TEAMWORK   09 MAY 2013

Lesson Description

In this lesson, we:

- Examine types of teams and characteristics of successful teams.
- Investigate and discuss alternative methods of improving the well-being of employees.
- Briefly examine business careers.
- Examine general and exam questions

Key Concepts

Teamwork

- A team is a group of people who each contribute their individual knowledge and skills together to complete a given task.
- In modern day businesses, teams have become an integral part of the daily operations.
- Larger businesses realise the importance of team work and even spend time and money on team building exercises.

Characteristics of Successful Teams

- They should have clearly defined and realistic goals and objectives
- All team members must have a common desire to accomplish their goal
- Members should show respect for the knowledge and skills of other members.
- There should be good communication between team members.
- Team members should support each other.
- Team members must learn to respect and trust each other.
- The team leader (manager / foreman) must motivate their team to reach the set objectives.
- Team members should be committed to the team and to good performance

Reasons for the Use of Teams

- **Synergy** - The combined efforts of team members are much more than the sum of each member's individual effort.
- **Creativity** - Teams are capable of generating more creative solutions to problems through processes such as brainstorming, because they build on one another's ideas.
- **Quality** - Team members are committed to performing to the best of their ability because team members are usually assessed individually after the task has been completed. This inspires team members to do well, and impacts favourably on the quality of work delivered by team members.
- **Productivity** - Teams that work together will be able to complete tasks in the shortest possible time, because each team member can focus on his/her strengths.
- **Motivation** - Team members help to keep one another motivated.
- **Involvement** - Teamwork increases employee involvement.

Types of Teams

- **Work teams** – These teams are also known as natural teams. Employees are permanent teams who work in the same department.
- **Project teams** – These teams are also known as problem-solving or task teams. They are temporary teams and their goal is to solve a particular problem or work on a certain project.
- **Cross functional teams** – These teams are also known as process or focus teams. They can be permanent or temporary depending on the task at hand. Cross functional teams are often used to implement change in a business enterprise.
- **Problem solving work teams** – These teams include employees from the same department, who meet on a regular basis. They deal mainly with internal problems.
- **Self managed work teams** – These teams make and implement decisions and take responsibility for their decisions.
- **Cross functional work teams** – These are teams that work on complex problems. They include employees on the same hierarchical level, but often from different departments.
- **Virtual teams -** Team members are in different locations. They communicate via internet.

Strategies to Improve the Well-being of Employees

Coaching and Mentoring

- Mentors provide guidance and advice to inexperienced employees.
- They guide the employee as to how to do the particular work.

Performance Appraisal

- Performance appraisal involves assessments of how well an employee has performed his/her job.
- Employees will work harder if they know that they will be held accountable for their performances.

Motivation

- Motivation of employees is extremely important to the well-being of employees
- Employees are either motivated by internal factors (job satisfaction, achievement of personal goals), or external factors (money or other tangible rewards).
- Rewards and incentives are usually offered as motivational instruments to employees when particular predetermined targets are reached.
- Rewards and incentives (e.g. bonus/increase/holiday) can be used effectively to improve employee performance.

Stress Reduction

- Our lifestyles have resulted in a build-up of stress which can negatively influence our performance. .
- Stress influences both our ability to make rational decisions and our health.
- More enterprises are starting to provide facilities where employees can de-stress and relax.

Staff Development Programmes/Training Programmes

- Staff development programmes are driven by the needs of the enterprise.
- Employees become better performers when empowered.
- Staff development programmes aim to improve general skills of employees, e.g. communication skills, management skills or problem-solving skills.
- Training programmes aim at providing employees with knowledge, skills and competencies to enable them to do their jobs.

Counselling

- Employees can meet with counsellors to determine where their skills, knowledge and competencies can be best put to use in the business enterprise.
- This will give employees a goal to work towards.

Rehabilitation

- Business enterprises are not compelled to rehabilitate employees e.g. where alcohol or drug abuse is applicable, but employers are compelled to consider offering rehabilitation to employees who need help.
- By rehabilitating an employee the business enterprises retains the skills, knowledge, competencies and loyalty of the employee.
- If an employee agrees to rehabilitation, it is done under the terms and conditions of the employer.

Team Building

- Team building is aimed at improving a team's performance.
- Reasons for team building include improving productivity, getting to know your colleagues and improving communication skills.
- Hiring a team building consultant is usually very expensive and results are often only short term.

How Do I Choose a Career?

