Managing Interpersonal Behaviour at Workplace

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Indexing:
Abstract:

Managing people at workplace or outside workplace is very tricky. We come across two types of people at workplace, the employees and the customers. A boss must be capable of handling both of them in a tactful way ensuring employee satisfaction at one side and customer satisfaction on the other. It’s both employees and customers who are going to add to the profits of the company in long run and short run. We all know that handling the diverse workforce and ever demanding customers are the biggest challenge faced by any organisation in today’s competitive world. An attempt has been made in this paper to throw some light on the strategies to be adopted by the HR manager to manage the swings in the mood of its employees.

Managing human resource is a herculean task for all managers. Every organisation has diverse workforce and managing such varied group is quite a challenging task. All employees are not equally hardworking, self-motivated and committed. A boss needs to be a good leader and manager, as employees are the people who sweat to meet the set targets. The managers have to mould the behaviour of its employees in a desired way. The following are the most challenging personalities encountered by Orloff, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at UCLA, and author of "The Ecstasy of Surrender" in her study conducted on various types of people in different work environments and the effective ways in which they can be successfully managed:

1. Narcissists

Narcissists have an inflated sense of their own importance and crave constant attention and praise. "They're self-absorbed and lack the capacity for empathy," she adds. "You have to realize that this person won't care what other people are feeling, which is a huge drawback in the workplace."

Telling someone how their behaviour is making others feel, or working to the detriment of the company--an effective approach with many employees--won't work at all when you're dealing with a narcissist. Narcissists are also extremely sensitive to criticism of any kind and liable to react badly, she says. "If you want to keep them on and want them to be productive, you have to frame things in terms of how it might serve them". "That's the only thing they'll respond to."
2. Passive-Aggressive Types

"They will promise to help you with a project but then they don't. Or they'll show up 15 minutes late". "Passive-aggressiveness is a form of anger, but not an outright form." You may be tempted to try and get to the bottom of what's making them angry and try to resolve the problem. Don't go there. "It's a character disorder. You have to dig very deep".

Another thing to watch out for is your own reaction to passive-aggressive people. "Passive-aggressive people will leave you dangling. They can make you feel you're not worthwhile because they don't show up for you in a consistent way. They can get to you without you knowing it."

Not surprisingly, Orloff recommends placing passive-aggressive employees in jobs where there are very specific guidelines and expectations laid out for them. In more open-ended roles, "They'll drive everyone crazy."

3. Gossips

Every workplace will have a certain amount of gossiping, but if one of your employees enjoys reporting bad news about you, others in your company, or even the competition, that's destructive behaviour and you need to do something about it.

The first step toward dealing with a gossip is not to get sucked in yourself. Don't participate in gossiping which can be hard to resist, depending on the subject of the conversation. Even more important, don't give in to the natural human desire to know exactly what's being said about you, or to try to please everyone so they'll only have good things to say.

Beyond that, it's a good idea to call the gossip on his or her behaviour, and explain that it's not helpful for your workplace. "Bringing their attention to it will curtail it a bit". "It's good to do because if you don't, it will go unchecked." Beyond that, she advises talking about gossip and its destructive effect to the company in general. "The workplace is a breeding ground for gossip," she says. "If you address it honestly and explain why it's not good for your company, you give employees permission to tell people that they don't want to participate in gossip."
On the plus side, gossips often have good people skills. "They like talking, so if you give them a positive place where they can talk, you can channel their abilities for the good". "Maybe sales is a good role."

4. Anger Addicts

Some people deal with workplace tensions by accusing their co-workers of misdeeds, yelling at others, and generally giving their angry feelings free rein. These are some of the most challenging employees you'll have to deal with.

Whatever you do, don't let them get away with it. "This situation needs an intervention". "That's unacceptable behaviour. They have to be given very strong limits and boundaries. It will destroy a workplace if people are having tantrums."

As the boss, you'll either have to take anger addicts aside, or get someone in Human Resources to do so. Either way, they need to hear that their expressions of anger are inappropriate. Offer them the opportunity to go for counselling. And face the fact that anger addicts may not have a future at your company since repeated rages can potentially drag your whole organization down.

5. Guilt Trippers

Guilt trippers lay it on thick. If you gave a plum assignment or perk to someone else, or otherwise slighted them or made their work more difficult, they'll let you know just how much of a grievance they have. They may lay the same guilt trip on co-workers who they feel have slighted them as well.

With guilt trippers, Orloff advises educating them on how to communicate better. "A guilt tripper doesn't know anything about communication," she says. "Using the word I--'I feel this way,' rather than 'You did this to me.' Just an education about that might be a help." You can also talk to them about the effect their comments are having, since guilt trippers often don't realize how they're affecting others.

What's the best role for a guilt tripper? "Not with people". "Have them work on independent projects."
What can’t work at Workplace?

**Rudeness is not going to work:** It's important to remember that we all have off days and times in our life when things are trickier, and this may on occasion lead us to be less than lovely to people at work. So patience and some time may be all that is needed for the individual to get themselves through a sticky patch.

**Be upfront with others:** Some people are not very self-aware so maybe you just need to tell them constructively what the problem is or what you need from them.

**Manage your expectations:** It might be a customer making unreasonable demands, your colleague expecting emails to be answered at midnight or your boss continually dumping urgent work on your desk just as you are heading for the exit. Choose a quiet moment when you can talk to them about their expectations and agree on how you can best work together, including what you can and can't do, realistic timeframes and, if needed, a system for dealing with urgent issues. Having this conversation ahead of time enables a far more rational discussion about what's needed, rather than one in the heat of a last minute panic.

