Lesson - 14

EMPLOYEE - MORALE

14.0 Objective:

After completion of this lesson, you should be able to understand:

* meaning and definition

* causes of Low Morale

* problems of Employees

* problems of Job

* positives measures relative to Morale

Structure:

14.1 Introduction:

Morale is a term which is used widely. Various authors have defined morale in different ways:

According to **Yoder,** "Morale is a feeling some what related to esprit de corps, enthusiasm or zeal.

Flippo has described morale as a mental condition or attitudes of individuals and groups which determine their willingness to co-operate.

Theo Haimann observes that morale is a state of mind and emotion affecting the attitude and willingness to work, which, inturn, affect individual and organisational objectives. Organisational morale is basically a mental condition which leads individuals and groups willingly to sub-ordinate their personal objectives, temporarily and within reason, to further the company's objectives.

Good morale is evidenced by employee enthusiasm, voluntary conformance with regulations and orders, and willingness to cooperate with others in the accomplishment of an organisation's objectives. High morale leads to a high degree of cohesiveness, togetherness and group effectiveness.

Morale is a matter of degree. A subordinate may have a high morale, low morale, or something in between. High morale exists when an individual's attitudes are predominantly favourable toward the things that affect him. Low morale exists when an individual's attitudes are pre-dominately negative and drives him to poor performance.

Employee morale is a very complex phenomenon and is influenced by many factors on and off the shop floor. Simply morale is a group concept.

14.2 Causes of Low Morale:

The reasons for low morale can be individual or organisational.

14.2.1 Employee's Personal Problems:

* domestic problems
* financial problems
* poor health
* worry
* lack of self-confidence
* lack of goals etc.

14.2.2 Job-Related Problems:

* ineffective leadership
* inadequate supervision
* salary dis-satisfaction
* feeling of un-fair treatment
* lack of recognition

* dissatisfaction with status

* fear of supervisor

* lack of involvement

* lack of feeling of security

* lack of opportunity to use one's highest skills etc.

14.3 Evaluation of Morale:

Morale can be measured by evaluating an individual's attitude. Behavioural scientists have developed several techniques for the measurement of employee attitude and job satisfaction. Measurement of morale includes inference, prediction from behavioural date, interviews as questionnaires and scales.

Morale can be assessed by surveys wing the questionnaire or interview technique. **Davis** classifies morale surveys in three categories such as objective surveys, descriptive surveys and projective survey.

14.3.1 Advantages of Measurement of Morale:

* Information obtained through a morale survey serves as a reflection of management in the minds of the workers as well as knowledge about their feelings, opinions and attitudes.

* It serves as an effective tool for analysing employee problems.

* Morale surveys provide an effective channel of upward communication in organisational settings.

* Morale surveys improve the attitudes of the employees and provide a safety value, an emotional outlet etc. to get things off one's chest.

* They are useful in determining the training needs of supervisors also

* They provide valuable information to the unions to enhance their knowledge relating to the feelings of its numbers.

These surveys are not opposed because they dig up the latest dis-satisfaction among the employees.

The management is also opposed to such surveys because of their cost involvement.

14.4 Indicators of Low -Morale:

14.4.1 Absenteeism and Tardiness:

Absenteeism and tardiness form a major problem in an industrial setting. They are the indicators of low efficiency and reflect an attitude of unrest, lack of interest and grievances. They provide an index of employee morale.

14.4.2 Disciplinary Problems:

In effective administration of disciplinary action exerts adverse effects on the morale of the employees. The best course of action is self-discipline and self control. The need for disciplinary action is minimised by effective managerial practices.

14.4.3 Employee Turnover:

It forms a response to severe unrest and morale problems. However, the turnover stemming from low morale should be separated from that arising from illness, death, lay-off and retirement.

14.4.4 Employee Grievance:

Any dis-satisfaction relating the company policy and activities can be designated as a grievance. It reflect the state of employee morale in an organisation.

14.4.5 Employee-Un-Rest:

It reveals a low level of employee morale unrest may be in several forms. It influences both the individual and the group.

Poor morale is evidenced by in subordination, a feeling of discouragement and dislike of the job. It is also characterised by slow-down, strikes, grievances, absenteeism and high labour turnover.

14.5 Improving Morale:

Maintenance of high morale is possible only when individual interests are received with the interests of the organisation. The promotion of high move is possible when certain positive measures taken. They are:

14.5.1 Job Satisfaction:

Job satisfaction plays an important role in the morale of employees. Job satisfaction depends on several factors like wages, supervision, security of employment, conditions of work, opportunity for promotion, working hours, fringe benefits and so on. In addition to the above factors, group relationship inside and outside the job also influence job satisfaction.

14.5.2 Job Enrichment:

This involves a greater use of the factors which are intended to motivate the worker. The idea is to reduce employee discontent by changing or improving a job. Job enrichment also opens up for the employee an opportunity for greater recognition, growth, advancement and responsibility.

14.5.3 Building Responsibility into a Job:

Employees should be encouraged to take risk-decisions. This is possible when authority is delegated to them. Authority without power will be of no use.

14.5.4 Rotation of Jobs:

If a worker does a piece of work continuously for longer periods, no doubt he will be efficient but at the sametime the worker may feel monotonous. It is the job rotation that helps to reduce employee's boredom arising out of monotonous nature of work. The imaginative managers may make a job more interesting to employee by adopting suitable techniques. For example: An employee may be assigned to a special project.

14.6 Morale Building:

Morale Building is not a simple process or a set of easy, clear-cut steps. There are a number of contradictory causes of variations in the attitude of people. Some events may provoke positive

feelings in another group. Thus, any morale building programme must take into account that techniques which may have a positive effect an one person may just the opposite effect an another, and that the same techniques may affect the same person in different ways at different places. Therefore, the programme should have the following techniques of morale-building. They are:

* Individual techniques and

* Group techniques

Individual techniques are oriented to the unique feelings of each employee. These techniques are expensive.

For example, job placement, job training, job rotation personnel counselling etc.

On the other hand, group techniques are oriented to the feeling of the average man in a group.

For example: Salary based on area practice seniority rights, retirement plans etc.

14.7 Morale Studies in India:

Several studies have been made an employee morale and productivity in India. The findings are:

* Group participation is an effective technique to improve the productivity and morale of the workers.

* The morale of pro-management workers is higher than that of pro-union workers.

* The workers morale is significantly related to their education. The higher the education, the lower their morale and vice versa. Income is found to be an insignificant factor.

14.8 Summary:

Morale means; evident commitment'. Morale like health, requires attention. It is a combination of feelings and maintaining high morale is a continuous task for management. In employment, it refers to attitude of participants towards the achievement of organisational goals. It is the sum of satisfactions experienced by an employee as a job-holder and member of an organisation. Higher the worker's morale, more successful the company.

14.9 Self-Assessment Questions:

1. Meaning of Morale

2. Causes of Low Morale

3. Indicators of Low Morale.

14.10 Essay Questions:

1. What is meant by Morale? How can the general level of morale be measured?

2. Explain the positive measures of improving morale?

14.11 Reference Books:

1. Principles of Personnel Management   - Flippo Edwin. B.

2. The Professional Management   - Haimann

3. Management: Principles and Practices   - Mc Farland.

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