it difficult to apologise when at fault?
15. Do you know the names of people in your office and neighbourhood?
16. Do you appreciate other people's plight?
Conclusion
I wish to conclude this paper with this thought provoking statement that the most demanding and difficult part of manager's job is managing people and relationships. Relationship management, more than anything else, determines the success or failure of any organization or establishment. Secretaries as Office managers must learn to manage ourselves and our relationship with others both at workplace and home. Our ability to manage our homes naturally influences our input and output in the office. A peaceful home translates to a happy worker and an office atmosphere full of tranquility.

Recommendations
For any organization to witness/achieve tremendous progress, management should provide good working relationship in our organisation or establishment, how? By ensuring a vibrant and productive work force. The following recommendations will suffice.
1. Personal etiquette and correct attitude should be provided according to the ethics of every profession.
2. Management should provide training for Professional Secretaries on public and interpersonal relationship in workplaces.
3. Professional Secretaries should continually improve on their ability to relate with co-workers, visitors and neighbours.

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