

Enhancing Staff's Work Motivation in Vietnamese Companies

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Abstract: Nowadays, with the trend of globalization, with increasingly fierce competition, it is required that businesses that want to succeed must constantly improve their quality and improve themselves to be able to stand firm in the market. In addition, people are being considered as an invaluable asset, which is a fundamental factor that determines the existence and development of an enterprise. In the context that society is gradually shifting to a knowledge-based economy, a business, even with rich and strong financial resources, becomes meaningless without the human element. Without effective employees, the organization cannot achieve its goals. When employees are motivated to work, they will work very enthusiastically, passionately and that will create high labor productivity, contributing to the achievement of business and production goals of the enterprise. This article analyzes in-depth the specific work motivation of staff in several Vietnamese enterprises.

Keywords: work motivation, human resource, Vietnamese companies.

1. Introduction to research problem

Nowadays, with the strongly going on trend of globalization, with the increasingly fierce competition, it is required that businesses that want to succeed must constantly improve their quality in all aspects and improve themselves to be able to stand firm in the market (Tien & Diem, 2020). In addition, people are being considered as an invaluable asset, which is a fundamental factor that determines the existence and development of an enterprise. In the context that society is gradually shifting towards a knowledge-based economy, a business, even with rich and strong financial resources, becomes meaningless without human capital (Dung, 2009, Rewel et al, 2020). Without effective workers, the organization cannot achieve its goals. When employees are motivated, they will work enthusiastically and be passionate about what they do. That will lead to a high labor productivity, contributing to the achievement of business goals of the enterprise (Than, 2012; Nogalski & Tien, 2019). Realizing the importance of human resources for businesses, the authors have chosen a research direction related to improving the motivation of employees in selected Vietnamese companies.

The research content of the article is aimed at the following objectives:

- Giving arguments to prove that labor motivation is an important factor contributing to the success of enterprises today, thereby clarifying the necessity of labor motivation for employees in Vietnamese companies.
- Analyze and evaluate current situation of staff motivation in Vietnamese companies.

- Provide solutions to improve motivation for employees in Vietnamese companies.

Research methods include:

- Observe actual work at the selected companies.
- Through the company's reports and statistics, authors aggregated data of the administrative and HR department related to human resource work in general and motivation work in particular.
- Direct interviews.

In addition, the topic is also done based on the synthesis of knowledge in reference materials based on textbooks, monographs, articles in relevant journals. Simultaneously, in combination with contacting, interviewing and surveying opinions of employees and managers at all levels in the human resources department of companies related to research issues.

2. Literature review

Concept of motivation and work motivation

Motivation: It is the subjective purpose in human activities (community, collective, society) that motivates people to work to meet and satisfy the set needs. Motivation is an abstract concept and is difficult to define because firstly, it is often hidden by its true nature and for many different reasons such as: psychological factors, social views, background, and human outlook of each person. Secondly, motivation always changes over time. At each moment, people will have different needs and motivations. Therefore, an HR manager must know exactly the types of motivations and know how to modify them for each specific employee to match the standards and responsiveness of the organization (Anh et al, 2021, 2021a).

Work motivation: The desire and willingness of an individual to increase efforts towards the achievement of a certain result or goal. Personal motivation is the result of many resources operating simultaneously in the environment in which people live and work. Motivation must be associated with the job, the organization and the working environment. In the condition that other factors do not change, motivation will lead to higher productivity and work efficiency. But this also does not mean that being motivated will inevitably lead to high job performance. Overall, job performance depends on the ability, the training and development of each employee (Anh & Tien, 2019, 2019a, 2019b).

Creating work motivation

Motivation is a system and management policies, measures and tips that affect employees in order to make them motivated at work. Thus, motivating employees is the responsibility and goal of the organization as it expects employees to devote their abilities, qualifications and experience to serve the development needs of all. On the contrary, employees expect to receive material and spiritual benefits, helping them find the joy in their work (Dana, 2020).

The purpose of creating work motivation is to contribute to improving work efficiency for employees. Work motivation measures help stimulate employees' working ability, as well as maximize their work productivity towards the mission that is to complete the assigned work in the best way that contributes to the realization of the short-term and long-term goals set by the organization (Dana, 2020a).

Motivation is the key to improving work results. People only work when they want or are motivated to work. Even when trying to excel at work, people only act because they are driven or motivated by themselves or external factors. Motivation is a skill that has and needs to be learned and is indispensable for managers if the business wants to survive and succeed. Job performance can be seen as a function of competence and work motivation. Work capacity depends on factors such as education, experience, and training. Performance improvement usually occurs slowly

over a sufficiently long period of time. In contrast, work motivation can improve very quickly. Because it affects the attitude and behavior of employees helping employees work more enthusiastically, have a greater sense of responsibility for work and of course that will lead to higher work efficiency and making employees more attached to the organization considering as their second family, so employees will have a sense of loyalty to the organization (Grzeszczyk & Tien, 2019; Long, 2019).

