

BUILDING COMMITTED WORKFORCE THROUGH GOOD EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AS A STRATEGY FOR RE-INVIGORATING THE SERVICE SECTOR IN NIGERIA

Igbojekwe Poly A.

Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria.

Ugo-Okoro Chigozie

Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Imo State University, Owerri
E-mail: godmanwin@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

We live in times of economic downturn when our industrial prospect is increasingly depending on managing ourselves, building and maintaining relationships. In such times, service organizations are looking for ways to excel in service and overall performance. A service organization can differentiate itself by offering superior service quality- a “zero defect” service quality preferably. An organization can achieve this by having highly and more committed and motivated customer-contact employees than its competitors. As service cannot be separated from the quality and behavior of the service provider, the interpersonal interaction between the customer- contact employee and customer must be of superior quality. This can be achieved through motivated and committed workforce. Employees become committed and motivated when they are passionately treated- when good employee relations reigns in the organization. Employee relations go hand-in-hand with customer relations. Money is not everything that employees look for from their organizations. In this paper, we present the non-traditional approaches to fostering good employee relation

Key Words: human relations; committed employees; employee morale; employee relations.

1.1 Introduction: The Nature of the Service Industry.

The purpose of a business is to create and maintain satisfied profitable customers. Customers are attracted and retained when their needs are met. Not only do they return to the same establishment, but they also talk favourable to others about their satisfaction. When a business satisfies its customers, the customers will pay a fair price for the product and services. A fair price includes profit for the firm (Power, 1992).

A service organization can satisfy its customers by differentiating their service delivery in three ways: through people, physical environment, and process. The company can distinguish itself by having more committed and reliable customer-contact people who possess the necessary skills (interpersonal and technical) than its competitors, or it can develop a superior physical environment in which service is delivered. It can design a superior delivery process. In each of these three ways humans (organizational members) are involved. *The service industry is people oriented, labour intensive and dependent, and will so remain irrespective of technological advances.* Complete mechanization is not near feasible as it is with manufacturing industries. In the service industry more emphasis is now laid on personalized service. Service industries are unique because of the characteristics of service which the managers must be

concerned with. The characteristics of service include; intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability (Kotler Bowen, and Makens ,2006). Unlike physical products, services cannot be seen, tasted, felt, heard, smelt before they are purchased. Quality of service depends on who provides them, his/her mood, and when and where they are provided. Perishability entails that services not sold/or rendered in any particular day cannot be stored or inventoried for a future period (Kotler et al, 2006) Inseparability entails that both the service provider and the customer must be present for the transaction to occur. *The quality of service delivered cannot be separated from the quality of the service provider (the customer-contact employee). For example, the food in a restaurant may be outstanding, but if the service person is surly, has a poor attitude or provides unattractive service, customers will down-rate the overall restaurant experience. They will not be satisfied with their experience. Inseparability also means that the customers are part of the product (Power, 1992). In the hospitality industry employees are a critical part of the product and marketing mix. This means that the human resources and marketing departments must work closely together. In restaurants without a human resources department, the restaurant manager serves as the human resource manager. The manager must hire friendly and capable employees and formulate policies that support positive relations between employees and customers. The job of the manager includes encouraging everyone in the organization to practice customer-oriented thinking (Lillicrap, Cousin ,and Smith, 1998).*

The manager also must manage points-of-encounter or moments of truth proactively by managing, training and motivating employees. A point-of-encounter or moment of truth occurs when employee and customer have contact. At the moment of truth it is the skill (technical and interpersonal), motivation, and tools employed by the firm's customer-contact employees and the expectations and behaviour of the customer together that create the service delivery process (Kotler et al, 2006). Since employees are part of the product, the establishment must have staff that will perform well during moments of truth.

