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## MANAGER-WORKER RELATIONSHIP IN A PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATION

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### Introduction

The relationship between Manager and Worker is sometimes fragile. The worker may feel pressured to keep his job while harbouring unfavourable opinions about his boss, while the boss wonders if the employee is working to the best of his ability. Employers are also concerned about the morale of workers, because low morale could lead to expensive issues with turnover or low productivity. While many companies employ workers without formal agreements, others have employment-at-will contracts with the workers. The company can terminate the employee for almost any reason, as long as the firm does not make its firing decision based on discrimination or whistle-blowing. This arrangement is sometimes a source of conflict between employee and manager, because the employee is afraid of losing his job. Recessionary times can negatively affect the relationship between employee and employer. An employee may start to distrust the company more and fear losing his job because of hard financial times. Downturns in the economy actually might be an opportunity for managers to build employee loyalty to the company, employers find themselves more frequently asking employees to trust the company assuring employees that better days are ahead and their efforts today will not be forgotten tomorrow. If an employer disregards the concerns of employees, that could lead to a number of important and sometimes expensive problems. Besides turnover, workplace violence is also a risk to the business if employees become disgruntled. Employees who feel slighted by managers may also compromise the security of the company's proprietary information by either sharing trade secrets or taking that valuable knowledge to another competing business. A company that doesn't foster a productive relationship between employees and managers also may develop a poor reputation in the industry.

In today's competitive business environment, organizations can no longer afford to waste the potential of their workforce. There are key factors in the employee's workplace



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environment that impact greatly on their level of motivation and performance. The workplace environment that is set in place impacts employee morale, productivity and engagement - both positively and negatively. It is not just coincidence that new programs addressing lifestyle changes, work/life balance, health and fitness previously not considered key benefits - are now primary considerations of potential employees, and common practices among the most admired companies.

In an effort to motivate workers, firms have implemented a number of practices such as performance-based pay, employment security agreements, practices to help balance work and family, as well as various forms of information sharing. In addition to motivation, workers need the skills and ability to do their job effectively. And for many firms, training the worker has become a necessary input into the production process.

The work place environment in a majority of industry is unsafe and unhealthy. These includes poorly designed workstations, unsuitable furniture, lack of ventilation, inappropriate lighting, excessive noise, insufficient safety measures in fire emergencies and lack of personal protective equipment. People working in such environment are prone to occupational disease and it impacts on employee's performance. Thus, productivity is decreased due to the workplace environment. It is a wide industrial area where the employees are facing a serious problem in their work place like environmental and physical factors. So, it is difficult to provide facilities to increase their performance level.

Interestingly, the workplace of today is characterized by two opposing trends. On the one hand, employees are given leeway in the way they dress and act. On the other hand, the management's tendency to micromanage has increased. Though the two are different aspects they are certainly related. The possible explanation for the increased tendency to micromanage is because of the fact that the young workers certainly do not present a picture as serious, dedicated workers in the way they dress, speak and act.

The management must take an active role in not only defining the physical environment of the workplace and making it conducive for workers but also alter the management style to suit the employees. This refers to changing aspects like ethics, behaviour, commitment, professionalism, drive and interpersonal relations in employees for the better.



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Today's manager has to change his style of functioning in order to bring about effective changes in these aspects. He has to spend more time on controlling these factors of the work environment rather than micromanage. For this, he has to:

- 🔗 Give adequate authority to employees
- 🔗 Delegate responsibilities
- 🔗 Increase their accountability
- 🔗 Encourage teamwork

The manager must curb the tendency to micromanage and instead display that he has confidence in the ability of his team members and trusts them to do their work efficiently. If he treats his subordinates as professionals then there is no reason that they should not behave in that way. Such an attitude promotes trust and loyalty among the employees and encourages better teamwork among them. Besides, they develop a sense of ownership towards the company. Creating a work environment in which employees are productive is essential to increased profits for your organization, corporation or small business. Principals of management that dictate how, exactly, to maximize employee productivity centre around two major areas of focus: personal motivation and the infrastructure of the work environment.