It is not only at work that people really need motivation, but even in daily life, people need motivation to live. A person without the motivation to live will not be able to survive. Natural selection is the greatest life force for human being. Not only humans but also animals and plants, in order to maintain existence, they must change to easily adapt when the living conditions change (Anh & Tien, 2018). In the economy, the state wants to attract foreign investors by creating an open investment environment. That is also one of the driving forces to attract foreign investment. In business, managers motivate employees to work harder, devote themselves, and stick with the company for a long time. The existence and development of the company depends greatly on the working efforts of the staff members, their dedication, devotion and contributions for the company. No company can survive and develop with people who are superficial, mentally depressed and bored at work. Therefore, company needs to create motivation for employees (Dinh et al, 2020). Creating labor motivation for employees not only stimulates high efficiency working psychology for employees, but it also increases labor efficiency and business efficiency, builds a professional staff team to increase competition in the market (Minh & Tien, 2019; Tien et al, 2020, 2021).

Forms of motivation at work

Forms of financial stimulation

□ Wages: In the current market economy, wages are the main economic leverage tools. Through the wages, managers can encourage employees to increase productivity, their sense of responsibility. Wages are tools that perform the function of distributing national income and of payment to employees from employers. Wages are intended to reproduce labor power through their use in exchange for necessary consumable goods and services. Wages stimulate people to participate in labor because wages are a part of income, it affects the living standards of workers.

□ Bonus: Bonus is for employees whose achievements are higher than the prescribed level of each business unit or each enterprise. In addition to the effect of supplementing income for employees, it is also a means to evaluate the merit, sense of responsibility, and achievements of employees for work and business. Bonus is one of the measures to encourage employees to pay attention to production results to ensure requirements on product quality and time to complete the work. Usually in an enterprise, there are the following bonus criteria: Bonus for exceeding the production plan; Bonuses for raising the rate of high-quality products; Bonus for inventions; Periodic salary increase. Bonus form: Direct bonus; Bonus after each production and business cycle.

□ Allowance: Allowance is additional to salary for position and working conditions, job complexity and living conditions. The allowance regimes being applied at present are: Extra-seniority allowance; Allowances for leadership positions; Allowances for concurrently holding leadership positions; Regional allowance; Attraction allowance; Mobile allowance; Toxic and dangerous allowances; Job responsibility allowance; Special allowances; Occupation-specific allowances.

Forms of non-financial stimulation

□ Social insurance: The benefits prescribed by law here are the social insurance that companies must provide for their employees. It includes the following 5 regimes: Sickness allowance; Occupational accident and disease allowance; Pension regime; Maternity; Subsidy scheme. In addition to the welfare programs prescribed by law, in enterprises there are often some forms of voluntary benefits to encourage employees to work and stick with the company: Program health insurance, health protection program, toxic allowance, danger allowance.

□ Training and developing employees: This is an activity to improve and update new knowledge for employees so that they have confidence in their own skills when working. On the other hand, when sending workers to school or training workers in some way will give them a sense of their role in the company and also show them that the company cares for them, thereby making them more attached to the company and work more actively.

□ Building labor norms: Norms are the basis for calculating salary and bonus for workers and it is also a tool to properly assess the ability of workers. The setting of norms should not be too high or too low because too high will make employees find it difficult, tired and dissatisfied, and too low will make them become lazy and not fully promote their ability to work. Therefore, building norms with a scientific basis is very necessary work.

□ Working conditions and environment: Working conditions and environment include specified conditions of air, humidity, noise and working tools. These factors directly support the workers. With bad conditions and environment, the job of labor protection is not guaranteed, which will reduce labor productivity, causing boredom and fatigue at work. An ideal working condition and a secure environment will be a great source of motivation for employees to be enthusiastic and secure at work.

□ The labor relationship: The labor relationship, also known as collective atmosphere in the company, includes: the relationship between the leader and the workers, the relationship between the workers with each other. These relationships will create a cozy environment, a harmonious and friendly atmosphere, where everyone contributes to building the company. Good people help weak people complete their work, superiors are close to subordinates, subordinates well abide by the regulations set out by superiors, making the company's activities better and more effective, employees can reach their full potential.

