

Effect of Counseling on Employee Performance

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ABSTRACT:

Counseling system as a tool to improve employee performance and also increase productivity in organization. Counseling methods and types are asset to employee as well as organization. The success of sustainability of the organization depends upon the performance of human capital. Hence in the fiercely competitive global market to combat the challenges organizations need a continuous review on the counseling of their man power. This paper aims at studying the different types and methods in counseling system, for the betterment of the employee performance to achieve the organizational goals as well as the individual goals. Implementing structured counseling management system lead to the high involvement of the people in the organization and also increases employee productivity.

KEYWORDS: Counseling system, types, methods, implementing structured counseling system, betterment.

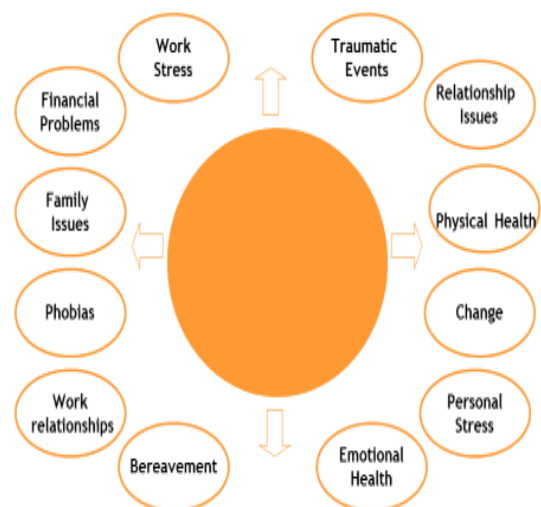
Introduction:

The latest trend catching up in the corporate HR across the world is 'Employee Counseling at Workplace'. In the world of ever increasing complexity and the stress in the lives, especially the workplaces of the employees, employee counseling has emerged as the latest HR tool to attract and retain its best employees and also to increase the quality of the workforce. In today's fast-paced corporate world, there is virtually no organisation free of Stress or stress-free employees. The employees can be stressed, depressed, suffering from too much anxiety arising out of various workplace related issues like managing deadlines meeting targets, lack of time to fulfill personal and family commitments or bereaved and disturbed due to some personal problems.

What is Employee Counseling?

Employee counseling can be explained as Providing help and support to the employees to face and sail through the difficult times in life.

At many points of time in life or career people come across some problems either in their work or personal life when it starts influencing and affecting their performance and, increasing the stress levels of the individual. Counseling is guiding, consoling, advising and sharing and helping to resolve their problems whenever the need arises. Technically, Psychological Counseling, a form of counseling is used by the experts to analyze the work related performance and behavior of the employees to help them cope with it, resolve the conflicts and tribulations and re-enforce the desire results. Organizations have realized the importance of having a stress-free yet motivated and capable workforce. Therefore, many companies have integrated the counseling services in their organizations and making it a part of their culture. Organizations are offering the service of employee counseling to its employees. Organization's has started Counseling at Workplace to retain the current employees, the talented employees, to increase the productivity and this is one of the ways to motivate their employee.



Counseling in Industry:

Employee counseling can be explained as providing help and support to the employees to face and sail through the difficult times in life.



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Ingredients of counseling:

Counseling of staff is becoming an essential function of the managers. The organisation can either take the help of experienced employees or expert, professional counselor to take up the counseling activities. Increasing complexities in the lives of the employees need to address various aspects like:

Performance counseling:

Ideally, the need for employee counseling arises when the employee shows signs of declining performance, being stressed in office-hours, bad decision-making etc. In such situations, counseling is one of the best ways to deal with them. It should cover all the aspects related to the employee performance like the targets, employee's responsibilities, problems faced, employee aspirations, inter-personal relationships at the workplace, et al.

Personal and Family Wellbeing:

Families and friends are an important and inseparable part of the employee's life. Many a times, employees carry the baggage of personal problems to their workplaces, which in turn affects their performance adversely. Therefore, the counselor needs to strike a comfort level with the employees and, counseling sessions involving their families can help to resolve their problems and getting them back to work- all fresh and enthusiastic.

Other Problems:

Other problems can range from work-life balance to health problems. Counseling helps to identify the problem and help him / her to deal with the situation in a better way.

Objectives of counseling:

Counseling helps a person overcome emotional problems and weaknesses relating to performance.

