

Employees and Workplace Participation

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Abstract- The concept of workplace participation or participative management means that companies encourage their employees to participate in the decision-making process. These companies realize that the employees are the facilitators who deal directly with the customers and fulfill their needs. This concept has been adopted by many organizations that encourage innovative ideas, thoughts, and opinions of their employees. Although there are many advantages to applying workplace participation in a company, there are some drawbacks and limitations to participative management because companies have different cultures and abilities.

Introduction

Workplace participation means that employees have a management role in decision making for a company. As Merlin Olson said, "A CEO will get the best input and advice by appointing a committee or task force with members representing the 'diagonal slice'. This produces multiple views and perspectives –all valid. Each level can make important contributions. Each person must be made to feel comfortable and valued as a participant" (Byron 121).

Advantages of Workplace Participations

There are many advantages of applying the principle of workplace participation for companies. For example, there would be an increase in productivity because employees are responsible for their behaviors with less delegation and supervision from upper managers. Similarly, employees would accomplish their tasks in a decent way if they feel they are valuable through appreciation of efforts which improve productivity again. Another advantage is job satisfaction which means employees will be satisfied in their jobs if they realize their innovative ideas and great feedbacks are taken seriously and being used in decision making. Thus, they will be motivated to put more efforts in future. Moreover, the quality would improve because feedbacks and input come from the bottom line employees who know the minor details of the process and deliver the result to the upper line managers. As a result, no gap or loophole goes unreported which helps to take an accurate decision for the company. Likewise, the cost will be reduced because the company depends on the ideas, recommendations and skills of its employees to work efficiently and effectively so it could lead to having a comparative advantage over its competitors (MSG, 2013).

Drawbacks of Workplace Participation

On the other hand, participative management could have some drawbacks for companies. The main concern when applying the workplace participation is security. Although

it is great to get more people involved before making a decision, it could affect the company badly if the employees leaked information outside the company. Another disadvantage could be the slowdown in decision-making due to the fact that the company would need more time to analyze the input and feedbacks from its employees as well as to check the accuracy before implementing them (MSG, 2013).

Limitations of Participative Management

As per the Management Study Guide Website, there are certain limitations that could affect the participation of employees in decision-making. Some of the limitations of participative management are:

- ❖ "Complexity of Technology and Organizations
- ❖ Employee's right of not participating
- ❖ Manipulation
- ❖ Workers Psychology
- ❖ General Bias" (MSG, 2013).

Nowadays, the complicated technology utilized by many companies needs specialized workers to perform the job. Also, some workers opt not to participate in the decision making process because they do not feel that they need to give their opinions or just because they do not like to. Additionally, managers may use workplace participation to manipulate employees, so that they refuse to participate in order to avoid being controlled by others. The workers psychology affects the way that some employees think about taking part in decision making. They believe that their job is only to serve their masters or managers, which makes participation a little interest to them ((MSG, 2013).

Conclusion

To summarize, it seems that workplace participation has more advantages than disadvantages. However, this does not mean that implementing this approach is good for all organizations because each company has different culture and resources. For that reason, it is important to consider

both sides (pros & cons) and measure their effects on the company before taking the decision.

References

Management Study Guide.

2013. <http://www.managementstudyguide.com/participative-management-advantages-disadvantages.htm>.

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