

# WORKPLACE ETHICS- A ROADMAP FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

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## **ABSTRACT:**

*At a time, when the world wide stagnation isin growth and employment is apparent many people seem to be diverted to follow the ethical values and moral principles. Most of the organizations have their own code of conduct and ethical principles but they are failing to communicate and integrate them in their work process. Therefore, the need of the hour is to enlighten them with the workplace ethics. A workplace ethics ensures positive ambience at the workplace. It leads to happy and satisfied employees who enjoy coming to work rather than treating work as a mere source of burden.Employee actionsare not limited to themselves but it also helps in strengthening the bond with other employees.The management plays an essential role in inculcating workplace ethics among employees.Managing ethics in the work place is about how the values, ethics and moral principles are utilized for sound decision making. Taking these views into considerationthe present study will show how ethical norms can influence employee behavior in an organizational environment. It also focuses on the issues an employee faces in a workplace and some recommendations for supporting and promoting ethics in the employees.*

**Keywords:-Decision making, Employee Behavior, Ethics,Values, Workplace ethics, Employee Satisfaction, Work process.**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

A good work climate is a formula for escalating great success. In today's scenario organizations are increasingly paying attention to the issues related with work ethics because it helps in inducing higher level of job satisfaction and commitment within the employees for their work.

Ethics is the study of moral obligations, which helps in deciding right from wrong things. It is the ethics which becomes the vehicle for converting the values into actions. Managing ethics in the work place is all about how the values, ethics and moral principles are essentially used fortaking sound decision.

Almost all the organizations in the world encourage ethics in work stations for bringing punctuality, positivity and professionalism in an employee's attitude. It is an important factor in building relationships between various individuals within an organization like- Higher Management, Supervisors, Colleagues, Employees and Customers. A Good Workplace Ethics always helps an employee to take variety of initiatives it motivates them to brain storm their minds for solving any typical problem. Employees with strong and good work ethics tend to develop their daily tasks and achieve their goals in a very organized manner. They can easily devote their time in other productive works and in this way can really contribute a lot to the organization.

The key person involved in promoting ethics in the workplace is the managers who also serve as leaders and if a leader values an employee on personal equations he or she can never promote team spirit within the employees. A manager should always take initiative in resolving the issues and tries to set examples. He or she should have an unbiased attitude while dealing with the employees, which will result in great success and harmony within the organization.

However, nowadays employee's ethical issues in an organization have become more complex. Ethical behavior irrespective of its benefits is not communicated properly as code of ethics to the employees at the time of induction which causes functional hindrance at work. Introducing the employees with work ethics can change their perceptions on how to deal with the ethical conduct in different procedure and practices followed in a workplace. A Human Resource Department plays an essential role in establishing and encouraging ethical behavior in number of way in the organization.

## **LITREATURE REVIEW**

Indian philosophy regards work as worship and the customer as God. Bhagwad Gita focuses on '**Karma**' or **work** and considers it to be the sacred duty of every person. Work is considered as offering to the supreme. Therefore, all work is sacred and should be done with ethics and utmost dedication for spiritual growth and not for material gains.

Ethics plays an important role in modeling an employee personality. They are behavioral norms or patterns that spring from one's view of good or bad, right or wrong. It is an activity based concept. Ethical norms emerge from self-discovery by managers, who have several subtle ways to integrate social cohesion with self- realization, social responsibilities with individual obligations and individual ethical norms form society. A good employee greatly value healthy relationships between superiors and subordinates. Such relationships are highly power based with leaders and managers as the power figures. It is common practice followed for subordinates expect their reverence and respect towards their superiors. In return, subordinate expect their leader's protection, concern and support. . The degree of involvement of an employee greatly impacts the performance to give high productivity or low quality.

Positive work culture is meant work-oriented environment, which rests on the discipline, orderliness, precision, punctuality and individual's responsibility for task accomplishment. In fact, the entire workforce must internalize the ethical values. Workplace ethics is felt necessary today in the view of the growing personality clashes, succession of feuds, top level manipulations and boardroom fights in the corporate sector. Work Ethics serve as a strong anchor in a turbulent sea of changes and prompt right actions. (Business Ethics: Shyam.L.Kaushal)

The key factor that distinguishes a successful organization from others is its ability to trust its people. Basically employees are driven to perform when employees realize that people are their best asset. Organizations can bring out best in people only when leaders have clear set of value, create a meritocracy, encourage information sharing and put in place an incentive and recognition system.

When employees does not follow work ethics systematically there can be a functional disability in the organization and in addition to that there will be no cooperation and understanding which can possess lot of problems or legal obligations to both employees and organization, because all the workers are not doing their duties in the required manner and the higher authority is not treating them equally and which can resonate a negative impact in the society and can mushroom issues related to dishonesty, injustice etc.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To study the effectiveness of ethics at workplace.
- To evaluate the ethical norms that can influence employee behavior in an organizational environment.
- To discuss the issues that an employee faces at a workplace.
- To provide recommendations for supporting and promoting ethics in the employees.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The present study is based on the collection of data from secondary sources. Secondary data is obtained from various sources such as Internet, articles, online blogs, published records, books, magazines and journals.