Motivational Content

Employee motivation includes the following basic contents (Thoi, 2019; Rewel et al, 2020a; Tien, 2019, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c):

- Develop and implement policies to motivate employees. The development of policies to motivate employees is essentially the creation of levers of material and mental stimulation for employees. The levers of material stimulation for employees focus on the following main areas: Building a fair salary and allowance system, ensuring high stimulation; Select reasonable reward forms to stimulate employees to strive to achieve organizational goals. The levers of mental stimulation should focus on the following directions: Creating a reasonable reward system; Creating a favorable psycho-physiological working environment; Organize collective activities to create cohesion among employees; Develop and organize the implementation of reasonable welfare regimes to create peace of mind for employees.

- Create a favorable working environment for employees. To create a favorable working environment, organizations need to focus on the following directions: Creating a safe working environment; Ensure necessary medical conditions; Ensure a reasonable working-rest regime. To perform well the above contents, the organization needs to set up a department in charge of

safety and health. When the organization's size is large enough, it is necessary to establish its own health station and safety and hygiene network within the organization.

- Create peace of mind for employees to avoid occupational risks in the future. In the work, employees can completely avoid those risks if the organization pays full social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance regimes for employees. On the other hand, in order to make a difference with other organizations, to increase the employee's attachment to the organization and the positivity in their contributions, the organization may offer other risk prevention programs such as paying life insurance for employees, or policies for employees to borrow money without or with low interest when their families face difficulties.

- Create personal development of employees. In the hierarchy of needs of workers, self-actualization is a higher-order need. Content that creates personal development for employees is the content to meet that need. To meet this, the organization needs to create an environment and favorable conditions for employees to develop through activities such as promotion and appointment; further education; skills extension; assigning challenging jobs; creating conditions to develop personal brand of employees.

- Create an effective management style and communicate with employees. The issue of creating an effective management style and communicating with employees is something that organizations should do to satisfy employees' needs for esteem and social needs. Management policies and communication behaviors between managers and employees will have the effect of stimulating work motivation or demotivation of employees. An open management style built on the basis of fair and impartial treatment of all members of the organization will create a favorable working environment, employees will not be inhibited from their actions and unfair management caused. The care and respect of employees by managers gives employees the feeling that they are important people of the organization and that the organization needs them and cares about them.

2. Current state of work motivation in Vietnamese companies

Labor force characteristics

Since selected companies are within production and manufacturing industry with a larger proportion of direct labors, in the past year, they mainly recruited employees to work in production plants. This increase in the total number of employees is higher than that of the officestaff because the goal of the companies is to increase the quality and quantity of products. Increasing the number of personnel recruitment and recruiting the right people for the right jobs so that employees can develop their abilities and complete the assigned work will help companies achieve their goals. The specificity of the production and manufacturing industry is hard work, diligence and dynamism in work, so the young workforce is very suitable for this job. With the labor structure of companies mainly under the age of 40, they have taken advantage of the acumen, agility, and high performance of their own. At the same time, combined with the persistent and experienced labor of long-term workers, it creates a great success for companies.

Labor management has long been considered as one of the most important and key activities, with the goal of managing people to effectively and promptly meet the objectives of production and business activities in terms of both quantity and quality of products. Over the years, thanks to the good performance of this work, companies have achieved many successes that not all businesses in the industry have.

Assess the current situation of motivational work for employees

Material (financial) stimulation

- Salary and bonus policy. Wages are the biggest weight in the employee's income which is the leading determining factor in whether they join the organization or not. Today, in addition to paying attention to salary, employees are also interested in bonus issues.

- Allowances. Workers are provided with workwears and protective clothings by companies, including: hats, boots, shoes, gloves, masks and other protective tools to be equipped for each position, if necessary.

-Welfare policy. Compulsory benefits are forms to ensure minimum safe conditions for employees and their families. If unfortunately, accidents or risks occur, employees and their families are heavily impacted. Voluntary benefits are based on mandatory benefit categories. Companies have voluntary benefits such as unexpected hardship allowances for employees, depending on each person's circumstances and conditions, with the minimum level clearly specified in the internal spending regulations.

Mental (non-financial) stimulation

- Human resource training and development. Every year, the companies often organizes training courses on operation and repair of machinery and equipment to serve production well, and organizes training courses for machine operators and accountants.

- Working atmosphere. Employees, when participating in organizations, consider this as their second home, because most of the time they work and live in the companies, so the work atmosphere has a huge impact on employees.

- Leadership attention. In all the companies, the leader has a great influence on his direct employees. If a leader cares about his employees, the productivity and dedication of employees in that organization will be much higher.

- Building corporate culture. Each business has its own culture, which is expressed by: time to work at the company, time to rest, relationships between people in the organization, cultural movements, arts and sports.

