

PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

TASK 2

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Defining a complex problem in the workplace including its scope and impact.....	3
Analysis of information on the identified problem to inform the decision-making process	4
Range of alternative solution to the problem.....	4
Utilizing a decision-making technique to identify the most appropriate solution	5
Implementation plan of the solution	6
Communication of the plan to the stakeholders	7
Monitor and reviewing techniques to ensure successful implementation of the identified solution.....	8
Conclusion	9
REFERENCE.....	10

Task 2: Report

Introduction

Research evidence points out the present “crisis” in which the UK workforce is currently suffering from delineating several complex problems contributing to the sustainment of the crisis (independent.co.uk, 2020). The present report aims to identify certain problem-solving tools and techniques to develop solutions to a work-based problem. The problem presented in this report is drawn from the current experiences of the workforce in *Sainsbury* (sainsburys.co.uk, 2020). The report takes into consideration the engagement of stakeholders in the implementation of the appropriate solution to address the identified problem.

Defining a complex problem in the workplace including its scope and impact

The identified complex problem in the workplace is *low motivation and job satisfaction of the employees*. This problem is said to be a complex one as it could arise due to several reasons that might be difficult to identify and might impact key performance indicators of the organization’s business. Discussing the scope of motivation level and job satisfaction of the employees it can be said that the same tends to highly influence the ability of an individual to complete the tasks they are aligned with, the development of culture within an organization, as well as management of the conflicts in the business (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020, p. 57). Research work has shown typically 5 essential factors to influence motivation and job satisfaction level of the workforce which are: Compensation, the work itself, opportunities for development, work culture, aspects of communication between the management and the workforce (Inuwa, 2016, p. 90).

A blow to any one of the mentioned factors poses a high potentiality to impact the organization's productivity and performance level. Low motivation and satisfaction level among the employees impacts the well-being of the workforce, and turnover rates leading to reduced productivity (Metz, 2018, p. 11). Employees engage in lower levels of engagement, poor communication channels, and diminished performance levels thereby causing a toxic work environment. In the case study provided, it can be seen that among the polled 12000 people, 80 percent of them reported feeling high job stress and 64 percent reported irregular sleep patterns as an impact of their job stress (independent.co.uk, 2020). This level of dissatisfaction makes the employees perceive undervaluation thereby impacting the turnover rates of the organization.

Analysis of information on the identified problem to inform the decision-making process

Information extracted from the case study and referring to the current experiences of the workforce in Sainsbury can be said most of the people are currently looking for a new job and the unsatisfied number of people at work has risen to an imminent percentage in last year. A large group of people is highly demotivated and unsatisfied due to poor work culture, excessive job stress leading to degrading work-life balance, and degrading changes in physical and mental well-being (independent.co.uk, 2020). Employees have further pointed to being undervalued at jobs as one of the prominent reasons for their low motivation, engagement, and satisfaction level. This extracted information formulates a cause-effect relationship depicting the pertinent issues associated with the complex problem of *low motivation and satisfaction level of the employees*. The information further enables us to lay down an effective decision-making process for coming up with appropriate solutions addressing the problem (Pang and Lu, 2018, p. 22). Low motivation and employee satisfaction level possess the potentiality to decrease the organization's performance in a much vital way and cannot be addressed using quantitative measures. Management has to take into consideration a lot of factors in order to develop problem-solving solutions to extract maximum positive outcomes directed towards resolution of the problem. The process of decision making requires an organization's commitment, its employees along with its resources, to set a particular course of action among the various alternatives that are available to achieve the primary objective (Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm, 2016, p. 10). The decision-making process would therefore need to consider a range of solutions that would effectively address the rising work-related stress among the employees, deliver the employees with a proper work-life balance, provide them with proper assistance for enhanced physical and mental well-being, make the employees feel valued at work, provide them with career development opportunities, and providing a friendly and supportive work culture to the employees (De Sousa Sabbagha *et al.* 2018, p. 136).

Range of alternative solution to the problem

When employees of an organization are happy and satisfied with the management as well as the work culture they put their maximum efforts to achieve organizational requirements. Opposite to the same directly hits the bottom line impacting organizational performance (Nguyen, 2017, p. 12). The report identifies the complex problem of low motivation and satisfaction level as an

eminent challenge to the performance of Sainsbury and attempts to develop an appropriate solution on their behalf to address this problem in an immediate effect. To address this, a range of solutions have been reviewed by the management that potentially would ensure improvement in the level of worker's motivation and satisfaction. The ranges of alternative solutions proposed to address the problem of "low motivation and satisfaction level of the workforce" are listed as follows:

1. The management of Sainsbury can consider offering *paid time off* to the employees in order to manage their increased job stress. Paid time off would not only ensure that the workforce enjoys their time off from their work it would even ensure effective work-life balance thereby handling work-related stress of the employees.
2. Apart from setting official policies, the management can ensure that employees take sufficient breaks in their on-job time and engage themselves in friendlier conversations, diversions, and other activities in the company's offsites. This would potentially help the employees to deal with stress (Ayundasari *et al.* 2017, p. 58).
3. Engaging in continuous feedback programs and acting on the same, direct compensation pay off as a thank you, and rewarding results would make the employees feel valued at work which would increase their work engagement leading to more satisfaction at job (Theresia *et al.* 2018, p. 25)

