

MANGING PEOPLE

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Assignment 2

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Around one year ago the humanity faced one of the biggest pandemics for this century – Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The illness is defined as it causing severe acute respiratory syndromes. (Cennimo, 2020) The impact of COVID-19 over the humanity has left a huge scar at the economy as well as the health and safety at the workplace. To prevent spreading the virus among us, most of the organizations were forced to re-form their approach and structures in terms of the new legislations that were imposed by the government. In this report, I will evaluate those new restructured operations within the organizations worldwide and how it benefits the global economy in such crisis.

Due to the Coronavirus spreads quickly across the world, there were major action taken in order to reduce the level of infection amongst the humanity. Some of those actions were directly related to the business and its closures globally. Schools, shops, public events, and corporations were locked down and this created severe economic consequences.(Granto, 2020) In order to increase the economy, the government framed new laws that can help organizations to re-open some positions within the business. Therefore, returning to work in these circumstances was challenge that every firm was happy to take in order to save the business and their employees.

The main employment question arising due to the virus spreading is to what extent it affects the employees' obligation in order to perform their work at the workplace. For accomplishing the employee's needs, the employer must consider whether the workplace is safe or not and how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 across the workforce. In contemplation of providing safe workplace, the employers must consider different approach that can *engage, retain, and deploy* the workers even away from the office. There are different methods suggested by the organizations beneficial to the employees such as *work from home, flexible hours, restructuring their positions*. (Osha, 2020) These methods are created for organizations to ensure that the staff performance and productivity is improved.

The employee engagement has been main concept that plays significant role in every organization. (Pandita and Bedarkar, 2014) Therefore, the employee engagement is one of the most powerful sources of competitive advantage in the turbulent time.

The concepts of employee engagement can be related to the famous theory of the humanist Abraham Maslow and his hierarchy of need. The Maslow's theory was introduced in 1943 and his message is closely linked to the people motivation and how to fulfill their basic needs towards their more advanced needs. (Cherry, 2020)



(fig.1 Cherry, 2020)

Maslow's pyramid is divided into 5 levels as lowest to highest – Physiological, Safety, Social (Love), Esteem and Self-actualization. (Cherry, 2020) Each level has its significance, however applying the theory at workplace, the employers should be able to provide all these needs to their employees in order to achieve better result as company.

According to the pyramid, the accomplished need of personal respect takes priority. The theory highlights the significance of personal development in order to achieve individual potential. Further to Maslow's beliefs, the theory can play an important role in motivation people's behavior. The top of the hierarchy is rated as growth needs of the individual.

Every organization should be able to apply this pyramid in terms of their employee's motivation scheme. For people the need of good job and well-organized environment plays a crucial role. The safety and the physiological levels of Maslow's hierarchy can apply to the basic needs of everyone. To accomplish all these needs, every organization must be capable to offer their employees suitable and safe place for work.

Although, currently employee engagement seems very challenging because of the new trends of flexible hours or working from home. This was not a new alternative as some of the office jobs were already experiencing such type of working environment. Working from home has a lot of benefits that can potentially increase the productivity of the company's employees. For instance, when an individual works from home, there is no need to wake up early as there is no need to travel to the workplace. This saves time and also stress that can be gained during the trip to the firm. The day of the worker starts already with less stress and the productivity on daily basis is getting increased. As usual, the work from home could also have a negative impact over the employees. For example, if we reduce our socializing for long period of time that could influence the mood and people can easily become self-cautious as they are not used to be working alone.

To reduce the chance of employee's disappointment, the company must work hard for introducing new ways of safe communication at the office. In the light of COVID-19 most of the employers faced an issue that affected their workers. The only alternative they had is to develop an idea that can easily keep the working process smooth even if it is not in the original working environment. For example, a lot of companies such as Google have extended their remote work in order to provide health and safety for their employees. (Whiting, 2020) But this does not resolve the problem. There should be something that must be done and bring all those people back in office just as before. Humanity needs to continue their life as they are used to. The pandemic has brought a lot of different methods to engage people at workplace, even if it is not as per usual circumstances.

