Chapter 18
Communication and Job Satisfaction

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ABSTRACT

In a business organization, communication is imperative for employers to express their thoughts, ideas, policies, and goals to their employees. Different organizational leaders or managers have various communication styles. Effective communication between employers and employees would not only boost employees' morale and job performance, but also demonstrate employers' successful leadership. Are communication and job satisfaction related? How should employers communicate so that their employees have higher job satisfaction, better engagement, lower turnover, and stronger long-term commitment? The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between communication and employees' job satisfaction. This chapter attempts to provide business executives, company leaders, and scholar-practitioners suggestions with regard to developing effective communication strategies for better company management.

INTRODUCTION

Employers need to communicate with their employees to reach their goals. Clear communication is critical for leadership success. Froschheiser (2015) indicated that clear communication is the golden thread tying six basic functions (i.e., leading, planning, organizing, staffing, controlling, and communicating) of the management. Communication is essential, because it can create positive changes within an organization. As Maxwell (2001) expressed,

Only with good communication can a team succeed – it doesn't matter whether that team is a family, a company, a ministry, or a ball club. Effective teams have teammates who are constantly talking to one another. Communication increases commitment and connection, they in turn fuel action (p. 197).

Communication is important for both employers and employees in a company. An "open, honest, and regular communication is essential to keeping employees motivated and productive" (DuFrene & Lehman 2014, p. 443). A timely communication from the employers may reduce miscommunication and employees' job stress.

Researchers have defined six leadership styles that create harmony and boost performance: visionary, coaching, affiliative, democratic, pacesetting, and commanding (Coleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Goleman, 2002). Leadership styles mediate relations between communication styles and leadership outcomes (De Vries, Bakker-Pieper, & Oostenveld, 2010). Garg and Jain (2013) outlined four levels of work efficiency related to people's skills. Low-relationship/low-task managers were considered unattached and would often delegate authority; low-relationship/high-task managers were viewed as authoritarian with little regard for suggestions from others; high-relationship/low-task managers were considered ineffective and would have difficulty maintaining order; high-relationship/high-task managers were considered as the most efficient (Garg & Jain, 2013). It is obvious that work efficiency is associated with leadership and communication styles.

What is the impact of effective communication in an organization? Effective communication is "intentional, goal-oriented and coherent with an organization's strategy" (Garcia, 2012, p. 42). Effective communication is rational, logical, and persuasive, which benefits industrial relations, organizational change, and relaxation (Choudhardy & Rathore, 2013). Effective communication contributes to higher employee satisfaction and engagement, lower turnover, and stronger long-term commitment (DuFrene & Lehman, 2014). Effective leaders need to know how to communicate with all stakeholders of an organization including managers, employees, investors, and customers (Anthony, 2015).

The problem is that not all managers are effective communicators. Communication involves more than leadership styles; emotional intelligence, attitudes, methods of expression, and strategies used all matter. What is the relationship between employers' communication styles and employees' job satisfaction? What strategies best facilitate communications between employers and employees? How do employers communicate to their employees so they can improve company management and reach their goals? The purpose of this chapter is to explore the relationship between communication and employees' job satisfaction as well as to provide business executives, company leaders, and scholar-practitioners recommendations on effective communication strategies for better organizational management.

BACKGROUND

The trend for employees' job satisfaction has fluctuated for the past 10 years, starting from 77% in 2005, 86% in 2009, 81% in 2012 and 2013, and 88% in 2015 (SHRM, 2016). Based on SHRM (2016), the top 12 aspects or contributors to employee job satisfaction included the following: (1) respectful treatment of all employees at all levels (67%); (2) overall compensation/pay (63%); (3) overall benefits (60%); (4) job security (58%), (5) trust between employees and senior management (55%) and opportunities to use skills and abilities at work (55%); (6) the organization's financial stability as well as the relationship with immediate supervisors (53%); (7) a feeling safety in the work environment (e.g., physical safety, taking measures to prevent violence in the workplace, acts of terrorism) (50%); (8) immediate supervisor's showing respect for the ideas of others (50%); (9) the work itself (whether the work is interesting, challenging, exciting) (48%); management's recognition of employee job performance (48%), communication between employees and senior management (48%); (10) career advancement opportunities within the

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