Utilizing a decision-making technique to identify the most appropriate solution

The decision-making technique of *Group Discussion* is used to consider the most appropriate solution of the identified complex problem. The group decision technique of decision making stands useful to solve complex problems that cannot be readily solved using other techniques (O. Nyumba *et al.* 2018, p. 20). The complex problem is discussed in a group and a range of solutions addressing the problems are identified. Then discussions are done regarding the applicability of the most appropriate solution that would address most components of the complex problem. The range of solutions is assessed depending on its key strengths and barriers and the one with potential strength which promises maximum outcomes, as well as consists of least barriers of implementation, is selected (Alexander *et al.* 2019, p. 33). Through group discussion, the Sainsbury managers came up with a decision to adopt a "*direct compensation pay*

off the program as a thank you to the employees” as an effective solution to address the low motivation and employee satisfaction level.

Justifying the same it can be said that in the provided case study it has been seen that employees seek more out of the work than they are getting. They highly complain of feeling undervalued and though they are enjoying the work they do, they are still involved in looking for a new job as they feel something is missing (independent.co.uk, 2020). This somewhat points out that perceiving to be undervalued is contributing to higher turnover rates which are not good for the operational functioning of an organization. The management at *Sainsbury* decides to work on the same as addressing this issue alone would lead to higher satisfaction levels of the employees, thereby increasing work engagement and productivity.

Implementation plan of the solution

Action Plan

Introduction of direct compensation pay-offs as a “thank you” gesture

Rationale

In the light of the current problems that the workforce is undergoing through, the management of *Sainsbury* has decided to introduce direct compensation payoffs on a weekly basis as a "thank you" gesture to those employees contributing valuable efforts to the organization. Though *Sainsbury* has potential rewards programs on an annual basis, this particular gesture is intended to remind the employees that they are a valuable asset to the organization and management is glad for them to be a part of the business (Nalim *et al.* 2020, p. 78). The management expects that employees would identify themselves with the organizational goals and objectives more personally and work towards the fulfillment of the same.

Actions Required

All the employees are required to notify about the weekly direct compensation pay-offs as a “thank you” gesture introduced by the management by their supervisors along with the criteria effective to be qualified for the same. The management would be paying \$30 more per week along with the regular remuneration to those who effectively meet the weekly criteria and bring in value to the organization. This program is to be introduced in immediate effect starting from next month.

Resources Required

The program needs no routine business resources as the reward provided would be in terms of direct compensation.

Expected Results

The management expects that all employees would identify themselves with the organizational activities more personally and would perceive that they are being valued thereby increasing their motivation and satisfaction level.

Communication of the plan to the stakeholders

In order to implement the action plan effectively, communicating the same to the business stakeholders is a crucial part in the process of successful implementation. The better the channels of communication with the stakeholders are established the better would be the perceived success of the same (Damiano Bragantini and Licciardi, 2017, p. 18). This communication plan is required to engage all the stakeholders of the business that are going to be directly influenced by the identified solution. The plan also includes any specific requirements or standards governed by the identified solution (Lauff *et al.* 2020, p. 34). The communication process of the plan to the stakeholders is provided in the below table:

COMMUNICATION PLAN			
Stakeholders	Role	Level of Influence	Channel of Communication
VP of the Organization	To approve the plan and assess the weight of the budget incurred and positive output.	HIGH	Budget/Progress Update via email
Communication Manager	To ensure effective communication of the elements of the plan across the organization.	LOW	Final approval on the proposed solution through meetings
HR Manager	To handle any disputes, conflicts, as well as other components associated	HIGH	Go-to-contact for needs, deliverables

	with the plan		through email
Supervisors	To clarify the organizational expectations and rationale of the plan	LOW	Meetings
Employees	To comply and perceive the significance of the plan	LOW	Meetings

Table 1: Communication of the plan to the stakeholders

(Source: Self-Created)

Monitor and reviewing techniques to ensure successful implementation of the identified solution

In order to monitor the successful implementation of the identified solution, the management of Sainsbury is required to review monthly reports and take feedback assessment from the employees. The management can use a *functional monitoring tool* to review whether the plan is being implemented in the way it was meant to. Reviewing the current records against the previous records would enable the management to view the difference in the result which would implicate the implementation of the solution being successful or not. The development plan serves the sole purpose of making the workforce perceive that they are valued by the organization and their contribution highly matters to the operational functioning of the organization (Chofreh *et al.* 2017, p. 42). This perception is expected to increase job engagement of the employees, thereby increasing their level of motivation and satisfaction and increase retention rates. The organization's performance is expected to increase due to high employee engagement and hence assessing and monitoring the same using effective functioning tools such as monthly reports assessment, feedback assessments, and employee absence records would enable the management to ensure successful implementation of the solution

Conclusion

Thus, it can be concluded that the present report effectively uses problem-solving tools and techniques (in this case - Group Discussion) to come up with an effective solution that would address the identified complex problem of "*low motivation and satisfaction level of employees*". A range of solutions to address the problem is developed and using effective techniques the most appropriate solutions are implemented. The report even provides a communication plan with the stakeholders to ensure effective communication of the integral rationale of the solution with the business stakeholders. The report effectively reviews the current workforce crisis as per the case study provided and identifies a complex problem that is creating a challenge in the path of achieving organizational goals and objectives.

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