



Achieving Utilization of Human Resources For Organizational Growth and Sustainability

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Abstract - In the recent past, the human factor has moved from the wings to the centre stage in the organizational arena. To sustain competitive advantage, an organisation must have a commitment to improvement, innovation, change and above all superior human resources. Employees are source of continuous improvement in productivity. They need to be utilized in a manner that the organization will continue to grow and be sustained. This paper discusses utilization of human resources from the broader standpoints of leadership, planning, recruitment, selection and training. The paper recommends proper selection of personnel, good equipment for staff, adequate wages and compensation, properly designed jobs, and good supervision as what can be done to achieve better utilization of human resources.

Keywords: Leadership, Planning, Recruitment, Selection, Training.

1. Introduction

In the recent past, the human factor has moved from the wings to the centre stage in the organizational arena. This is because of the effects of globalization. The world is now so linked that when Governor, Bank of England sneezes, investor from Tokyo to Seattle catches cold. An act of indiscretion by Bill Gates could decide the economic fate of many countries. You can send an electronic order to your factory half a world away and workers can manufacture and ship that order tomorrow. Information is instant and news is old instantly.

Increasingly, organizations in the western world are viewing their market areas as global rather than domestic or even foreign. Business organizations have taken note of this international dimension and taken steps to deal with it. Competition has become the name of the game. Parke, in his book "The Competitive Advantage of Nations" (1990) pointed out that to sustain competitive advantage; an organization must have a commitment to improvement, innovation, and change. Important sources of these qualities that cannot be easily replicated by competitors are superior human resources and technical capability.

Employees should be recruited with care, treated as permanent rather than dispensable, seen as a source of continuous improvement in productivity, and trained on an on-going basis to support more sophisticated competitive advantages. Outstanding competitors should serve as benchmarks, and motivators; and a visionary management should create an atmosphere in which organizational change is both normal and expected.

The purpose of establishing corporate organization is to make profit which is carried out by plugging all the factors into production which results into valorisation of capital. It is therefore imperative to know that if there should be continuity of the realization of an organization, human beings as the active and important causative factor of production should be developed (trained), maintained and utilized to the fullest.

2. Utilization of Human Resources

According to Egungwu (1992) “systematized human resources utilization is the placement of only right employees in the right jobs, at right times and places, irrespective of their origins, and adequately motivating them through appropriate management techniques to be productive, ...it ensure that every employee’s talents are used to the fullest benefits of the enterprises and of the employees, in this way, it leads to the avoidance of talented employee displaying disenchantment and disruptive work attitudes which never augur well for the enterprise”. The words efficiency, effectiveness and productivity are the key words that serve as the ingredients for measuring utilization. Thus, “the efficiency of an employee or a group of employees is assessed by the degrees to which they produce high quality goods or services during the shortest possible time. Efficiency, therefore, involves doing things right. The effectiveness of an employee or an organization is, on the other hand, assessed by the degrees to which organizational goals are achieved while productivity is a measure of the efficiency of management. It can be described as a ratio between what is put into anything, for example, money, raw materials, human efforts etc., and what is gotten out, for example packets of chalks. If the output of goods and services has increased relative to the input, then there is increased productivity. Thus the issue of human resources utilization will be addressed from the broader standpoints of leadership, planning, recruitment, selection and training.

3. Leadership

The point being made here is that for the effective utilization of any type of resources human and material, a good, strong, honest, wise, intelligent and adaptive leadership is a sine qua non. But let us pause here and ask ourselves who is a leader and what does leadership entails.

The adage “leaders are born not made” is a well-worn phrase but which retained currency for a long time and which could still gain some support. This theory sometimes called the “trait theory” according to Bass & Bass (2008) sought to find universal personality traits that good leaders have to some extent in greater quantity than ineffective leaders. True enough, it is possible to inherit leadership qualities arising from one’s genealogy. But this alone does not explain the success or otherwise of someone who finds himself in a leadership situation. The weakness of this theory lies in the fact that it ignored the circumstances and the environment in which the leader operates.(Schultz & Schultz, 2010)

The “behavioural theory” of leadership concentrates on styles and this led to prescriptions for an ideal leadership style. However, further research indicated that a good leadership style is contingent on such factors as the leader – subordinate relationships, the leader’s characteristics, the follower’s characteristics, the organizational culture, and organizational environment. The complexity of the leadership process cannot be revealed without considering the dynamic interaction between the leader and the follower.(Robertson, 2012)

Leadership therefore depends on an interactional context, which includes how others view a leader’s performance and its effects, and this is influenced by the leadership expectations and preferences of the subordinate. Macaulay (2003) expressed the belief that there are five basic components of leadership:

- i. The ability to get your employees to follow you and your vision: the ability to inspire.
- ii. The ability to get things done;
- iii. The ability to build relationships, and to build consensus with co-workers and subordinates;
- iv. The ability to communicate clearly and concisely on a peer level to achieve true understanding;
and
- v. The ability to give up power and to truly empower subordinates in a give and take environment.