Quality in the service industry requires a different focus from quality in manufacturing firms. Services are produced and consumed simultaneously, whereas production and consumption in manufacturing firms are separated by time and distance. This gives manufacturing firms time to inspect and discard, and recall defective products before customers receive them. Defective products cost a firm money, but not as much as the customer who defects. There are costs associated with defective service delivery, they are *internal costs* – costs associated with correcting problems discovered by the firm before the product reaches the customer; *external costs* – costs associated with errors that the customers experience; these errors can be experienced because they are difficult to detect before they reach the customer; and *systems cost* (Kotler et al, 2006). Because these costs have impacts on profitability of a service firm, firms now direct much effort towards delivering “zero-defect” service. *A “zero-defect” service is service promptly delivered right first time around and each time (Power, 1992). Meeting such service delivery goal requires an appropriate organizational climate where employees have sense of identity and loyalty to the organization, have feeling of being valued as important members of the firm; have positive attitude towards their customers.* The relations between and among the employees, staff members, leadership – and indeed all stakeholders are essential for a service organization to work efficiently and productively towards achieving its goals. Achieving firm's goals and guest satisfaction require that employees are supported and well trained in both technical and interpersonal relations skill, motivated, respected, trusted, appreciated, and valued.

One obvious effect of globalization is stiff competition in the business world. In a globalized economy, the customer is global and is king or queen. The globalized customer is enlightened, complex, knows his rights and is not ready to compromise. He is more discerning than customers of more than two decades ago. In today's service sector, firms are adopting Customer Relations Management (CRM) as coping strategy to ameliorate the effects of globalization. Besides globalization, service inseparability

means that customers are part of the product, hence, the relationship between company (representative) and the customer must be properly managed.

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a managerial philosophy and practice that has received widespread acceptance in many industries (Kotler et al, 2006). CRM combines marketing, business strategy, and information technology to better understand the customer and to develop closer-relationships with key customers. Good relationship between company and customer leads to customer loyalty. According to Kotler et al (2006:396), the concept of relationship has expanded to include developing of relationship with all stakeholders who can help the company achieve its goals. The manager needs to understand the main influences on behaviour in work organization and the nature of the people-organization relationships.

The People-Organization Relationship

The majority of people come to work with the original attitude of being eager to do a good job, and desirous of performing well and to the best of their abilities. *People generally respond in the manner in which they are treated* (Mullins, 2005:36). In the same way, workers treat their customers in the manner in which they are treated. The CEO of Marriot Hotels (in the USA) says “you can’t make a happy customer with unhappy employees”; management should therefore treat their workers the same way they would want them treat their customers (Power, 1992). Where actual performance fails to match the expected, this is largely a result of how staff perceive they are treated by management and the management function.

In the people-organization relationship problem, much of it arise from the manner in which management carries out its functions but not from what it does. Often times it is not the intent but the manner of implementation that is the root cause of staff unrest and dissatisfaction. Therefore, a heavy responsibility is placed on managers and the activity of management, on the processes, systems and styles of management. Accordingly, how managers exercise the responsibility for, and duties of management is important. Attention must be given to work environment, and appropriate systems of motivation, job satisfaction and rewards. It is important to remember that improvement in organizational performance will only come about through people (Mullins, 2005, Robinson, 1999:4). It is the responsibility of management to create the appropriate organizational culture to effectively cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. Culture influences the way people view their job, work with colleagues and look at the future (Reich, 1997:481). Management must create an organizational climate in which people work willingly and effectively. People and organization need each other. *Attention should therefore, be focused on improving the people – organization relationship. It should reconcile the needs of the people at work with the requirements of the organization.*

Theoretical Framework: Human Relations Movement

The human relations perspective developed in the mid twentieth century and was an extension of the behavioural viewpoint. According to Wikipedia (2009) Human Relations Movement refers to those researchers of organizational development who study the behaviour of people in groups, in particular workplace groups. It originated in the 1920s’ Hawthorne studies, which examined the effects of social relations, motivation and employee satisfaction on factory productivity. The movement viewed workers in terms of their psychology and fit with company’s rather than as interchangeable parts. *“The hallmark of human-relations theories is the primacy given to organizations as human cooperative systems rather than mechanical contraptions.”*

Elton Mayo, who was called “the founder of both the Human Relations Movement and Industrial Sociology” (Pugh and Hickson, 1989), had the basic idea that “workers had strong social needs which they tried to satisfy through membership of informal social groups at workplace”. Mayo claimed that

scientifically clarified rules strict work procedures and incentive, money payments were not the only stimulus to inspire workers and they were less factors in determining out-put than were group standards, sentiments, and security.