## **WORK ETHICS**

Work ethic is a combination of hard work and diligence. It helps in boosting the moral of an employee for work benefits and high productivity. Work ethics has a significant and positive effect on organizational development. This means that higher work ethics will contribute in the growth of an organization while lower work ethics will become hindrance in achieving organizational goals.

## RELEVANCE OF WORKPLACE ETHICS

There is a need to have ethical values in the workplace as it legitimizes managerial actions, strengthens the coherence and balance of the organization's culture. Some of its practical implications are as follows:-

- It helps in increasing productivity of employees as they try to set targets and dedicate their time and efforts for successfully achieving them.
- It develops a mutual understanding between employees for the completion of team works which gives a positive signal to the organization for sustaining in the variable market conditions.
- It builds a public image and brand value in the eyes of others which can increase the customer base which is directly proportional to increase in the brand value.
- It will promote a trouble free working environment with no negativity.
- It helps to ensure that policies and procedures are legal at the workplace.

When everything is so managed and systematic along with the understanding of the employees because of their strong ethics, the organization will surely touch new heights of success and even the growth of your business will be assured.

## INCULCATED VALUES AT WORKPLACE

Work culture plays an important role in the organization success. Hard times push organization to the limit where its culture stands in motivating to survive. Indian workers value good relationships between superiors and subordinates. Such relationships are highly power-based with leaders or managers as the power figures. Some of the values that Indian workers have are as follows:

- a) **Strong Work Ethics:** Learning the most efficient way to complete tasks and finding ways to save time while completing daily assignments. It is also important to care about job and complete all projects while maintain positive attitude.
- b) **Dependability and Responsibility:** Being dependable and responsible Indian workers shows value towards job and they are responsible in keeping up with projects and keeping them informed of the things that they should know about.

- c) **Possessing a Positive Attitude:** A positive attitude gets the work done and motivates others to do the same without dwelling on the challenges that inevitably come up in any job. A positive attitude is something that is most valued by supervisors and co-workers and also makes the job more pleasant.
- d) **Adaptability:** Being open to change and improvements provides an opportunity to complete work assignments in a more efficient manner while offering additional benefits to the corporation, the customers and even the employees. Adaptability also means adapting to the personality and work habits of co-workers and superiors. Each person possesses their own set of strengths and adapting personal behaviors to accommodate others is part of what it takes to work effectively as a team.
- e) **Honesty and Integrity:** Good relationships are built on trust. When working for an employer, employees want to know that they can trust what the employer says and what he does. It is the responsibility of each person to use their own individual sense of moral and ethical behavior when working with and serving others within the scope of their job.
- f) **Self-Motivated:** Employees require little supervision and direction to get the work done in a timely and professional manner. Once a self-motivated employee understands his or her responsibility they will do it without any prodding from others.
- g) **Motivated to grow and learn:** Learning new skills, techniques, methods and theories through professional development helps to keep the organization at the top of its field and makes the employee's job more interesting and exciting.
- h) **Strong Self Confidence:** This has been recognized as the key ingredient between someone who is successful and someone who is not. Self-confidence always inspires others with their set of knowledge and experiences.
- i) **Professionalism:** Professional behavior includes learning every aspect of a job and doing it to the best of one's ability. Professionalism reflects on a person from the way he carries himself or herself, his behavior and appearance. Professionals complete their assigned projects in the given timeline to meet their targets, avoiding letting uncompleted projects pile up.
- j) **Loyalty:** Companies offering employee growth and opportunity will ultimately gain a sense of loyalty from their employees. Employees today want to feel that the employer is fair and wants to see them succeed. Although this may mean only staying five or ten years in a position, employees can offer loyalty and make an important contribution during their time with the company. (Business Ethics: Saroj Kumar and Veera Karoli).

Ethical values build resilience and keep one going when everything around seems bleak and insurmountable.

## **COMMON DILEMMAS AT WORKPLACE**

In a workplace there are variety of people with different opinions and thinking. There are incidents when an employee thought process clashes with other employees thoughts or opinions which often leads to conflict and can be notified as dilemma situation. Some of the common dilemma which can be seen at a work place are:

### **❖ Initiating Personal Business in working hours**

An Employee spends half of its productive time at his workstation in this situation it is very common phenomena when he uses office resources for his personal works i.e. using office internet for online shopping, reservations etc.

### **❖ Taking Credit for Others' Work**

Employees often work in teams they work on different projects and each individual have different sets of skills. In the completion of a project every team member plays an important role yet it has been seen that credit of few employees is easily taken by some other employees.

### **❖ Harassing Behavior**

Inappropriate behavior such as harassment, using offensive language toward other employees is a truly objectionable incident, for which serious action should be taken by the higher management of an organization. Unfortunately, employees ignores such incidents in order to safe their own jobs.

