Discussion 1 Question

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Discussion Question

In an ideal word, learning and performance needs should be attended to. However, in reality, organizations often have limited resources, particularly financial resources. As a result, management likely focuses on training programs or other interventions that will address the performance gaps. These interventions may not be to the employees' (best) interest. This approach has been criticized as not being humanistic. An increasing attention has been paid to create a humanistic work environment where interventions such as training programs are more focused on individual needs, with an assumption that happy workers are also productive workers. What is your take on it?

Discussion Response

As defined by Swanson (2007), humanistic organizations are made up of managers who "assume that their job is to guarantee the high morale of workers, which will then logically lead to increased outputs of goods and services on the part of satisfied workers" (p. 13). In other words, in an ideal humanistic organization, the manager would take a big role in the development of their employees and their morale.

As mentioned in the discussion topic, organizations have limited financial resources to create an abundant of training programs. Trainings are also limited in resources because it can be difficult to measure the return-on-investment (ROI), from a financially standpoint, to measure the success of the program. In my opinion, I think an organization should focus their training programs on equipping its managers with the appropriate skills and knowledge on handling performance and behavior issues.

Another reason to focus on the manager is because of the familiar 70-20-10 training model. 70% of an employee's development is through on-the-job training, 20% is through informal learning, and 10% is through formal learning. That means 90% of the training happens outside of the a formal setting, like a training program, and is handled by managers. Therefore, managers need to be trained and take ownership in the development of their employees. This would create a humanistic work environment, allow individual needs to be met, and increase the employees' morale. I've listed four training topics I've experience that I think would be ideal for managers who work in a humanistic work environment.

Of course, an organization should make trainings for employees. Most organizations create general trainings for employees such as stress management or time management trainings. I believe the best way to develop an employee would be through the use of creating a learning

pathway based on their position or by providing employees with the option to create an

Individual Development Plan (IDP) with the help of a mentor or their supervisor. Another

suggestion in creating a humanistic work environment could come from the organization

allowing the use of Employee Resource Groups (ERG). The purpose of these type of groups is to

provide opportunities for employees to network and possibly be mentored with other employees

in the group. A great example of an ERG is a Women's Professional Group made up of women

who work at the same organization.

Four basic training programs that I've experienced that I would consider for managers

working in a humanistic work environment:

- Leading Meetings - Based on Patrick Lencioni's (2004) book, *Death by Meeting*, which

  covers four different meeting styles that can improve employee and team morale. Not

  every meeting has to be an hour long.

- One-on-ones - 30 minutes to one-hour weekly meetings that allow the employee and

  manager to talk about the employee's performance and behavior as well as discuss

  upcoming projects or opportunities for the employee to develop. This form of meeting

  allows the employee and manager to stay connected instead of waiting until the annual

  performance evaluation meeting as the only time to measure and discuss

  performance/expectations.

- Crucial Conversations - Based on the book by Kerry Patterson and Associates (2011)

  called *Crucial Conversations*. A training that helps managers feel more confident in

  having conversations with their employees about poor performance or poor behaviors.

- Understanding IDPs - Helping the manager understand the benefits of an Individual

  Development Plan (IDP). IDP is a way for an employee to own their development and for

  the manager to help support and drive the employee's growth.

Resources:

Lencioni, P. (2004). *Death by meeting: A leadership fable about solving the most painful*

    problem in business. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R. & Switzler, A. (2011). *Crucial conversations: Tools for*

    talking when stakes are high. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education

Swanson, R. A. (2007). *Analysis for improving performance: Tools for diagnosing organizations*

    and documenting workplace expertise. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Kohler.