The human relations Movement has led to the ideas on increasing production by humanizing the work organization. The human relations approach strove for a greater understanding of people's psychological and social needs at work as well as improving the process of management. The human relations approach recognizes informal groups. It recognizes that people go to work to satisfy a complex of needs and not simply for monetary rewards (Mullins, 2005:30).

Human relations is frequently used as a general term to describe the ways in which managers interact with their employees (Stoner et al, 1995:41). When "employee management" stimulates more and better work, the organization has effective human relations; when morale and efficiency deteriorate, its human relations are said to be ineffective. The human relations movement arose from early attempts to systematically discover the social and psychological factors that would create effective human relations. Mullins (2005:67) describes human relations as attention to social factors at work, groups, leadership, the informal organization, and behaviour of people. It explains the patterns of interaction among people and the behaviour displayed towards one another.

According to Romer (2005:1) on the simplest level, human relations are being sociable, courteous and adaptable. It is about doing what is needed to minimize and go to greater lengths to resolve conflicts; real or imagined. It is about avoiding trouble with your fellow workers. It is about following protocol and using the chain of command in staying marginal within a certain pre-defined nomenclature. Proper telephone etiquette and adhering to all of the other basic 'office rule' that are instilled for harmony and smooth sailing suggests that the bottom line is a thick one. As important as these qualities are to personal success, they only scratch the surface, for human relations is much more than behaving courteously so that people will like you. Through it all, you still must be able to understand yourself with a commitment deep inside you to bring about change if it is warranted.

Effective human relations demand that you know how to handle difficult problems when they arise...working under and seemingly unfair supervisors. Dealing with an irate customer will surely embody even-temperate dispositions, never matching the customers' anger. It is about building and maintaining long-term relationships with family, friends and allowing the workplace to be a good backdrop to emulate elsewhere. Romer (2005) says "I've always felt that learning to live with your frustrations without hurting others or jeopardizing your own career goals is a meticulous balancing act that takes time and temperance". *In short, human relations are building and maintaining relationships in many directions with many kinds of people in both good and bad working environments.*

1.2.8 Why Build Effective Relationships?

Effective and positive human relations between and among everyone involved in the functioning of the organization are essential for an organization to work effectively and productively, in its ability to meet its goals. Organizations only function with the cooperation of their members. We all know that ineffective organizations can be very frustrating. It is also known that effective organizations can demand so much from their employees that those people have nothing of themselves left for life beyond their work environment. Either of these scenarios can result in personal and relationship stress or breakdown (Heap, 2001).

In a society we need to build effective relationships for a number of reasons. For instance, the health of people depends on what happens in organizations and what they do. Organizations can have a profound

effect on people that do not work for them but who depend on them for the necessities of life – for example, food, housing, clothing and clean water.

Society is a web of relationships, requiring all parties to work together in order to create something that is good. But what makes society work even better are relationships that are positive, cooperative and respectful. In this way everyone works for the good of the whole and towards a common purpose. This demands effective relationship based on mutual understanding (Heap, 2001; Romer, 2005).

A manager can jeopardize his career by not getting along with his fellow workers. People who balance their technical skills with human relations competencies often find greater on-the-job happiness. The component does more to contribute to the productivity of organizations and in general have more successful careers (Romer, 2005, Heathfield, 2008). Heathfield adds “you can submarine your career and work relationships by the actions you take and the behaviours you exhibit at work. No matter your education, your experience, or your title, if you can’t play well with others, you will never accomplish your work mission”. Effective work relationships form the cornerstone for success and satisfaction with your job and your career. How important are effective work relationships? Effective work relationships form the basis for promotion, pay increases, goal accomplishment, and job satisfaction.

If the relationship between directors, managers and non-managerial employees is poor, teamwork and cohesive leadership will suffer and the organization’s ability to reach its goals and objectives within the time frame specified will be compromised.

