FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

1st SEMESTER 2019

ASSIGNMENT 1

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR
OSB611S
ASSIGNMENT 1 FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER

General remarks:

Most of you scored good marks on your first assignment. However, most of you failed to adhere to the structural aspects of an academic assignment. You did not have introduction, conclusion, in-text citations and references. I am reminding you that plagiarism is a serious offence and should always be avoided. Take note of the fact that I will deduct marks next time for this error.

I wish you good luck for the next test and assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 1 MEMO

QUESTION 1 (CASE STUDY) – 22 MARKS

THANKS FOR NOTHING

Though it may seem fairly obvious that receiving praise and recognition from one’s company is a motivating experience, sadly many companies are failing miserably when it comes to saying “thanks” to their employees. According to Curt Coffman, global practice leader at Gallup, 71 percent of Namibian workers are “disengaged,” essentially meaning that they could care less about their organisation. Coffman
states, “We’re operating at one-quarter of the capacity in terms of managing human capital. It’s alarming.” Employee recognition programs, which became more popular as the Namibian economy shifted from industrial to knowledge-based, can be an effective way to motivate employees and make them feel valued. In many cases, however, recognition programs are doing “more harm than good” according to Coffman.

Take Rachel, a 50-year-old former employee of a dot-com in Windhoek. Her company proudly instituted a rewards program designed to motivate employees. What were the rewards for a job well-done? Employees would receive a badge which read “U Done Good” and, each year, would receive a T-shirt as a means of annual recognition. Once an employee received 10 “U Done Good” badges, he or she could trade them in for something bigger and better—a paperweight. Rachel states that she would have preferred a raise. “It was patronizing. There wasn’t any deep thought involved in any of this.” To make matters worse, she says, the badges were handed out arbitrarily and were not tied to performance. And what about those T-shirts? Rachel states that the company instilled a strict dress code, so employees couldn’t even wear the shirts if they wanted to. Needless to say, the employee recognition program seemed like an empty gesture rather than a motivator.

Even programs that provide employees with more expensive rewards can backfire, especially if the rewards are given insincerely. Eric Lange, an employee of a trucking company, recalls the time when one of the company’s vice presidents achieved a major financial goal for the company. The vice president, who worked in an office next to Lange, received a Cadillac Seville as his company car and a new Rolex wristwatch that cost the company $10,000. Both were lavish gifts, but the way they were distributed left a sour taste in the vice president’s mouth. He entered his office to find the Rolex in a cheap cardboard box sitting on his desk, along with a brief letter explaining that he would be receiving a 1099 tax form in order to pay taxes on the watch. Lange states of the vice president, “He came into my office, which was right next door, and said, ‘Can you believe this?’” A mere 2 months later, the vice president pawned the watch. Lange explains, “It had absolutely no meaning for him.”

Such experiences resonate with employees who may find more value in a sincere pat on the back than gifts from management that either are meaningless or aren’t conveyed with respect or sincerity. However,
sincere pats on the back may be hard to come by. Gallup’s poll found that 61 percent of employees stated that they haven’t received a sincere “thank you” from management in the past year. Findings such as these are troubling, as verbal rewards are not only inexpensive for companies to hand out but also are quick and easy to distribute. Of course, verbal rewards do need to be paired sometimes with tangible benefits that employees value—after all, money talks. In addition, when praising employees for a job well-done, managers need to ensure that the praise is given in conjunction with the specific accomplishment. In this way, employees may not only feel valued by their organization but will also know what actions to take to be rewarded in the future.

Questions

1. If praising employees for doing a good job seems to be a fairly easy and obvious motivational tool, why do you think companies and managers don’t often do it? (4)
   - Companies do set aside time for this
   - They regard it as not needed. They sometimes have the argument that employees are getting paid and therefore there is no need to thank them separately
   - They did not budget for it
   - Any other relevant answer

2. As a manager, what steps would you take to motivate your employees after observing them perform well? (6)
   - Recognition plans
   - Monetary rewards
   - Non-monetary rewards
   - Any other relevant suggestion

3. Are there any downsides to giving employees too much verbal praise? What might these downsides be and how could you alleviate them as a manager? (6)
Yes. It may become routine and sometimes be taken lightly. It is better to look at serious good performers and then reward them.

4. As a manager, how would you ensure that recognition given to employees is distributed fairly and justly? (4)
   Through a proper performance management system. Any other relevant suggestion will be considered.

5. What would be your personal choice of organisational reward? Motivate your answer. (2)
   Bonuses; Employee stock ownership plans etc

STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

1.1 Discuss and provide relevant examples of the different stages in the model of group development. (10)
   - Forming
   - Storming
   - Norming
   - Performing
   - Adjourning
   Students should have named, discussed and provided relevant examples

1.2 Discuss the OB applications of Emotions and Moods. Provide relevant examples (14)
   - Selection
   - Decision-making
   - Motivation
   - Customer service
   - Leadership
   - Interpersonal conflict
Deviant workplace behavior
Students should have explained the above and provided relevant examples

1.3 Explain the four employee responses to job dissatisfaction (4)

Exit
Voice
Loyalty
Neglect
Students were asked to name and describe these responses.

END OF FEEDBACK TUTORIAL LETTER