**Be tolerant of different approaches:** Every team needs a mix of different personalities and approaches – the pessimist who will point out the flaw in the plan, the ideas person who challenges the status quo, the "do-er" who is impatient with discussion and wants to get things happening. So maybe your nemesis at work is simply someone whose approach is different from yours. Your styles may clash but that doesn't mean to say they are dysfunctional – in fact it might be just what the team needs.

**Observe them closely.** How does their approach compare with yours? Are they a detailed person, glass half full or empty, task orientated or relationship focused? Then adjust your style when you communicate with them. For example, if they tend to be a nit-picking pessimist, then they may be more receptive to your ideas if you focus on which might be the least worst of possible scenarios and supply lots of detail. Read up on neuro-linguistic programming to find out how to build rapport and influence the thinking of individuals with very different thinking styles.

**Handle aggression assertively:** If someone is being highly aggressive with you, either verbally or physically, then regardless of who they are it's OK to walk away or say
that you are going to put the phone down – and that you will return when they have calmed down. No one at work has the right to compromise your sense of personal safety and wellbeing through engendering physical or psychological fear.

Some of the people at workplaces are not easy to manage as revealed in another study by Forbes. The study concluded with some tips for managing people who are hard to manage.

1. **Accept that management is an inherently complex and difficult job** – Don’t fight it. Don’t waste time and valuable mental energy wishing it weren’t so. Recognize that frustrations and difficult situations go with the territory of management. That’s why you’re being compensated more than if you weren’t in management. Approach delicate employee “issues” positively, like an intriguing puzzle to solve.

2. **Don’t avoid or bulldoze conflict, but deal with it directly and evenhandedly** – Conflict is the currency of management. If you abhor conflict, management likely isn’t the right job for you. The best managers aren’t “conflict avoiders,” but neither do they pull rank and roll right over others when conflicts occur. Remember, you’re going to have to continue work with these same people in the future. Best to look for fair constructive resolutions, not simply “getting your way.”

3. **Try to see things through the eyes of others** – Easier said than done, I know. But there may be reasons why a certain person is hard to manage. Has he or she always been this way, or may new external factors be contributing? Is there anything in your own management style (hard to imagine, I know!) that could be triggering an oppositional response? There were times, for example, I was unnecessarily micromanaging people and was completely unaware I was doing it… until it was (entirely accurately) pointed out to me. If you can look at a problematic situation holistically and gain insights into why someone is acting the way he or she is, that can lead you to a constructive solution.

4. **Get help when you need to** – This is an easy step, but often neglected. If you work in an organization of any size, help is everywhere. Get perspective on a difficult employee from someone whose judgment you trust. This could be anyone: a Human Resources contact, a mentor, your own manager, a colleague. During my years in management I went to all of these people at different times to seek opinions when
employee issues arose. It isn’t a sign of weakness. It’s sensible judgment. I found Human Resources especially helpful and made a point of establishing close working relationships with individuals – regardless of rank – who I felt were especially capable. I never for a moment regretted it.

Apart from the above tips if a company is successfully able to meet the employees’ expectations from the company, it can manage its employees effectively and efficiently:

In the present working environment employees leave their job mainly

- For better career development opportunity
- For higher perks
- Dissatisfaction at the present working conditions or organization’s environment
- Unhealthy work culture
- For the sake of change
- For a higher job profile
- To avoid heavy workload and stressful environment
- To add new experience or to learn something new (want a change in job profile)
- To find a challenging job
- Proximity to home

A good employer must know how to attract and retain its employees. Retention involves five major things:

- Compensation
- Healthy Environment
- Relationship
- Opportunity to grow and excel
- Support

In relation to above factors it can be said that a well planned strategy could really help the organizations in retaining their employees and must include the following factors:
1. Fair pay structure
2. Healthy work atmosphere
3. Performance based incentives
4. Proper training and development programmes for skills enhancements.
5. Use workforce skills and abilities in order to make use of environmental opportunities and counterbalance the threats
7. Indulge in continuous quality improvement through Total Quality Management and HR contributions like training, development, counseling, etc.
8. Utilize people with distinctive capabilities to create unsurpassed competence in an area, e.g. Xerox in photocopiers, 3M in adhesives, Telco in trucks etc.
9. Decentralize operations and rely on self-managed teams to deliver goods in difficult times.
10. Recognize performance appropriately and consistently:
    Reward outstanding performance (e.g., with promotions and opportunities)
    Do not tolerate sustained poor performance — coach & train or remove!
11. Involve employees in plans and decisions, especially those that affect them.
    Solicit their ideas and opinions. Encourage initiative.
12. Create opportunities for employees to learn & grow. Link the goals of the organization with the goals of each individual in it.
13. Actively listen to employees concerns — both work related and personal.
14. Share information promptly, openly and clearly. Tell the truth … with compassion.
15. Celebrate successes and milestones reached — organizational and personal.
    Create an organizational culture that is open, trusting and fun.

The HR manager should treat people as resources, reward them equitably, and integrate their aspirations with corporate goals through suitable HR policies.

Conclusion:
Today managers believe in working together since working together does not only bring out the best in all of us as a team but also brings out the best in each one of us. Retaining a positive and motivated staff is vital to an organization's success.

The success of any organization depends on employees. Keeping in mind the need of employees, motivation can be planned.

An organization’s success increasingly depends on the knowledge, skills and abilities of employees, particularly as they help establish a set of core competencies that distinguish an organization from its competitors.

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