- The first step in developing your career is to know yourself.
- Many factors can impact on your life and career choices.
- Your immediate surroundings can also influence your life and career choices.
- Socio-economic conditions such as poverty, lack of transport, or lack of educational institutions in an area can create obstacles for learners who want to pursue certain career opportunities.
- Most people therefore choose their careers based on their self-image, socioeconomic background, desired income, beliefs, values, interests and abilities.

Learnerships/Apprenticeships

Learnership

- A learnership is a training system that allows learners to gain skills in the workplace.
- Learners can gain on-the-job training and off the- job training. In other words, you work and study at the same time and gain a qualification at the end of the period.
- Learnerships are established through SETAs, and the qualification received must be registered with SAQA.

Apprenticeship

- An apprenticeship is where you also study part time, but most of your training is done on the job.
- You receive on-the-job training with a mentor or guide.
- A mentor is a qualified, professional person who agrees to assist in your training and helps you achieve success.
- Jobs which require an apprenticeship include electrician, plumber, welder, technician, mechanic, hairdresser, etc.

Issues to Consider before Choosing a Career

- **Financial implications** – How much will I earn from my chosen career?
- **Security** – will I be able to find a job for my chosen career, and how easily am I replaceable?
- **Risk factors** – What risks are attached to the career? E.g. Medical profession and HIV/AIDS; the police force and losing your life.
- **Morals/Values/Ethics** – Honesty; Bribery; Abuse of work time; etc.
- **Religion** – Will I be prepared to do work which might be against my religious beliefs?
- **Family ties** – How will my chosen career impact on my family life.
- **Relocation** – Will my chosen career mean locating to another area/ city / country?
- **Interests/Values/Abilities**
- **Research** possible careers and study fields at tertiary institutions.
- **Communicate** with persons already in the career that you want to follow.
- **Job opportunities** out there
- **Career guidance/counselling**.
- **Networking** with people already in this career.

Career Pathing

- A career path should be planned from the time a person decides on a particular career.
- It should provide a road map of how to get to an ultimate position.
- It would involve progression within a particular career.
- Career pathing involves employees taking on new roles and responsibilities by accepting opportunities to move from a current position to another position, and receiving an increase in compensation to match the position, or it could be to gain wider experience.
- This move can be within a particular organisation or it could be moving to another organisation.

- Each career path is unique and consists of the following: study, training, skills development and employment.

Types of Career Paths

- **Horizontal** (moving to a position on the same level)so as to gain experience
- **Vertical** (moving to a position on a higher level) which is also known as climbing the corporate ladder.

Questions

Question 1

(Adapted from Various Sources)

Read the case study and answer the questions that follow:

FROM CLEANER TO BANK MANAGER

Mariam Mareke matriculated in 1996. Her strong subjects at school were accounting and business studies. Owing to financial constraints, she could not study further and was forced to accept a job as a cleaner in a clothing factory based in Cape Town. Mariam started working in January 1997 and earned a time-related wage of R3 per hour. Her frustration soon led to her seeking employment elsewhere. In 1998 she found a job as a cleaner in a local bank, and this is where doors opened for her. Very soon her manager recognised her potential, and through the relevant SETA, she improved her skills and qualifications. By March 2000 she was promoted to the position of a teller. In 2003 she became a bank consultant, and today Mariam is a branch manager of a bank.

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a.) From the case study, identify the reason for Mariam becoming a cleaner after matriculating.   (2)

b.) Give a possible reason as to Mariam's frustration in her first job.   (2)

c.) Explain what is meant by a time-related wage.   (2)

d.) Explain what you understand by vertical career pathing and horizontal career pathing.
Utilise examples from the case study to justify your explanations.   (8)

e.) List any FIVE considerations that Mariam should have looked at for a career choice after she matriculated.   (10)

f.) Give two reasons for people moving positions in their work situation.   (4)

g.) Discuss any THREE aspects of career pathing.   (6)

h.) Explain any THREE paths to follow when considering business careers.   (6)

Question 2

(Adapted from Various Sources)

Give a brief explanation on the following types of teams:

a.) Work teams (2)
b.) Project teams (2)
c.) Cross functional teams (2)
d.) Problem solving work teams (2)
e.) Virtual teams (2)

Question 3

(Adapted from DoE Nov. 2009)

a.) Describe FIVE characteristics of a successful team in the workplace. (10)
b.) Discuss any FIVE advantages for businesses who utilise team-work in their daily operations. (10)

Links

http://www.mindset.co.za/resources/0000070741/0000165525/0000169544/BS%20Gr%2012%20Session%2016%20LN%20(Careers%20&%20Teams)%202011.pdf