To be a market leader in today’s highly competitive environment, a company must be able to solve key business issues through customer-focused strategies. This includes building loyal and committed employees through effective human relations. This also involves paying great deal of attention to the work environment we provide for our workers if we want to keep them, and the customers happy. A happy worker is more likely to show commitment and loyalty to the company than an unhappy worker. Customer care and employee care go hand in hand. Brandi (2007) says “wasn’t it ludicrous to believe that we could ask workers to care about customers if they didn’t feel cared for?”

Without loyal customers, it is hard to grow business because the best source of new customers are referrals (through word of mouth advert) and positive comments from existing satisfied and loyal customers. The employee is pivotal in creating value to the customer by means of effectively implementing the organization’s customers relations model. *For many customers for example in the hotel organization, their overall experience with the organization is based on experience with the employee they deal with on any particular transaction.* Customer experience is the most important factor in gaining customer loyalty. Creating environment where both customers and employees are willing to pledge their loyalty is a function of good human resource management strategies as much as good intention. The creation of consistently positive experience is crucial to customer loyalty building and maintenance. It is easier to have loyal customers when an organization has loyal and committed employees (Green, 2007:2).

1.2.9 Symptoms of Deterioration in Human Relations: (Employee/Customer Relation)

In an organization where human relations is not effective, certain features would be perceived/observed. It is the responsibility of the management to recognize and identify these features.

3.0 Strategies for Fostering Effective Human Relations

Strategies for effective Human Relations vary from company to company and culture to culture. When an individual is employed by a company he has a lot of expectations (needs) which he hopes that the firm will afford him the opportunity to satisfy. The individual is preoccupied with the need to maximize his pleasure and minimize his displeasure. He expects that the workplace will provide him the opportunity to

use his time and energy constructively; give him identity within the society as a whole, serve as an agent of socialization etc.

3.1 Meeting the Needs of the Employee: The Needs Theory

The four most popular needs theories are, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Alderfers ERG, McClelland's needs for achievement theory and Herzberg's two-factors. Each of these theories describes a specific set of needs that researchers believe individuals have and each differ somewhat in the number and kinds of needs identified. The theories also differ as to how unfulfilled needs influence motivation. As pointed out by Agulanna and Awujo (2005:180), if employees are obtaining a reasonable degree of need satisfaction, the chances of good employee performance and higher productivity are greater. In the framework of the needs theories, business enterprise should create enabling organizational environment that will help the worker satisfy his needs as nearly as possible, and grow to his fullest psychological stature within the system. Space does not permit us to discuss the four (4) theories of need in details, references can therefore be made to Gordon (1997) Agulanna and Awujo (2005), William et al (1993), Gibson et al. The reinforcement theory emphasizes the importance of feedback and rewards in motivating behaviours through diverse reinforcement techniques, which include positive reinforcement, punishment, negative reinforcement, or extinction. The techniques can either encourage desired behaviour, eliminate the undesired behaviour (Gordon, 1997). "Stick and carrot" approach is reinforcement technique. When using this approach, it is advised that one should give more "carrots" than "sticks".

3.2 Respect for Psychological Contract

One significant aspect of organizational behaviour and the relationship between the individual and the organization is the concept of *psychological contract*. This is not a written document, but implies a series of mutual expectations and satisfaction of needs arising from the people-organization relationship. It involves a process of giving and receiving by the individual and the organization. The psychological contract covers a range of expectation of rights and privileges, duties and obligations, which do not form part of a formal agreement but still have important influence on people's behaviour (Schien, 1988). The individuals have expectations of the organization. The organization will have implicit expectations of its members. The organizational side of the psychological contract places emphasis on expectations, requirements and constraints that may differ from and may conflict with, an individual's expectations.

The extent of the matches between individual and organizational expectations also influences the willingness of people to stay with the organization and of the organization to continue to employ them.

Stalker (2000) suggests that successful companies are those that have the ability to balance the unwritten needs of their employees with the needs of the company. Such companies use a simple formula of caring, communicating, listening, knowing and rewarding.

Stalker (2000), says "mutuality is the basic principle of the psychological contract and consensus or mutual understanding is the basis of mutuality. Really therefore, self-interest should be balanced with common interest in a "win-win" arrangement. The nature of the boss-subordinates relationship is clearly a central feature of the psychological contract. "Managers at all levels can have influence on employees' perception of the psychological contract". It is however, the relationship between individual employee and their line manager that is likely to have most influence in training and managing peoples expectations (Emmott, 2001:15).