### **Workplace Environment Factors**

Many managers and supervisors labour under the mistaken impression that the level of employee performance on the job is proportional to the size of the employee's pay packet. Although this may be true in a minority of cases, numerous employee surveys have shown by and large this to be untrue. In fact, salary increases and bonuses for performance, in many instances, have a very limited short-term effect. The extra money soon comes to be regarded not as an incentive but as an "entitlement".

It is the quality of the employee's workplace environment that most impacts on their level of motivation and subsequent performance. How well they engage with the organization, especially with their immediate environment, influences to a great extent their error rate, level of innovation and collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and ultimately, how long they stay in the job. Many studies have revealed that most employees leave their organization because of the relationship with their immediate supervisor or manager.

There are also other factors that may impact on performance like environmental factors and physical factors. A close consideration of each of these factors is also very useful



ensuring that employees apply the skills they learn during training programs once they return their workplace.

### **1. Goal-setting**

Employees are involved in setting meaningful goals and performance measures for their work. This can be done informally between the employee and their immediate supervisor or as part of an organization's formal performance management process.

### **2. Performance feedback**

Information on how the employee is performing is fed back regularly to employees. This consists of both positive feedback on what the employee is doing right as well as feedback on what requires improvement.

### **3. Role congruity**

The role that the employee is required to perform is consistent with their expectations or joining the organization and any subsequent training. The organization's role expectations are consistent with tasks allocated by the employee's immediate supervisor.

### **4. Defined processes**

The organization constrains the variability of how work is actually performed through documenting processes and communicating such expectations to employees.

### **5. Workplace incentives**

The organization determines what motivates its employees and sets up formal and informal structures for rewarding employees behaving in the way required.

### **6. Supervisor support**

Immediate supervisors act as advocates for employees, gathering and distributing the resources needed by the employees for them to be able to do a good job and providing positive encouragement for a job well done.

### **7. Mentoring/coaching**

Skilled and respected people are available to employees to help them perform better in their current role and to assist them develop further into a future role.

### **8. Opportunity to apply**

Individual workloads and organizational systems and processes do not hinder employees from applying established skills or from practicing newly learned skills.

### **9. Job aids**



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Their work is to be made easier and help minimize error rates and customer dissatisfaction by supplying job aids. These can include templates, guides, models and checklists.

### **Workplace Culture & Interventions**

Adjusting to the workplace culture, whether in a new company or not, can be intensely stressful. Making one adapt to the various aspects of workplace culture such as communication patterns, hierarchy, dress code if any, workspace and most importantly working and behavioural patterns of the boss as well as the co-workers, can be a lesson of life. Maladjustment to workplace cultures may lead to subtle conflicts with colleagues or even with superiors. In many cases office politics or gossips can be major stress inducers.

Primary and secondary interventions may prevent adverse outcomes by reducing or eliminating external loads, changing organizational factors, altering the social environment, improving individual stress-coping skills, or matching the physical demands of the job with the employee's physical capacities. External loads in the work environment act on the body to create internal loads on tissues and other anatomical structures. Interventions that focus on the reduction or elimination of exposure to external loads must first identify and quantify the motions and forces acting on the individual, including vibration and thermal exposures. Often a systematic study of the work is required to evaluate these physical exposures and their characteristic properties. When specific physical stress factors are identified, the sources of these loads are ascertained. Workplace redesign may include alterations in tools, equipment, workstations, materials handled, tasks, work methods, work processes, and work environment, based on their contributions to the identified stresses.

### **Conclusion:**

An employee may start to distrust the company more and fear losing his job because of hard financial times. Downturns in the economy actually might be an opportunity for managers to build employee loyalty to the company. Employers find themselves more frequently asking employees to trust the company assuring employees that better days are ahead and their efforts today will not be forgotten tomorrow. If an employer disregards the concerns of employees, that could lead to a number of important and sometimes expensive problems. Besides turnover, workplace violence is also a risk to the business if employees become disgruntled. Employees who feel slighted by managers may also compromise the security of the company's proprietary information by either sharing trade secrets or taking



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