Motivating Employees

BUS 610 Organizational Behaviors

The Performance Issue

Motivating employees is essential to any business. Motivation includes what starts, maintains, and stops behaviors (Baack, 2012). Employees of any organization is the effects the overall production of the company and unmotivated employees provide bad internal and external customer service. The effects of unmotivated employees can cause havoc in the workplace and disrupt the progress of other employees. Motivation cannot be instilled or taught because it comes from within (Dhobale, Pillai and Patil). In order to have employees perform at maximum potential, specific communication about the work performance must exist between employee and manager.

During my career as a manager, there have been several instances where employees felt unmotivated due to lack of growth opportunities. The performance issue with this particular employee was difficult. At one point in her career the employee was the highest sales person for several years at this location. The employee was highly regarded as a stellar employee from her manager as well as regional management and represented the region at several national corporate events. Although the employee was the highest sales person at her previous location, she was never promoted to full time which cause the employee to only focus on menial tasks instead reaching her maximum potential. Regional management transferred the employee to my location to motivate the employee but the employee’s performance was still on the decline. To get employees to perform at maximum potential, specific communication must exist between employee and manager.

After working with the employee for several weeks, behavioral patterns started to emerge with the employee and other members of the team. The employee would get complaints from other members of the team including managers about the employees’ unprofessionalism, tardiness and unwillingness to be a team player while on the sales floor. After talking with the employee about the concerns, the employee felt that the concerns weren’t important because she was the top salesperson and that was her job.

The Theory

The ERG Theory is a three concept motivational process the progresses from existence, relatedness and growth (Baack). Unlike the Maslow Theory, the ERG theory can be completed in any order. Existence needs refers to basic and safety needs. Relatedness is one’s need of social needs, belonging, acceptance and status desires. The final component growth is one’s desire for personal development (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002). The motivational theory can explain the problem with the employee.

The relatedness of the model speaks to the needs of the employee and her relationship with her co-workers. When the employee first joined the team, she felt threaten by the staff for several reasons. The employee came from a small location with 7 employees that generated 1.2 million dollars in sales per fiscal year. Her new location had 18 employees, generated $3.3 million in revenue and had 4 seasoned employees that consistently sold 30% more than she accomplished. The employee was accustomed to being the top salesperson; however, with additional employees and a higher volume location, there were several top salespeople and increased competition.

Existence in this situation refers to the employee’s perception that being the highest salesperson secures your job and it’s the most important job expectation. Like most positions in an organization, the employee has a job function that is important but other factors are equally important to the position. If all aspects of the job cannot be fulfilled the employee could face termination for their inability to meet job expectations which directly effects the source that provides the basic needs and job security.

The final component growth pertains to the employee’s desire for promotion and personal development. Although the employee was a high performing part time salesperson, she desired to be a full time employee and then progress to management. Because of her inability to recognize that her job is more than selling merchandise, she was unable to this aspect of the model.

Action of Change

Employees must receive specific feedback to reach their maximum potential. Managers must ensure the employee is connected to the feedback being provided by asking follow up questions to address the existence component of the theory. Although the employee was highly effective with selling she was disconnected with the other aspects of the job such as collaboration with team members, and arriving on time for scheduled shifts. The first step is to review the job description with the employee. This will align and engage the employee with job expectations and help the employee see the larger scope of the job function. Employee engagement has optimistic significances for the organization (Ram & Prabhakar). After communicating with the employee about the concerns about her performance, the employee informed me that her previous manager always gave her positive feedback and her tardiness was never addressed. Therefore, providing the employee with consistent constructive feedback will address her performance opportunities and motivate her to perform at a higher level.

Secondly, to assist the employee with relating to her co-workers it would help by partnering the employee with a co-worker as a mentor to build a relationship. This will allow the employees to be social and promote diverse knowledge and skills to get results. The employee can also serve the team by treating others with respect regardless of their role. The employee should be able to look beyond her role and think of the big picture to achieve goals.

Finally, to get the employee to achieve the self-development, assigning new tasks such as partnering a with shift manager to understand their role. The partnership will permit the employee a glimpse of the job expectations of the role desired. Therefor, this will inspire the employee and develop critical thinking and management skills. When the employee interviews for future positions, the focus can be on the development plan and the growth that has benefited her within her role along with her selling abilities.

In conclusion, the established plan using the ERG theory should motivate, inspire and correct the performance problem with the employee. Indeed the manager can provide the employee attention to support their growth and communicate specific feedback of job performance. This allows the employee knowledge of opportunities so the employee can work to address them.

References

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