Healthfield (2008) says that people work for money and benefits; of course; but once they are making an adequate living and their basic needs are met, most people work for other reasons too. Survey of

employed people demonstrates that people want challenge in their work. They want appreciation from people they hold in esteem. They want the boss to notice when they do more than is expected. But most of all people want to accomplish their own personal work mission. Whatever this mission is expected that the organization would make it possible for the employee to accomplish, yet it is not written in any agreement or document.

3.3 Boosting Worker's Morale

Morale is explained to mean a state of mind, a prevailing mood, an attitude of the individual, and of the group to which he belongs, towards the leadership and its human relations posture (Vallen et al, 1987). Morale is the employees' response (attitude) to management's human relations effort. It is an indication of willingness to give dependable, cooperative and wholehearted support to company objectives.

Since morale is a personal as well as a group or company attitude many factors (motivators) account for the level of morale/loyalty finally attained. Building loyalty in employees requires going beyond the call of duty (or extra-mile) in employee relations.

3.4 Recognition: Workers feel valued when recognized. When a worker is noticed and recognized by his boss/peers/others for a job well done and is rewarded tangibly or intangibly, he tends to become loyal.

Recognition of good performers and performance is an essential part of the process of management. Managing people in organizations requires not only an understanding of the employees, but also a recognition of the culture of the organization.

3.5 Prestige: The respect accorded to one by others in his company and the business community enhances human relations as the individual develops sense of worth.

3.6 Self-Esteem: Self-esteem is explained as one's feeling of self worth, the respect he accords himself, feeling good about who he is and about the job and the company where he works. Where and the work an individual does is a symbol of status. Good company image enhances self-esteem.

3.7 Sense of Security: The certainty that one feels of maintaining his position; the extent to which he feels that his position tomorrow will be at least as good as it is today will instill sense of loyalty in him.

3.8 Growth Opportunities: When employees expand their abilities, they complement the organizations objectives. These growth opportunities aid both the department objective of developing internal replacements and the individual's personal career plan. The feeling growing in the individual of becoming more competent, broadening and deepening himself as a person drives loyalty (Brandy, 2006:2).

3.9 Career Development: By offering career, not just jobs, many companies nurture a pool of talent that allows them to staff senior management positions internally. And many employees use their dedication and loyalty to the company as a career tactic (William et al, 1993:394).

3.10 Collaboration: When ones' job offers him the opportunity to work and learn from others in a team environment; and the give and take of team play, he finds happiness in his work (Brandi, 2006:2).

3.11 Orientation and Training: Training empowers workers so that they are prepared to proactively handle customers need from start to finish. According to Lewis (2007:1), one-third of respondents in a

study were found not to know what to do, and where they did know they did not want to do it. These workers were categorized as “disengaged” workers. They did not know what work to do because they were not properly trained and oriented. Employees should be trained in interpersonal skills. Having positive interpersonal skills increases the productivity in the firm since the number of conflicts is reduced; it allows communication to be easy and comfortable. People with interpersonal skills can generally control the feelings that emerge in difficult situations and respond appropriately instead of being overwhelmed by emotion (www.en.wikipedia, 2009).

3.12 Career Contentment/Job Satisfaction: Most people find happiness at work when they feel connected to the core purpose of the organization; and when they are able to use their capabilities and express their creativity and uniqueness through their work (Brandi, 2006:1).

3.13 Perks and Compensation: Workers should be adequately compensated. Without adequate compensation current employees are likely to leave, and replacement will be difficult to recruit. Pay dissatisfaction may lower performance, increase grievance or cause workers to quit and other forms of withdrawal tendencies. Compensation should be equitable and competitive too (William et al, 1993:412), Gibson et al (1994). Stevens (1999) reported her observations in a study she conducted in Russia as follows: lack of work ethic, aggressiveness and sabotage in poorly unrewarded workers; that one Russian said, “we pretend to work and they pretend to pay us;” “I just work here syndrome” was found to be the major attitude of the workers. Lewis (2007:1) reports that the more satisfied employees were with their rewards of their jobs, the more likely they were to be “engaged”. An engaged employee is one who both knows what work to do and wants to do it. The study finds that 52% respondents fit into this category.