According to Eisenberg & Delaney, the aims of Counseling are as follows:

Understanding self. Making impersonal decisions. Setting achievable goals which enhance growth. Planning in the present to bring about desired future. Effective solutions to personal and interpersonal problems. Coping with difficult situations. Controlling self defeating emotions. Acquiring effective transaction skills. Acquiring 'positive self-regard' and a sense of optimism about one's own ability to satisfy one's basic needs.

Characteristics of Counseling:

Some characteristics of Counseling are:

Counseling is a communication between the counselor and the counseled. It's an exchange of ideas between the two. Counseling is a process and not an advice giving procedure. It is a long-term process 'and takes some time for the person(s) involved to understand the problem and learn how to cope with it. Counseling is about clarifying and helping the counseled to handle him or her in the time of crisis and be able to meet the demands of life. Both professional and non-professional counselors can provide counseling. Counseling is usually private and confidential so that the employee is free to 'speak out without a fear of retribution i.e. penalty from the employers. Counseling is beneficial to the organisation as it helps to solve problems relating to both job and personal life of the employees; thus helping them perform better on the job and also giving a more humane look to the organization.

Benefits of counseling:

The benefits of counseling are:

Helping the individual to understand and help himself understand the situations and look at them with a new perspective and positive outlook helping in better decision making Alternate solutions to problems coping with the situation and the stress

Types of Counseling:

Counseling session depends upon the counselor to give it a direction. The type of direction the counselor gives to the session differentiates it into three types of counseling:

Types of Employee Counseling:

In attempting to help an employee who has a problem, a variety of counseling approaches are used.

All of these counseling approaches, however, depend on active listening. Sometimes the mere furnishing of information or advice may be the solution to what at first appeared to be a knotty problem. More frequently, however, the problem cannot be solved easily because of frustrations or conflicts that are accompanied by strong feelings such as fear, confusion, or hostility. A manager, therefore, needs to learn to use whatever approach appears to be suitable at the time. Flexibility is a key component of the employee counseling process.

1.Directive Counseling: It is full counseling. It is the process of listening to an employee's problem, deciding with the employee what should be done and telling and motivating the employee to do it. This type of counseling mostly does the function of advice, reassurance and communication. It may also perform other functions of counseling.

2.Non-directive Counseling: In non-directive counseling, the employee is permitted to have maximum freedom in determining the course of the interview. It is the process of skillfully listening and encouraging a counselee to explain troublesome problems, understand them and determine appropriate solutions. Fundamentally, the approach is to listen, with understanding and without criticism or appraisal, to the problem as it is described by the employee. The employee is encouraged, through the manager's attitude and reaction to what is said or not said, to express feelings without fear of shame, embarrassment, or reprisal. The free expression that is encouraged in the non-directive approach tends to reduce tensions and frustrations. The employee who has had an opportunity to release pent-up feelings is usually in a better position to view the problem more objectively and with a problem-solving attitude.

3.Participative Counseling: Both directive and non-directive methods suffer from limitations. While the former is often not accepted by independent employees, the latter needs professionals to operate and hence is costly. Hence, the counseling used in most situations is in between these two. This middle path is known as participative counseling. Participative is a counselor-counselee relationship that establishes a cooperative exchange of ideas to help solve an employee's problems. It is neither wholly counsellor-centred nor wholly counselee-centered. Counselor and counselee mutually apply their different

knowledge, perceptions, skills, perspectives and values to problem into the problems and find solutions.

Methods of Employee Counseling:

Effectiveness of counseling largely depends on the methods and techniques as well as the skills used by the counselor. Methods and techniques of counseling change from person to person and from situation to situation. Normally employee counseling involves the following methods:

1.Desensitization: According to Desensitization, once an animal has been shocked in a particular situation, it will continue to avoid it indefinitely. This is quite true in respect of human beings also. Once an individual is shocked in a particular situation, he gives himself no chance for the situation to recur. This method can be used to overcome avoidance reactions, so as to improve the emotional weak spots. If an employee is once shocked by the behavior, approach or action of his superior, he would continue to avoid that superior. It is difficult for such superiors to be effective counselors, unless such superiors prove otherwise through their behavior or action on the contrary. Similarly, once an employee is shocked by a particular situation, he can be brought back to that situation only if he will be convinced through desensitization that the shock will not to take place further. Counselor can make use of desensitization in such situations.

2.Catharsis: Discharge of emotional tensions can be called catharsis. Emotional tensions can be discharged by talking them out or by relieving of the painful experience which engendered them. It is an important technique as a means of reducing the tensions associated with anxiety, fear, hostility, or guilt. Catharsis helps to gain insight into the ways an emotional trauma has been affecting the behavior.