Leadership is so powerful that it gives pace and energy to the work force and empowers them. When the work force is empowered, they feel significant, and become part of a community. Work becomes

exciting, and people are pulled rather than pushed towards a goal. A successful leader must be able to think deeply, communicate and make things happen. A leader must have a clear sense of direction and inspire. He/she must be a team builder as well as a team leader to make effective utilization of human resources. Let me say that no one is a leader until his/her appointment is ratified in the hearts and minds of the subordinates. You can call yourself a manager, but you cannot actually call yourself a leader until that acceptance happens.

4. Planning

This is a predetermined step taken to achieve goals and objectives. Planning is used to assist in meeting the future expectation and create foresight to manage the limited resources and also to give a direction to a target. Gordon Beath (1978) says 'Planning is the mobilization of total resources of an organisation for the achievement of quantified objectives within a specific period of time. It is a process to determine the long-term objectives of an organisation as a whole and then generate plans designed to achieve these objectives bearing in mind the probable changes in the environment'.

The above was corroborated by Ernest Dale (1989) when he submitted "planning cannot be divorced from forecasting for what is feasible depends to a large extent on events in the external world..." He agreed that the actual planning stands with goal setting, but any number of contingencies in the environment will have a major effect on the extent to which various goals may be at all feasible.

In his own contribution, Penny Hackett (1985) says "manpower planning is a strategy for acquiring, utilizing, retaining and developing manpower by forecasting sound manpower policies". This is because the aim of manpower planning is to get the right people, that is, the right quality of people needed by the organization. This process involves the development of policies and programmes that will ensure that manpower supply meets the demands of the organization. It facilitates the supply of the right calibre of personnel needed to execute approved programmes and check wastage by ensuring that no excess hands are recruited than are absolutely necessary.

Practically, in manpower planning, data, personnel records and a host of other documents are very crucial. This is because they give us information about sex, age, job title, job location, date of employment, probable date of retirement, status of the staff etc. It also shows the current salary, promotion, professional and academic qualification and the employee's currently estimated potential.

In planning, according to Shehu Adamu (2008) there are three steps involved as below:

- i. The investigation of the environment which could be the analysis of the external and internal (positionaudit) opportunities and the influence such could have on the internal conduct of the organisation. For example, the possibility or an attempt to recruit a candidate from outside the organisation for the purpose of succession.
- ii. Forecasting, for instance, how could a required staff for a specific job be obtained and secured? Here opportunity may be given to promoting old employee or recruitment is made. The forecast comes into play in form of manpower requirements. The reconciliation of demand and supply forecast shows how many people have to be recruited and made effective utilization of human resources possible.
- iii. Utilization, here, the classification of and analysis of the total number of employees into grades, length of service, duration of overtime, to what extent actual manpower cost exceeds budget and manpower ratios, payroll etc. have much to reveal about manpower utilization at this stage. Here, "there may be a concentration of attention on the deployment of excellent materials and at the same time encourages the strangers".

5. Recruitment

This is situation for sorting “garbage in and garbage out”. Recruitment is the aftermath of the preparation of manpower action plans that is based on analysis of manpower requirements and a study of the implication of the information on productivity and costs.

According to Ndioko (1992), the approach to recruitment consists of:

- determining the job to be done;
- determining the man specification and grade;
- considering the source
- preparing and publicizing information;
- assessing and processing applications;
- conducting selection interviews for shortlisted candidates after determining the criteria for selection;
- notifying all candidates who were interviewed.

In his opinion, Dale (1989) says “recruitment may mean bringing in a few candidates for a single position or corraling hundreds or thousands for a major expansion”. In any corporate organisation, it is likely to be a continuing job since positions are constantly opening up as employees leave, retire or die.