3.14 Use of Employee Handbook: Communication is one of the best ways of building a happy and effective workforce. Employee handbook provides the values, rules, rights and the expectations of the company. If workers know what to expect, then they will be able to focus on getting the work done, that makes them proud and their employer successful (Cooper, 2006:2). Regular and honest communication with employees, talking to them about the happenings, share vision, getting feedback instills sense of belonging and builds quality relationship. Communication is the lifeblood of every organization. If we do not know what we want from each other, misunderstandings are inevitable and the relationship will suffer.

3.15 Quality Leadership: Leadership is a central feature of organizational performance. Top management is responsible for creating a work environment where employees feel good about themselves and their work. According to Brandi (2007:2) more and more statistics prove that there is an inextricable link between the work environment and employee happiness, as well as between employee happiness and customer happiness. A good leader is expected to provide socio-emotional support to the staff members. Staff members who perceive they are not being properly taken care of develop low morale. The leader is the most powerful factor in employee motivation and morale (Healthfield, 2006:2). By the leaders’ words, body language and facial expression he can “make or break” the worker’s day. A good leader is one who says it and means it; he should keep his promise. If a leader says one thing and does another, his subordinates will become cynical. A good leader should be dependable, and a role model. The manager must understand the nature of leadership influence and factors which determine relationships with other people and the effectiveness of the leadership relationships. Some management experts recommend the interactive leadership style (Mullins, 2005:358). The interactive leader encourages participation, (whereby people express their ideas, share power and information), enhance self-worth of others (employees feel important); energize others (getting

others excited); Generally people perform best when they feel good about themselves and their work, interactive leaders create situations that contribute to that feeling.

3.16 Empowerment/Restraining Bureaucracy: Some amount of bureaucracy is needed in every organization to achieve internal efficiency. However, conscious efforts need to be made to resist bureaucracy's tendency that is capable of strangling the service out of a service organization. With too much bureaucracy employees tend to adhere to and quote the rules of the operation, rather than satisfying the customers' requests. Therefore, empowerment of employees is highly recommended. Empowerment allows employees to use their own judgment in solving problems for the guest by making immediate decisions and bringing up the matter later with management. Empowerment minimize anti-service syndrome as its aim is to satisfy guest desires which is regarded as first priority. Empowerment gives the employees sense of independence/freedom to run their activities as they wish; freedom from restrictions imposed on them by business methods and their boss; and opportunity to take part in decisions concerning their job.

3.17 Trust: Going hand in hand with respect is trust. "You have to trust the people you work for and enjoy the people you work with. In a nationwide survey of 500 employees (in the USA) about what matters most in their relationship with a manager, 90% of workers ranked honesty, fairness, and trust as their top three needs (Gardner, 2008:2). When workers are trusted, they develop sense of belonging in their work place.

3.18 Empathizing with Employees: Empathy begets empathy. Empathy for the employees translates to empathy for the customers. Focusing on the task and excluding the feelings and needs of others hampers building effective relationships. People have feelings and they bring those feelings to work. If you ignore people's feelings and drive through the task regardless, then your best people will leave, you will alienate your customers and you will not get the contribution you could get (Heap, 2001). If you treat employees with respect and understanding, and listen to their feelings, they will want to give more and work better together.

3.19 Conflict Resolution

Conflicts can have functional or dysfunctional (positive or negative) consequences whether conflict takes a constructive or destructive course is influenced by the socio-cultural context in which the conflict occurs because differences tend to exaggerate barriers and reduce the likelihood of conflict resolution (Gordon, 1993:448). *Effective managers learn how to create functional conflict and manage dysfunctional conflict* Dysfunctional conflicts cause reduced productivity, decrease morale, cause overwhelming dissatisfaction, and increase tension and stress in the organization. It can arouse anxiety in individuals. *As the distance between people increases, a climate of mistrust and suspicion may arise.* Individuals or groups may focus more narrowly on their own interests, preventing the development of teamwork.