3.Insight: With the help of insight one may find that he has devalued himself unnecessarily, or his aspirations were unrealistic, or that his childish interpretation of an event was inaccurate. Then he can overcome his weakness.

4.Developing the new patterns: Developing new patterns becomes very often necessary when other methods to deal with weak spots remain ineffective. In order to develop new, more satisfying emotional reactions, the individual needs to expose himself to situations where he can experience positive feelings.



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The manager who deals with such individuals may motivate or instigate them to put themselves into such situations, so that their self-confidence may increase. Every counselor must concentrate his full attention on two aspects viz., using of assessment tools, and utilizing counseling methods, choice of which differs from person to person, situation to situation, and from case to case. Employee assistance program is an approach where an employee can get reward which inculcate help in her/his personal problems or any problem the employee is facing during her/his workforce that may include their performance at the job and other specific programs for their well beings. The agenda behind Employee Assistance Program is to improve the conditions of the employee health for the sake of profit of both the individual as well as the organization. It helps in taking care of the personal responsibility associated with the employee and these programs aids in providing an asset to the employee by lowering down their pressure and helping them to grow more.

Following are the advantages of the Employee Assistance program that aims at helping the employees:

1. Increased productivity: Employee Assistance Program helps the employees by providing them enough help both personally and professionally that eventually bring out the best performance out from any employee. This scheme helps in increased productivity by the individual as the more the employee will be satisfied with what she/he has got, the more dedication she/he will put in their work. This will help the individual to grow and provide the employee a long term security goal.

2. Focused and dedicated employees: Often it is seen that the programs meant for the development of the employees helps them to grow more and bring out the best performance out of them. Employee engagement is an important aspect and it only happens when employee is free and has no trouble poking them in their work irrespective of the work being personal or professional. A focused and dedicated employee is the real outcome which is why this program aims to be delivering.

3. Highly motivated: The employees seek to perform their duty with full determination keeping aside the problem she/he is dealing with in her/his daily life. This helps keeping them self motivated and achieve whatever goals they have set for themselves.

This is why a highly motivated employee responses to a successful business and help the dependents that are associated under them to grow more and also helps in building a good and motivated working environment around them.

4. Reducing the Stress: The more relaxed an employee will feel or the more satisfied she/he will be with whatever they are doing, the less stress they will feel. Stressful mind never helps in producing fruitful result but on the other hand if there are such policies that will light up the daily work of an employee, it is surely a boon. This is often seem that by developing a healthy relationship between employees and other people working in the organization helps reducing the stress occurs. With a healthy mind both the individual as well the organization will eventually grow.

5. Supporting in cost: The security offered by not reducing the cost of the employee if she/he is not there to work in their workplace due to some urgent reason is a boon to the organization. The cost cutting is not at all favored by the individual employee unless and until they are not taking it for their personal benefit. This can only happen when the employees start treating their organization as their own and not of anyone else. Security provided by helping in cost is the most important security provided to any employee.

6. Security of time: Under this scheme it is assumed that the amount of time assigned for the individual employees if is not meant for some or the other reason that that employees under this program has the power of compensation that she/he can work extra and compensate for that day. Time is the most valuable asset and it is what an organization need to bound so that no employee take this for granted but by the activation of this policy that can get a compensation which eventually will help them to grow.

7. A more happy employee: A happy employee is not a myth and that is what this policy has helped in proving. A happy employee is the one who in their workplace views no pain and even if they do, they make sure how to get rid of it and under this assistance policy they will get help up to each possible extend. Especially in time of recession they will be paid and rewarded so that they don't feel them unhappy. The primary need or impetus of establishment of this is to make the country more economically stable.



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8. Assurance to confidentiality: By keeping the content of each employee safeguard by either assigning them a unique key and a password they can make sure no one else apart from them can peak in to their personal policy. This is important as every individual has some or other personal issue which they don't want their organization to know or react to. Their confidentiality is maintained thoroughly and will be maintained. By helping the individual grow they need to feel safe and secure and that is the major purpose of this policy.

9. Access to additional resource: If any employee at any given time need to access any new resource in their policy they can upgrade them at any time and enjoy them. Direct access is an additional boon for the employee as it helps the employee to call any one directly on to their office at any specified time they are in need of them. This helps in helping them and save their time of going out.

10. Easy off-side: For various counseling an individual will be required to leave their office and go on side but again this is also appreciated under this scheme as employees and their growth is the only Motto with which this policy works into. Seeing this, they can consider few of the things and ignore mistake that are not hindering or causing any fault to the company.

