

55th EOQ Congress
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"Navigating Global Quality in a New Era"



June 22, 2011 (Wednesday) 55th EOQ Congress

CONCURRENT SESSIONS
KEMPINSKI HOTEL CORVINUS

Wednesday 8:30 – 12:30
Erzsébet tér 7-8, Budapest V.

SALON CORVINUS

Wednesday 8:30 – 10:30

23.1. PEOPLE INVOLVEMENT AND MOTIVATION I.

Session Chair: *János Takács, Electrolux Lehel Ltd., Hungary*

9.00 Involvement of People – Motivation Versus Manipulation
Olga Stajdohar-Paden, Croatian Society for Quality, Croatia

Stajdohar-Paden, Olga (Croatia)

Her basic education is electrical engineering but since many years she has been involved in quality issues. She has been quality manager of the first accredited laboratory in Croatia since the year 1997 and this includes human resources management as well. She actively participates in domestic and international conferences and seminars as organizer and presenter and is the author of many published articles in domestic and foreign magazines. She is author of the book "To swim with ISO and stay alive – What is quality and how to manage it in business and private life". She also believes in life-long learning and takes every opportunity to improve her knowledge and skills in many areas.

Presenter: Olga Stajdohar-Paden

Involvement of people – motivation versus manipulation

*Author: Olga Stajdohar-Paden
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One of the Eight Quality Principles stated in the ISO 9000 standard is: *People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organization's benefit.*

Why is it important to have involved employees?

The prices of raw materials on the world market are defined. The prices of electrical and other types of energy, too. It has become more and more difficult to invent a technological breakthrough. The salaries are agreed among employers, governments and syndicates. So, how to achieve market advantage in this circumstances? How to gain profit with so many parameters dictated by outside forces?

As Kjell A Nordström and Jonas Ridderstrale say in their book *Funky Business – "The main production mean is little, gray, approximately 1,5 kg of weight, and lies between your ears."* Motivated people are that factor which makes the difference.

Involved employees lead to reducing recruitment costs, increasing retention of experienced staff, high level performance and consequently better financial results.

How to fully involve employees?

This has been an important issue ever since pyramids were built in ancient Egypt or even before. The problem is, human beings have an excellent sense for honesty and sincerity. They are not easily cheated. At work and in working environment, everyone has his own inside measuring instrument permanently switched on. This instrument compares the relation and balance between "what I give" and "what I get". If the instrument shows, one gives more than he or she gets (in his/her eyes at least), the correction is taken towards giving less.

Different people have different motivation triggers. It is one of the tasks of managers to find it out and use it for the benefit of the organization. But managers shall also be careful not to cross the thin line between motivation and manipulation. People know when they are being manipulated and react accordingly.

What is the difference between motivation and manipulation?

Normally, we use the term manipulation for handling machines. When we use it for dealing with people it sounds negatively. In his book *Motivate to win* Richard Denny says: "*Manipulation, in my very simplistic view, seems to be getting somebody to do something because you want them to do it; whereas motivation is getting somebody to do something because they want to do it!*"

So, the key difference is are you thinking of what you want and try to direct people to act in your favor or is it something they want and have benefits of it, too. Manipulation has many faces. If you say to your employee, "*I know you can do it until Wednesday*" it can be a compliment (if you really think so), a threat (if the employee is aware of the consequences when the task is not done until Wednesday) or a manipulation (if you want to subtly touch employees' good working habits and sense of duty).

What do people want at work?

The first answer would be, of course, material benefits like salary and other perks. Nobody can say they are not important, but often they are not enough. *“Work begins when you don’t like any more what you are doing”.*

We all want to feel well at work. We want to now our job has meaning, is useful, is appreciated, that we as human beings are accepted, that we can make difference to other people’s life. We do not want boring and monotonous jobs where we do not see the meaning of the results we produce.

How to make jobs more satisfying?

In 1968 psychologist Frederick Herzberg in his article *“One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?”* gave one of the possible answers. Key factors in good job design are job enrichment, meaning enhancing individual jobs to make the responsibilities more rewarding and inspiring for the people who do them. The tasks someone performs are expanded, with more varieties and people have more control over their work.

But before enriching jobs, the work environment must be generally good – good working conditions, fair compensation, appropriate supervision, clear expectations placed upon employees, honest relationships. If not, attempts to do something about satisfaction of people will not succeed.

In 1976 Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham identified five factors of job design that would contribute to people's enjoyment of a job:

- **Skill Variety** – Increasing the number of skills that individuals use while performing work.
- **Task Identity** – Enabling people to perform their job from beginning to the end.
- **Task Significance** – Providing work that has a direct impact on the organization or its stakeholders (and explaining them this impact, sometimes it is not obvious).
- **Autonomy** – Increasing the degree of decision making, and the freedom to choose how and when work is done.
- **Feedback** – Increasing the amount of recognition for doing a job well, and communicate the results of people's work.