According to Agulanna and Madu (2003:135) conflicts can be caused by ambiguity over responsibility, group membership and identity, reward structure, poor interpersonal relations, interdependence limited resources etc. Interpersonal conflict may arise from hurt feelings, bruised ego, faulty perceptions, and long standing grudges (rather than opposing group interest).

Heap (2001) suggests that working out solutions where all parties win builds exciting and satisfying relations. He says "I believe profoundly that win-win solutions are possible and they should always be our

goal. If we both feel we have gained from resolving a difference, then we will be more willing to cooperate again in future”.

Resolve any conflicts or disputes at the earliest opportunity. Unresolved conflict undermines relationship building and mutual purposeful progress towards personal and organizational missions (Heathfield, 2008).

3.20 Organize Employee General Meeting/Forum

Heathfield (2008) suggests that bringing suggested solutions with problems to the meeting table would create a positive empowering, motivational work environment for people. Werther Jr. and Davis (1993:532), support above viewpoint and add that such meetings are used to discuss complaints, opinions, questions, suggestions. The primary purpose is to encourage upward communication. It can be used to probe in some depth the issues that are on the minds of employees (deep-sensing). Constructive suggestions sometimes emerge from these meetings. According to Werther Jr. and Davis (1993:545) the president of Hyatt Hotels (USA) held several of such meetings and commented that sometimes he hears of serious problems that require immediate attention. More often he hears seemingly trivial complaints but they concern matters that can make day-to-day life miserable. He says “Every time I do one of the these meetings, I realize it’s the little things that most often affect morale. This is a way to make the employee feel like we care”. When I worked for Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis, USA I witnessed employee general meeting was being held by-monthly. Staff members were normally entertained and paid some money for attending such meetings.

3.21 In-house Communication/Complaint Procedure

In-house complaint procedure is a formal method through which an employee can register a complaint. This procedure normally is operated by the Human Resources department and requires the employee to submit the complaint in writing. *Suggestion systems* are a formal method for generating, evaluating, and implementing employee ideas. Employee ideas are evaluated by supervisors. This method is likely to succeed if management provides prompt and fair evaluations, if supervisors are trained to encourage employee suggestion, and if top management actively supports the programme (Werther Jr. and Davis, 1993:546).

3.22 Attitude Survey/Evaluation

Attitude surveys are systematic methods of determining what employees think about their organization. These surveys may be conducted through face-to-face interviews, but they are usually done through anonymous questionnaires. An attitude survey typically seeks to learn what employees think about working conditions, supervision and personnel policies. Questions about new programmes or special concerns to management may also be asked. The resulting information can be used to evaluate specific concerns, such as how individual managers are perceived by their employees. Feedback of the results and actions on the problem areas make attitude survey feedbacks a powerful communication tool (Werther Jr. and Davis, 1993:546).

Senior management attitude shall be equally looked into. A management attitude has impact on his career success and even other aspects of his life. Everyone, from the most optimistic to the pessimist should from time to time go through some form of “attitude adjustment” (Romer, 2005). Stress on the job or because of some along with not being in tune to handling problematic issues can spell angst, cause unproductiveness and mismanagement of time.

Some jobs, such as hotel jobs are emotionally laden and can be stressful, but can be overcome by using effective human relations and an attitude adjustment. Generally, hotel jobs are regarded as “*Emotional labour*” Hotel workers “commercialize their feelings” hence, they suffer some psychological consequences. Positive attitude on the part of the management helps employees get along with the customers. While on the part of people in service work, Power (1992:417) has suggested “*Deep acting*” and “*Surface acting*” as coping strategies for emotional labour.

3.23 Employee Counseling

Counseling is the discussion of a problem with employee, with the general objective of helping the worker either resolve or cope with it. Stress and personal problems are likely to affect both performance and an employee’s general life adjustment; therefore, it is in the best interests of all those concerned (employer, employee, and society) to help employee return to full effectiveness. Counseling is a useful tool to help accomplish this goal (Werther Jr. and Davis, 1993:547).

