

Risk Of Loss Of Productivity In Workplaces

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Abstract: In every organization there exist some unavoidable cost when running any business. However, these costs can be minimized by managing the factors that contribute to increased business cost and finding ways to prevent risks before they occur. This paper examines one of these factors which is loss of productivity in the workplace. The paper examines the risks of loss of productivity, what causes these risks and in what ways will the business be affected by them. This paper also present the various ways a business can manage the risks by providing ways on how the business can prepare for any incidents with regards to the risks. And because it's impossible to manage anything that you can't measure, ways in which productivity can be measured have been addressed. Finally, the paper addresses ways in which the business can improve its' workplace productivity to achieve the business goals and ensure continuity of the business.

Index Terms: Loss of productivity, Low productivity impacts, managing loss of productivity, Raising productivity, Risk assessment, Scrum framework.

1 INTRODUCTION

Most organizations place a high value on productivity emphasizing the need to sustain it to ensure continuity of the business. However, sustaining productivity require the organization to maintain a conducive working environment for its employees. Several factors may lead to a decline in productivity. These factors negatively impact workplace productivity in such a way that affected units exhibits reduced performance and an overall reduction in output. These risks which might lead to loss of productivity include but not limited to technological factors, poor relationships between managers and employees, poor performance management, outdated systems, personal problems, fear of failure, poor communication, organization safety and health issues, and procrastination. They are not associated with the employees alone, but also to the workplace environment and the management. Low productivity poses a serious problem within an organization which force an organization to adapt creative ways to deal with problems that result from the productivity loss. To mitigate these risks, the business need to have strong operation foundations as a way of ensuring manageable growth and continuity.

2. FACTORS MAY LEAD TO LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY

I) TECHNOLOGY

Although technology boost production there are other ways in which it affects it in a negative manner. Smartphones, social media, internet, and other entertainment sites are among technological factors that lead to low productivity in the workplace. Most employees agree that the biggest distraction come from the use of smartphones. These smartphones have internet connectivity which enable employees to access social media and other sites. The downside is that employees spend most of their times on the internet or playing games with their smartphones rather than utilizing the time to engage in productive organization activities. This leads to reduced input in terms of manpower and efforts required in production which translates to diminished productivity.

II) ORGANIZATION SAFETY AND HEALTH

Employees' capacity to perform reduces if the workplace environment is unsafe and unhealthy. A workplace environment quality plays a huge role in workers motivation and their performance. The organization risks productivity loss in unhealthy environment due to employee illnesses which causes absenteeism of important workers. Furthermore if

workers are injured, their productivity diminishes if they are allowed to continue working. Health issues increases cost to the employer because employee who are exempted from labor due to illnesses are still paid which is an extra additional cost to the employer. Herzberg recognized working condition as a major demotivation factor for employees. In his theory he identified that unhealthy and unsafe working conditions leads to dissatisfaction among employees causing a low morale in the workplace (Herzberg, 1965). If the environment was un conducive trying to motivate the employee to work harder through any means like rewards, would not necessarily improve their productivity.

III) POOR MANAGEMENT

Poor or ineffective management affects the organization productivity in many ways. The management is responsible for creating company strategies and it is the duty of the manger to implement the best ways to achieve the business objectives. The inefficiencies seen in low productivity could be due to the managers' failure to employ effective ways to perform tasks in the most efficient manner. Poor management extends to how managers relate to their employees, the mode of communication and most of all the managers confidence. Poor communication lowers employee's morale while the mode of communication could shape the managers relationship type with the employees. Decreased morale can reach to a point where the employees no longer care about anything concerning the company and they may perform duties as they wish.

IV) INADEQUATE RESOURCES

Resources may be inadequate for production or to expand the business. There could be shortage of labour or professional personnel's to work in specific divisions in the firm. This could lead to low productivity due to underutilized opportunities. Also, employees may leave without any explanation which could lead to a void in the firm. The company needs to act first to fill such voids to ensure that the available resources are utilized. A low input in terms of labour supply, could eventually lead to low outputs of production units.

V) WORKPLACE STRESS

Workers with high stress levels aren't as productive as they should be and show a characteristic absenteeism levels. Stress results from excessive work pressures in the workplace. This could be inadequate staffing where employees are required to carry out excessive tasks. According to Osterman, occupational stress causes may be

viewed from three dimensions, work, life situations and self (Osterman, 1994). Stress for factory workers can be directly linked to the work situation like dealing with unsafe or heavy machinery office workers will most likely be affected by stress linked to interpersonal workplace relations. Other stress causes could be unclear supervisions, fear of causing conflicts and tensions between workers. Workers under stress make more errors causing reduced efficiency in production.