The idea is, if we use many skills to perform our job, if we have control of the whole process, not just of one step in it, if we know this what we do is important for our organization, if we are allowed to make decisions on how to do it, and if we get lot of positive feedback for job well done, we will be more satisfied at our work and more motivated to do it well all the time.

There are some strategies we can use to enrich jobs in a workplace:

- **Rotating Jobs** – this gives people the opportunity to constantly learn something new, to see other parts of the organization, to gain better insight in problems of other departments and consequently better communicate with each other
- **Combining Tasks** – allowing people to participate in the whole process or at least in bigger part of the process, in order to increase task identity and their use of variety of skills

These forms of job enrichment may provide increased motivation but also decreased productivity. Namely, people have to learn new tasks and can’t be as efficient as skilled workers.

- **Identifying Project-Focused Work Units** – Instead of having departments specialized for one type of work (marketing, design, purchase), you can join various experts in teams working together on one project or to serve one client. Employees will build client relationships and their autonomy is increased as well as task identity and feedback
- **Creating Autonomous Work Teams** – This relates to groups, teams. If possible, people can also choose team members by themselves. A goal is set for a team. Team members are free to

distribute work assignments, timetables, deadlines, evaluation parameters, and so on. And they are responsible for the results.

- **Implementing Participative Management** – Team members are involved in decision making and strategic planning. Their opinion is important, they bring in their experience and information. People see their place in organization and that they can influence the direction the organization takes.
- **Redistributing Power and Authority** – In many companies there is too much surveillance and too strict hierarchy – one has always to ask somebody for permission. This is not good for employees but also for customers. If you can increase authority of employees in making decisions concerning the work problems and customer related problems you can also increase the speed of solving the problems and increase customer satisfaction
- **Giving More Feedback to Employees on Their Performance** – People need to know when they work well and of course, when they could work better. Too often good work is taken for granted and nobody notices it as something special, poor work is tolerated, not communicated and not corrected. Both leads to dissatisfaction of all parties, little by little motivated workers lose their motivation. Give people feedback on their work, always point out good work, celebrate successes, find out how poor workers can improve their performance or find tasks that better suit them.

A word of caution, it is not always possible (nor necessary) to use all of these techniques and they will not always bring the desired results. They should be used slowly and sensibly.

Job enrichment also brings many opportunities for people's personal development. They become more competent, self confident and able to manage new and unknown situations in a better way. This can be the most valuable asset of an organization in times of crisis.

How to implement a Job Enrichment Program?

Be clear with yourself, do you really want to improve something or it is just a cosmetic. Real changes are motivation, cosmetic changes are manipulation.

The first step would be to find out what makes people dissatisfied in the jobs they do at the moment. The best way is to ask, not just assume what it would be. This can be done by surveys, by direct questions, by observing people's behavior and by combination of all three.

When it is clear what people makes dissatisfied, you should consider what job enrichment opportunities are applicable to the current situation. Usually it is not possible to drastically change working processes and job enrichment is a compromise between business needs and people's wishes. It is useful to have a team composed of members from different departments and let them create a plan of job enrichment.

The next step would be communicating the plan and the implementation program to the people. No matter how good a plan is, if not communicated in a way people would accept it, it will lead to dissatisfaction and non-acceptance. People normally resist changes and need time to adapt. Patience and persistence is needed on the side of managers.

The implemented plans should be monitored, the effectiveness of the measures taken should be evaluated, and corrective actions taken, if needed.

Conclusion

Job enrichment is important for attracting, motivating, and retaining talented people, particularly where work is repetitive or boring. This was the case in the industrial times when lots of jobs were performed by pure human force. Nowadays these jobs are done by machines, but more people are

employed in services which also can be repetitive and boring. So, job enrichment philosophy hasn't lost its purpose.

But there is another important issue. Today's teenagers in a couple of years will be looking for jobs, they will join the work force on the market. Employers are not aware yet, but the new generations are completely different from their current employees born in the years 1950 to 1980.

The new generations are used to search answers on-line, not from their parents and grand-parents, so they will not expect answers from their older coworkers. Professors represent no authority to them, so neither will their bosses.

They easily communicate with complete strangers, forming groups supporting cases they believe in. They know their rights and are ready to insist on them. They are exposed to thousands of commercial messages daily and have their own system how to ignore those messages, it is not easy to reach their attention. Also, they want quick answers and quick rewards.

And they definitely want interesting jobs. Job enrichment in future will perhaps have different forms, but will be equally important as it always was.

CV

Olga Stajdohar-Paden basic education is electrical engineering but since many years she has been involved in quality issues. She has been quality manager of the first accredited laboratory in Croatia since the year 1997 and this includes human resources management as well. She actively participates in domestic and international conferences and seminars as organizer and presenter and is the author of many published articles in domestic and foreign magazines.

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