3.24 Discipline

Discipline is management action to encourage employee compliance with organizational standards. There are two types of disciplines; preventive and corrective. Preventive discipline is action taken to encourage employee to follow standards and rules so that infractions are prevented. The basic objective is to encourage self-discipline. Corrective discipline is an action that follows a rule infraction. It seeks to discourage future infractions, and to ensure future compliance with standards. For corrective discipline to be effective, due process must be followed (Werther Jr. and Davis, 1993:549) and the employee must be told what he did to deserve disciplinary action. Vallen et al (1977) recommends the “Hot stove” principle which knows no bound and its impact is immediate.

3.25 Meeting People Informally

Heap (2001) suggests meeting people informally makes them feel comfortable to raise issues that are important to them. Most people feel more relaxed in informal settings. He adds that if one intends to meet with someone with the specific purpose of developing relationship with that person, he should think about holding the meeting in a setting in which he/she will feel comfortable. When people are relaxed, they are more able to speak about what is important to them. Rap session is suggested by Werther Jr. and Davis (1993:545). Rap sessions are meetings between managers and employee/groups of employees to discuss complaints, suggestions, opinion, feelings or questions.

These meetings may begin with information sharing by management to tell the group/employee about developments in the company.

3.26 Avoid Playing the Blame Game

Heathfield (2005), and Heap (2001) have suggested that manager/employees should as much as possible avoid blaming others. Blaming the other party for a difficult relationship/problem is always futile. Blaming the other group/party alienates coworkers, supervisors and reporting staff. It creates distance and defensiveness and does not help the relationship develop. You may need to identify who/what was involved in a problem. The manager may even ask what about the work system that caused these employee to fail? Heathfield says “But, not my fault and publicly identifying and blaming others for failures will earn enemies”. These enemies will in turn help the manager to fail.

3.27 Share Credit for Accomplishments, Ideas and Contributions –

Recognizing other people's contributions towards the achievement of organizational goal helps build effective work relationships. No manager can do it alone and achieve great success. Heathfield (2008) suggests that a manager takes the time, and expend the energy, to thank, reward, recognize and specify contributions of the people who helped him succeed. This is no-fail approach to building effective work relationships.

3.28 Help other Employees find their Greatness

Every employee in the organization has talents, skill, and experience. If employees can help their fellow employees harness their best abilities, the organization will benefit immeasurably. The growth of individual employees, benefits the whole. Employees should compliment, recognize, praise, and notice others' contributions. Heathfield (2008) says "You don't have to be a manager to help create a positive, motivating environment for employees". In such an environment, employees do find and contribute their greatness. If you regularly encourage others, you will play well with others and develop effective work relationships. Coworkers will value you as a colleague. Support your colleagues' ability to accomplish his missions too (Heap, 2001).

3.29 Never back-stab or blind-side a Coworker, boss, or reporting staff person

Heap (2001) and Heathfield (2008) have strongly argued that blind-siding or back-stabbing a coworker cannot build effective work relationships. Heap (2001), has said that if the first time a coworker hears about a problem is in a staff meeting or from an e-mail sent to his boss, then the coworker has been blind-sided (or ambushed). If you have a problem with any person's actions, talk to him directly rather than some other persons.

Conclusion

No business organization can last long without attracting loyal customers using loyal employees who are willing to go extra-mile to deliver a stand-out experience to keep the valued customers delighted, particularly in the service organizations. A committed employee is one who is ever willing to go beyond the call of duty. For an employee to become loyal he must be well motivated and passionately treated; the work environment must be cordial. Management must create an organizational climate in which people work willingly and effectively. Attention should therefore be focused on improving the employee – organization relationship. The needs of the employees should be reconciled with the requirements of the organization. Management must be sensitive to the emotions of the workers bearing in mind that people generally respond in the manner in which they are treated. Management should not forget the role of human beings in service delivery processes; that the worker is an intrinsic part of the product. Employees must be trained in both technical and human relations competencies. The hospitality job is emotionally laden and stressful, hence, it is classified as an emotional labour. Employee training should also deal with developing and maintaining emotional labour competencies. This will enable them to effectively manage their emotions and cope well with that of the customers.

Building effective human relations in the hospitality industry is an imperative because the industry is service oriented, labour intensive and labour dependent irrespective of technological advancements. Measures suggested in this presentation are many, however, they have been found to be effective in building effective human relation in the workplace.

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