Recruitment process includes confirming the vacancies, describing the job, producing a personnel specification, where to look and writing an advertisement. Penny Hackett (1985) says the “main aim of recruitment advertising is to produce, at minimum cost, a compact field of candidates, capable of doing the job and motivated to perform it to the required standard. That is effective utilization.

6. Selection

This is the next process after recruitment is capped by advertisement. Generally, the advertisement attracts a field of candidates but through the process of selection, it eliminates large sections of the population. Selection is the length at which the organisation goes to select the excellent materials through the process of rejecting and/or making the candidates competes against each other thereby making the exercise a very competitive one.

The main purpose of this as opined by Fatiregun (1992) “is to spot the attributes and qualities in the candidate expected to be employed for the success of the job”. This procedure as put forward by Penny Hackett (1985) contains five principal components, which are:

- application forms/letters;
- application references;
- medical checks;
- interviews; and
- tests.

All these require sorting the application forms and letters, checking the various references and inviting the selected candidates for an aptitude test. The selection interview comes to the stage. This selection has been described as a “conversation with a purpose” which enables the organisation to find out the “best first” for its job specification, it also enables the candidates to know more of the organisation so that he can move from the fence into it.

This procedure allows “the concerned organisation to discover a lot more about the candidates than the Physiognomists can ever gathered about the manners, habits etc of persons from their photographs”. The

conclusion of selection by interview leads us to the placement, which is the successful offer and assigning the man the jobs and the authority, which is the legitimized power to do the work that is nothing other than utilization of human resources.

7. Training

For any organisation to achieve its targeted objectives and to further stay afloat and be able to compete in the present day economic system and also be abreast with the technological innovations of today, such organisation must be prepared to develop its human resources to a hilt through the process of training. It is regarded as a means of improving productivity. It is viewed as the acquisition of a body of knowledge and skills that can be applied to work of a particular type.

The first form of training a new employee encounter is called orientation which is designed to give him a general view of what the organisation does, how it is organized, what benefits it offers and what its general rules and regulations are. This training can be elaborate. Some organizations show movies explaining their activities while others arrange lectures on their activities and practices. Others allow their new employees to spend specific period in each departments that constitute the organisation to enable them gain first-hand experience.

According to the view of the Udoji's Public Service Commission (1974) "training is a continuous process from recruitment (induction or orientation) to retirement".

In Management, Strayton (1985) says, "training activities occupy the most significant position of human resources development. Other endeavours and measures that are likely to enhance managerial competence as time goes on are also included. Management, in this case, embraces career planning for various managers, rotation promotion, motivation for growth, improvement of leadership and communication styles, the manager's self-education, use of consultants and other helping managers to grow professionally and progressively improve their performance".

Training for industry and commerce, which implies the acquisition and development of those knowledge, skills, techniques, attitudes and experiences, enable an effective contribution to the combined efforts of the team of which he is a member. Its objective may be to prepare the individual out of his present job satisfactorily or to prepare him for greater responsibility.

Human resources training and development involves efforts aimed at improving the quality as well as the quantity of employees. It is to prepare them for better and effective utilization. It helps to articulate the need and the scheme for providing the right number of employees that possess the right type of skills at the right places and at the right time.

It is also pertinent to mention that for a highly successful human resources development and utilization, trainees should be accorded the opportunity to put into practice their newly acquired knowledge in order to justify the enormous amount, time and energy plus other various resources, which the organisation has expended on their development.

8. Conclusion

The utilization of human resources is view and presented as a key factor to the attainment of corporate objectives that is nothing more than growth and sustainability. This generally come out of good leadership, pragmatic recruitment and selection processes coupled with a gradual and systematized continuous job related education, training and job assignment during work-life which in itself is a process of ensuring an improvement in the performance ability of the job and the man.

9. Recommendations

From the above, to achieve optimum utilization of human resources for organization growth and sustainability, one is constrained to recommend as follows:

- i. Employers should ensure that the employees are the right ones with right prerequisites required of the job. That is they have to be properly selected.
- ii. Employers should provide employees with good and appropriate equipment to work with. Lazy worker blames his tools still the tools have to be good to identify lazy worker.
- iii. Working conditions must be good. This includes office conditions, furniture and safety expected.
- iv. Wages are in commensuration with the job. Where wages are too low or not competitive, the human factor may not bring out its best.
- v. Jobs should be properly designed to ensure no overlapping of schedules. Having more than required number of staff on a schedule will not bring out the best in them.
- vi. There should be appropriate supervision. Supervision should not be too weak or too harsh but appropriate and achievement oriented.

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