3. IMPACTS OF LOW PRODUCTIVITY RISKS

Low productivity risks leads to low production due to low morale among company employees. The employees who fail to perform as required are an increased liability to the company because the company can work better without them. An increase in output even after manpower reduce shows that a company doesn't need the employee and that some employees were unproductive. Sick employees due to unhealthy or unsafe working conditions increase the cost to the company, the reason being that the organization will have to take care of the employees even if they are absent from duty. Technologies such as smartphones can cause negative effects on the employees physic. Some employees use their mobile phones for long hours even when they should be resting late at night which makes them physically unfit to work for long hours during the day. These technologies lead to misuse of company resources by the employees leading to underutilization for the right purpose. The organization with low output due to these risk, lack a competitive edge over their competitors. This could mean to loss of markets share and reduced profits.

4. STRATEGIES TO MANAGE LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY

*IMPLEMENTING SCRUM FRAMEWORK TO MEASURE PRODUCTIVITY

It should be a daily routine for an employee to give explanations of what they have achieved throughout the day and set targets to achieve in the next duty. It is basically asking employees to rate how productive they are. This data may be verified against the assigned duties to the employee and personal goals, and also data collected daily to evaluate employee performance. The organization should make a plan or strategies should be created to define objectives and individual roles (Berger2001). . This is a chance to set goals for every employee which ensures that personal goals correlate with those of the company. Meetings should be held where teams are involved to discuss the things have been done in the right way and the needs that need improvement. The manager can make brief meetings with individuals to discuss their performances against the organization goals and what they need to correct. The average rate for each employee performance collected in each section becomes the final rate when the appraisal ends. This enables worker to receive quick feedback from the employer. This measurement method depends on a step by step evaluation within stages to determine the employees' efficiency in the workplace and see how effectively they enact their allocated responsibility. The employee should clearly communicate and present the work completed and the plans for the next duty. He should highlight any distractions when working. The appraiser who access the employee should be transparent in the appraisal process and conduct meetings with the employees and fill data in

individuals employee data chart. The senior manager assumes the job of a reviewer. By reviewing the employee performances he can identify area of weaknesses and also address the conflicts that arise.

5. Ways to raise productivity for business continuity

i) Make every employee accountable

The employees must be reminded that they are accountable for all tasks assigned to them. This can be done through clear communications and creating awareness of what is expected of them. They should be asked if everything is clear as a way to empower them to be fully responsible for the part they play and not shift the blame to colleagues or the supervisor.

ii) Set realistic targets

It is important to set targets that an employee can achieve. Employees who feel that they are overloaded with what they are expected to accomplish may experience stress which would slow or reduce their ability to produce the best results. On the other hand, achievable goals motivate employees and eliminates the probability of work stress. Some challenges may make the employee feel motivated to accomplish a task, but if challenges persist for a long time, they may become a source of stress for workers.

iii) Remunerations

Remunerations are meant to reward employees in recognition of their excellent performance. Genuine words may mean more that salary rewards in recognition of an employee's effort. However, the employer need to consider the level of the employee before choosing the type of reward for them. The rewards should be given on fairness else the remuneration process loose its meaning. A manger should never criticize an employee alone, he should as well compliment the employee for the good jobs has done. If the employees feels undervalued he/she might leave in search of an employer who would recognize their skills.

iv) Training

It is important to train employees in their area of work to minimize errors and to ensure that these employees have the required skills. Training is critical to a firm that wants to address the employees' weakness in applying machinery, to improve employee performance and ensure that workers are consistent in their duty performance. Training employees result to increased productivity mainly because the employees attain all the knowledge and acquire skills necessary for day to day operations. It also saves the organization the cost of recruiting new employees and saves the company time for other productive activities.

v) Monitoring

Closely monitoring employee's activities can improve productivity by restricting them from accessing sites that waste productive time. In the case of social media and the internet, the employer can use monitoring applications to view what the employee has been doing during work time. The supervisor can also pay close attention on how many time an employee asks for sick leave.

6. CONCLUSION

The best strategy for a business to adopt is to prevent risks before they occur. This can be done by providing a conducive working environment to minimize the risks of losing productivity. The management should also be concerned with the welfare of the employees in order to make good judgement pertaining to their productivity in the workplace. In this case a manager needs to maintain the best relationship with his or her employees. Through this he will be able to notice matters affecting productivity in the workplace and address them with the needed urgency.

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