Advantages and disadvantages affecting the work of motivating employees

Advantages

- Almost all the companies' headquarters are located in large industrial zones of Binh Duong province, which is one of the dynamic and fast-growing metropolises in the country, located in a modern traffic route, convenient for transporting goods and delivering services.

- The boards of directors of all the companies have a high level of competence and have a clear and specific work assignment, always grasping the progress of the business situation as well as unexpected situations to promptly direct and handle.

- Large teams of employees, highly unified within in the political systems of companies, everyone is secure, excited, united, enthusiastic to work and work with high responsibility for the manufacturing quality goals and serve customers in the best way.

- Organization of labor and life. Working conditions for employees are improved with stable average income, creating peace of mind for dedicated and responsible employees.

Disadvantages

- Bonus. The number of commendations in the year is relatively small, which proves that the company has not paid much attention to motivating employees' performance through reward activities.

- Allowances. With the rules concerning labor protection equipments, it is relatively humble compared to the nature of the job. Companies' leaders also haven't really consulted that with workers.

- Incentives. The work bonuses have been promoting their advantages, but there are still many disadvantages as many forms of rewards overlap.

- Work arrangement. The number of employees who don't have the right professional qualifications is small, but this is also one of the issues that need to be paid attention, because when they are not trained in terms of right professional skills, they will not have the passion for work, so it is difficult to complete the assigned work well.

- Relationship between superiors and employees. The relationship between superiors and subordinates is not really close and strong, because the superiors and their employees have not shown and share the same opinion at work as well as in life to understand and care for each other in social life during and outside of the work.

3. Improvement solutions and recommendation for Vietnamese companies

Causes of the current state of training for employees

There are many causes of disadvantages.

- The companies' mechanism of training and encouraging self-training is not really attractive to employees.

- The number of workers who can go to school and training centers to improve their work skills is still limited. The reason is that the funding for training is still limited in addition with many complicated bureaucratic procedures.

- The companies only pay attention to business results and total revenue of the company, but have not paid much attention to the building trust and peace of mind of workers during their work.

- Policies on reward, promotion and training are not specific, detailed and tailored to each person' needs and interests.

- Sometimes, the identification of workers' personal and training needs is still subjective, not considering the capabilities of each of them.

The activities of companies are being placed in the context of the changing economy and society affected the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The emergence and development of this new technology not only changes the product, but also changes the form of work, requiring leaders in particular and employees in general to often and regularly updated their knowledge, skills and relationships to adapt to the new business environment (Vinh & Tien, 2019). The companies' field of activity is a potential, diverse and challenging when the market requirements are increasingly diverse and complex, as well as fierce competition and full experience expected from rivals in the industry.

Some solutions on motivating employees

Solution for material (financial) stimulation

□ Salary. In the process of globalization and international integration, domestic enterprises are especially facing and competing with many foreign counterparts. Companies are in the process of development, so they need to care and focus on employees, who are the main components to bring success to them. One of the measures to encourage and motivate employees in the companies to work actively and effectively is salary. As in Vietnam, salary occupies a high position and is very important, it directly affects the life of workers.

□ Bonuses. So far, the bonus schemes at the companies is doing very well. Therefore, they should be maintained, developed, and further enhanced. Most companies have a reasonable reward and punishment policy.

□ Allowances. They ensure all kinds of service benefits for employees and improve their life standard and quality.

Solutions for mental (non-financial) stimulation

The benefits and service regimes that the company is implementing are achieving certain results, such as compulsory benefits: retirement benefits, labor accidents and occupational diseases, sickness, maternity, death are being done very well and should be kept continued as all workers feel very satisfied.

Solutions for organizational, human resource and administrative work

There should be an effort to check the working time at the companies, in fact the use of time of employees during the work at the companies has not been strictly recorded and there is still a lot of time wasted at work. Tightening the working time of employees will increase productivity and product quality, especially creating a strongly disciplined working spirit and culture for employees along with the agile industrial working style. This is also a culture for each business, and companies should also apply to their human resource management.

4. Conclusion

Motivation is an integral part of the management in business. It is playing an extremely important role in determining the work efficiency of employees, it will motivate employees to work hard, strive to improve learning, improve work efficiency and product efficiency of business and at the same time increase the income of workers. This is particular in this period, when the human factor is increasingly concerned and appreciated for the development and maintenance of a business.

For the selected companies in our research, the issue of employee motivation is even more significant because of its necessity. In the activities of motivating employees of companies, there are still some employees who are not very satisfied with this work. Companies need to focus on activities of job performance evaluation and job analysis. In addition, they also need to understand the aspirations and needs of each of employees so that they can take appropriate measures to motivate them.

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