Disadvantages of Employee Assistance Programs:

1. Limitation in boundary: These services often are not supposed to be technically always working and can stop any time. While majority of them are situated off-site but the once that are online often come across with such problem. Likewise, The professional or the friendly behavior or supervision often tends to make the employee unhappy or feel over the top. They tend to want more personal space and less of involvement from outsiders.

2. Redundancy: There are many employees who often feel that the services provided to them are of no specific use to them and they feel they are bounded in some kind of force which leads them to become what they don't want to become. They might not be aware of the problem they are facing and eventually will be disappointed with everything going across them. The redundancy is often the cause which is keeping the employee policy in hindrance.

3. Mandatory policies: This making the mandatory scheme, often creates problem with the individual as they might happen to be not happy if anything is made compulsory to them without their permission and that keeps disturbing them often and keep them occupied even if they are dealing with something important. They keep on indulging them in their work or talk. By making everything mandatory they are either not paying attention to them or they are merely just there to do their job irrespective of what the other person is getting out of it.

4. Managers at risk: The higher authorities are often termed off with this policy and are made out with no advantage. This is a lack of education about the type and availability of the policy across different forum of employees in the organization. Other people might not be aware of the existing policies they can upgrade in their existing policy and may end up being in a trouble. By avoiding the employee assistance policy one can seek help from others but this again is not always possible to achieve due to the internal problems between the employees and other people working for the upliftment.

5. Lack of information: The most common problem faced is the lack of information about the policy in which they are being assigned. It is only the case when the employees tends to get into account the policies they don't want to get associated with. The employee remains unaware for majority of the time and this may reflect their outcomes. This should be avoided as it may create a problem in the organizations. This drawback needs to be removed as soon as possible.

6. Problem because of the unemployed: If there are people in an organization who are unemployed or not properly employee or meeting the specific employment they should be having, then that might create a trouble. They won't be happily admitting the changes brought up to them nor they will accept any specific change at any time nor they will be contributing to any. Having an educated employee is a must and this should be achieved previously for the sake of a company's profit.

7. Misguidance: This is often arising due to various policies acting over an individual at the same time making them get misguided and unknown to the outcome. A person should be avoided being misguided but often the policies aims at providing only the good for the people associated with the policy making.



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This should be avoided to make full utilization of the policy by each and every employee. The less there will be misguiding the less there will be trust. Fraud is not a good asset for any program to place them into.

8. Expensive: The cost associated with various EAP program are not offered at free of cost and are often very expensive so it becomes difficult for an individual employee to enjoy its full services truly without any outer consent of other employees. Not every individual employee program will be needed to maintained or properly pay attention to, but despite of this they are being maintained or we can say money is being taken from the employees for its proper maintenance which is eventually going to be used for their personal benefit.

9. Too much involvement: The employees are necessarily required to pay on time for the services that has been offered to them. This often creates a hell lot of problem within the organization. People residing in any organization catches with some minor or major issues when it comes about the security of the individual or revealing one's pay. If any individual is not good at fighting her/his bad habits then that should not be a concern for the whole organization.

10. Globally accessible: This is one thing every policy maker should keep in mind. This programs associated with the employee assistance are very much for only a group of individual or for some organizations and not for the whole. This often creates hindrance in the small company as they remain unknown to such programs. They should be made available to every individual so that they can contribute for their own growth and upliftment. Global accessibility is the utmost need for any employee. In order to conclude that, one should enjoy the program that is meant for the upliftment of every individual employee and should understand truly all the services they are providing. In case of any trouble, one should feel free to ask for their help and get the problem solved. One should treat this program as an asset for the growth of every employee and thus the process of putting evaluated efforts will help in delivering fruitful result. This program is only aimed to achieve a unit of transparency in the individual's life and should be made available to one and all. Every employee should take up the responsibility and should focus on the better so that the programs that are being entitled to them are fully and totally enjoyed by them.

SOURCE OF DATA :

This study is purely depends upon secondary data which is collected from the websites, published literature, research papers, articles, magazines, and various other sources.

CONCLUSION:

Counseling can go a long way in helping the employees to have better control over their lives, take their decisions wisely and better change of their responsibilities; reduce the level of stress and anxiety. Counseling of employees can have desirable consequences for the organization, it helps the organization when the employees know that the organization cares for them, and build a sense of commitment with it, it can prove to be significant help to modify the behavior of the employees and more so to re-enforce the desired behavior and improve and increase the employee productivity.

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