Workplace @ 2020

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ABSTRACT

The liberalized, globalised policies and the increased level of competitiveness in the global scenario have exerted immense pressure on HR functions of domestic companies in India. To sustain and survive in such situations of crisis, the future organizations have to prepare themselves and develop their employees to compete with other organizations in every aspect – be it skills, efficiency and effectiveness. In the present competitive business environment, Indian organizations are undergoing a revolutionary change in reorientation of employment relations with their employees. For healthy Employee Relations (ER), it is essential to have well-defined proactive policies and procedures since reactive policies cannot sustain in the long term. In this context, organizations have shown keen interest in framing and implementing the policies and procedures which can address their global needs. However, there exists a gap when their implementation part comes into picture. Increasing competition, complex and changing economic environment, ever- increasing cost of labor and such other factors have compelled organizations all over the world to adopt proactive and innovative strategies towards ER. Companies with strong ER initiatives will definitely benefit because their workforce is highly motivated to expend their extraordinary efforts.

Introduction

The World Bank has recently in its reports, forecasted that by 2020, India will become the fourth largest economy of the globe. Owing to such developments, a large number of overseas firms have shown their genuine interest in investments and exploring business opportunities in India. The liberalized, globalised policies and the increased level of competitiveness in the global scenario have exerted immense pressure on HR functions of domestic companies in India. To sustain and survive in such turbulent situations, the domestic companies have to prepare themselves and develop their employees to compete with overseas organizations in every aspect – be it skills, efficiency and effectiveness. In the present competitive business environment,

Indian organizations are undergoing a revolutionary change in reorientation of employment relations with their employees. For healthy Employee Relations (ER), it is essential to have well-defined proactive policies and procedures since reactive policies cannot sustain in the long term. In this context, organizations have shown keen interest in framing and implementing the policies and procedures which can address their global needs. However, there exists a gap when their implementation part comes into picture. Increasing competition, complex and changing economic environment, ever- increasing cost of labor and such other factors have compelled organizations all over the world to adopt proactive and innovative strategies towards ER. On the other hand, while having such proactive and innovative strategies, the organizations have to ensure achievement of corporate objectives which is only possible through the cooperation and commitment of employees. Companies with strong ER initiatives will definitely benefit because their workforce is highly motivated to expend their extraordinary efforts. It involves providing fair and consistent treatment to all employees so that they remain committed to their organization. Thus, excellent ER can help in developing satisfied, committed and productive workforce that lead towards overall effectiveness of an organization.

2020 – The Changing phase of Workplace

Superior – Subordinate Relations

The superior – subordinate relation is considered as the most important aspect when we talk about job satisfaction, working environment, organizational development, mentoring, coaching, etc. Employees would love to work under a leader who acts as a 'mentor' instead of a 'boss'. No one is interested to work under a Boss like 'HARI SADU', where 'H = Hitler, A = Arrogant, R = Rascal and I = Idiot'. Apart from a leader, an employee expects his Boss to be a philosopher, motivator, guide, coach and a mentor rather than a person who gives orders and firings.

The Younger Worker

Another important trend concerns younger workers in the workforce @ 2020. Changing expectations, motives and values in the younger group of workers are likely to influence the nature and character of the workforce. Youngsters and fresher joining the organizations believe that they are more dynamic and talented than seniors and existing employees. Opposing, the seniors opine that youngsters and fresher are arrogant and have an attitude problem. They are not in listening modes and want to create their own individuality instead of team cohesiveness. Many a times, it has been seen that they surpass their immediate bosses, in order to come in the lime

light of the top most bosses. This results in a "generation gap", where young blood will demand greater flexibility at the beginning of their careers in contrast to older working groups. The only mantra is to 'respect your workplace and dignity for everyone'.

Women at Work

With the workforce expected to grow continuously, the number of women in the workforce is expected to rise further, and at much faster rate than men. At present, there are only 3 % women employees in leadership roles at global level. This scenario is changing because of changing aspirations of a woman. Women do not want to occupy the back front in the careers and wants to come in the forefront. With the passage of time, more names will add in the galaxy of Indira Nooyi, Kiran Shaw and many others. It gives rise to a question, 'why girls should always go for pink and not blue?' This situation may result in gender sensitive issues at workplace. So, this problem can be overcome by creating gender – friendly environment at the workplace.

Future work stressors

Using the work environment to help people maintain or improve their health requires the identification of those working conditions that are stressful (stressors). However, it is important to remember that not all stress is bad, and that jobs need to be challenging and demanding so that the individuals can maximize their potential, utilize and hone their skills and abilities. It is when the individual perceives that working conditions are about to tax their physical and psychological resources that results in stress. Work stressors can become productive if they are considered as positive and a tool to measure and enhance their performance and at the same time considering their limitations and capabilities into consideration.

Qualitative work overload

The work stressors that have been measured will continue to have an impact on employee well-being in the future. These comprises of work overload, interpersonal conflicts, participation and control and job content. However, the nature of these stressors is likely to change in the future. Work overload will continue to be described in quantitative terms. But it will also have a qualitative dimension, which focuses on the "cognitive" aspect of the job.

Workplace bullying

In future, interpersonal conflicts at work are more likely to extend beyond traditional role conflicts to encompass behaviors such as bullying, harassment and fear. A wide range of behaviors fall under the definition of bullying at work – harassment, mistreatment, hostility and

aversive behaviors. Bullying is more generally defined as "those situations when an unequal balance of power exists between individuals in a conflict situation". "Dignity at Work" initiatives, the development of measurement tools and building a culture at work "where appropriate ways of behavior are clearly communicated and supported" has all been identified as useful strategies to combat bullying.

Work systems and flexible working

The last decade has seen many organizations engaging in some form of re-engineering of business processes. While the drive to improve productivity and reducing costs has resulted in much restructuring, global competition and changing labor markets have ensured that the most significant advantage of an organization lies in the competencies of its employees. This has led to the growth in so called "resource – based strategies", where competition is furthered by placing even greater demands on employees in terms of their competency to produce, and their motivation to do so.

As the range of flexible working arrangements continues to grow, more attention will need to be given in the future to their management and it involves three important steps:

1. The first covers employee involvement and is concerned with making use of employee experience in exploring the impact of different arrangements and identifying what employees want and how it can be accommodated.

2. The second step recognizes that training is crucial and becomes important at two levels: Firstly, in preparing and training employees for what may be involved when taking up different forms of flexible working; and secondly, in recognizing the need for managerial training, not just on the practicalities of dealing with flexible working, but more importantly that flexible working requires different styles of management and therefore training.

3. The third step requires the development of trust and confidence between employers and employees, ensuring that the ensuing autonomy is not exploited.

Conclusion

Workplace @ 2020, may pose many challenges as discussed above. In the light of the above mentioned areas, progress must be made in two very important areas. These are in developing and progressing human capital metrics and measurement, and a greater emphasis on the 'human' in human resources as expressed in the form of employee engagement and organizational culture. Employee Engagement requires the translation of human resource policies into practice. The

important element here is partnership with all levels of the organization working together as partners, so that employees experience the benefits and voluntarily walk the extra mile and enhance their performance. The essential element that makes such partnerships work is communication leading to the development of new approaches to workplace relationships. Partnership at work, as F W Taylor argues "should no longer be regarded simply as well - meaning slogan; it is the basis through which organizations develop trust and commitment.

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