### **❖ Stealing on the Job**

Some employees make use of the companies' resources for their personal usage and carry them at their home. For example -stationery such as staplers, pins, papers , using office computer and printers for personal uses such as taking lengthy print outs, heavy downloading and even unnecessary net surfing etc.It may seem like a small thing, but when every employee takes something, it leads to scarcity of office resources and becomesanadd on burden for the organization.

### **❖ Breach of rules and regulations**

It is mandatory for the employees to follow the code of conduct by accepting terms and conditions provided by the organization at the time of joining procedure. Breaching of these rules may leads to undesirable issues between the employees.

## CREATING AN ETHICAL WORKPLACE

Organization with strong workplace ethics add to the growth of an organization and support an environment where employees feel safe and valued. The practical step one can take to make it more happen is formulation of an action plan that can help to bring uniformity within the employees and can create an ethical workplace culture that benefits both the external and internal environments in the company.

- **Formulation of a code of Ethics:** A code of ethics should be established for creating a common framework for understanding the boundaries within which the employees has to behave. Codes of ethics should be present in a written form which should try to include the ethical expectations and how to report unethical behavior of an employee.
- **Training the Ethics:** Mere formulation of code of ethics will not make any difference until they are practiced and followed. Therefore small training session should be organized by the HRD were few members from top level management should be involves which can for proper implementation of ethics in workplace and for achieving more clarity.
- **Empower employees:** Involve all new and existing employees to increase the effectiveness of the work ethics. It is the responsibility of the senior management to set an example that motivates the other employees to behave in the same manner.
- **Continuous review of code of ethics.** It is very important to continuously monitor the implementation of code of ethics in the organization. In this fast changing scenario it is very important to update these ethics from time to time to keep up with the changing times and to add more job satisfaction in the employees.
- **Feedback Sessions:** Performance feedback session should be taken in a corrective and healthy manner so that it would encourage the employee to perform their best.
- **Acknowledge the changed behavior:** Good behavior should be acknowledged some regards or appreciation should be given in order to encourage other employees.

## A SHIFT FROM UNETHICAL TO ETHICAL WORKPLACE - SUGGESTIONS

A few important and easy to remember strategies to help create and sustain a culture of ethics could be endorsed and shared with perhaps all organizations. These include the following:

### ❖ **Clear Expectations**

All organizations have both spoken and unspoken rules and guidelines about how to act within their environments. This includes everything from attire, attitudes expressed, and behavior towards colleagues, customers, and the public.

❖ **Modeling Desired Behavior (especially from organizational leaders)**

Thus, organizational leaders must practice what they preach and be sure that they model for others the desired behaviors that they wish to nurture within their organizations. If the highest standards of ethics are desired within an organization then high profile leaders in that organization must demonstrate these standards and be beyond reproach in this regard. Their actions often will speak louder than their words when it comes to helping to create a more ethical environment within their organizations.

❖ **Reinforce the Behavior You Want, and Don't Reinforce the Behavior that You Don't Want**

This is a very simple truth from basic operant conditioning that any college freshmen would learn about in their introductory psychology course. Also, it is a truth that has been known for generations. If you want behavior to continue, then reinforce it. If you want behavior to discontinue, don't reinforce it. This is a pretty simple truth yet it is often hard to do and hard to remember for many organizations and individuals alike. And it is certainly easier said than done.

❖ **Focus on Skill Building and Problem Solving**

Organizations can do a great deal to focus their attention on developing ethical skills and problem solving techniques. Rather than only stating what kinds of behaviors are expected or not, institutions must help with the step by step strategies for developing effective ethical decision making and behavior skills and strategies for resolving organizational issues. Workshops, easy to use reference materials, ongoing and readily available consultation from peers or mentors are just some of the many ways institutions can assist in training students and staff.

❖ **Provide the Tools People Need to Act Ethically**

If an organization wants to create a culture of ethics they must be sure that members have the tools that they need to do so. These tools also include being able to bring internal and external to the organization experts in to engage staff at all levels of training and problem solving as well.

❖ **Provide Corrective Feedback**

Another basic and important principle borrowed from introductory psychology is the notion of immediate corrective feedback. Unless organizations offer timely and thoughtful corrective feedback regarding behavior they will unlikely create a culture of ethics. Reinforcement for behavior that is desired and corrective feedback for behavior that is not desired is critical to help create and sustain a culture of ethical behavior and consideration.

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study shows that ethical values helps in developing healthy work environment by imparting qualities such as – honesty, integrity,loyalty, dedication, positive attitude and dynamism inside employees. Good work ethics encourages the employees to put their best efforts at work andachieve high organizational commitments. However there are many issues related to work ethics and common dilemmas like harassment, breach of rules,taking credits of others etc, which are not addressed properly. In such situation, practical steps like creating a fixed code of ethics and further providing trainings to the employees can actually empower them and can bring the mutual feeling of self-belongingness and harmonious growth for all. Lastly it deals with some suggestive steps that can be opted at a workplace for bringing up a positive change byestablishing an unethical to an ethical workplace. Therefore, it is evident from the current study that the success of an organization is directly related to the ethically committed workforce and ethical values they follow for achieving sound results.

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