Many companies are using the employee engagement as strategic tool conducive to gain more importance which can influence the workers performance and well-being. To attain such result, the employer must consider what drives the engagement within employees nowadays and make sure that HR department

focuses on. There are a lot of factors that can impact the employees' work performance such as learning and development, coaching, providing feedback, the variety of tasks on a daily basis and also the responsibilities.

The learning and development process for workers has been always an important part of individual growth. Before the pandemic the business was investing a lot of money on learning and development but now is commonly held on technology and virtual platforms. Companies are investing in electronic learning and development in a way to gain better results during these difficult times. With remote jobs having become part of the new normal and still a lot of firms not planning to return to an office space until 2021, this investment in virtual learning can only be set to rise across the globe. (Alberti, 2020)

Coaching can help you peer through the fog of uncertainty and review what's likely to have changed temporarily, permanently, and fundamentally. Helping you consider what to bring into the new world and laying the groundwork to get your organization in pole position for the future. (Colleta, 2020) In the grand scheme of things, the current Covid-19 crisis won't last forever. There will be a post-pandemic world, and even if your organization is standing still for a while, now is the time to prepare for the next stage. At the moment coaching does not take priority within companies, however once the crisis is over every employer must consider a strong coaching plan to be introduced amongst the employees.

The employee feedback is an important tool for driving the employee engagement within a company. The definition itself means that this is a process of giving constructive suggestion to the worker in order to improve their professional growth. (Johnes, 2020) Feedback can help the as well organizations as employees to develop a better workplace culture. For jobs based at home the feedback process hasn't changed much. Employers are still able to provide workers with feedback which is mainly based on their productivity and performance.

Since most of the companies moved into remote working environment, the tasks for the employees were kept as normal. The daily work process remains the same and the employee's responsibilities are as before. However, employer must ensure all employees are kept engaged during the working process at home. For this reason, I have described a few suggestions that could effectively apply to the individual's daily basis tasks:

- Employees should have a sense of belonging – as per The Wallstreet Journal, the most successful companies are those that give employees a sense of belonging. (Shellenbarger, 2020) An important role for employees plays the way they are treated within a company. Being able to see that they are valued, employees will ensure that they follow all managers suggestions in order to improve the business.
- There should be specific goals defined only for remote workers – there is a conducted research by Daily Mail which states that 39% of remote working people manage to complete their tasks faster. (Calnan, 2017) To increase this percentage, companies are to ensure every remote worker has a clear and measurable goal. It is understandable that communication is very challenging, however it is vital to be clear about employees' duties and responsibilities.
- Improvements in internal communication strategy – in benefit to the employee engagement, every organizations must review their communication strategy. Employers task is to put more effort into prioritizing the employee relations and engagement efforts.
- Team collaboration is the key for achieving best productivity levels of an organization. To eliminate all challenges that remote workers are facing, most companies must consider an alternative for team collaboration. Employers must also think in a way to bring some fun to the employees while at work in order to keep employees engaged. For that reason, there are many software programs that are used to create fun at the remote workplace. (Klein, 2020)
- Work from home – establishing policy – to gain more productivity within remote workers, there should be a policy applied in benefit to support employee's flexibility. Introducing a policy that is functional for remote workers will make them feel as part of an organizational culture. There is no option to apply same rules for office jobs rather than home based jobs. Employers must be very creative to develop an environment where employees are valued even if they are away from the office.

These are just a few examples of how to keep people engaged at workplace. Every organizations should have its own strategic plan in order to attain employee's engagement within the business. In the light of the current situation,

governments keep releasing new legislations in terms of keeping the humanity safe. The workload will not stop in certain departments, therefore the introducing of new position or flexible ours to the employees will be essential. There are different work frames applied to different organization in order to allow employees to work together to find solution in this challenging times.

There are many alternatives for keeping employees engaged within organization. Once the engagement is fulfilled, the employers can easily retain its workers. To retain people within a company is probably the most difficult job for the employers. In order to achieve employee retention, the employers must invest time and capital in new ventures rather than just relying on people to stay. The employer must be informed and aware of what keeps employees engaged at standard or non-standard workplace. Being able to judge the current situation with COVID-19, there are a lot of opportunities revealed in every industry conducive to help the business survive.

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