

Organizational Morale

SIRTAJ KAUR

FINANCE TRAINER, SBV GOVT SCHOOL, MANGOLPURI, NEW DELHI

Abstract: most people thrive on feeling appreciated. You can improve employee morale by showing your appreciation in simple ways, such as rewarding an employee by saying, “job well done,” or, “thank you for the good work.” Morale is a mental and group phenomenon which determines the individual’s willingness to cooperate in any organization. It is a human behavior in which a person derives his total satisfaction in his general environment. It indicates the happiness of the employees with the organizational environment with their full interest towards the organization.

Keywords: Employee Morale, Motivation, Employee Efficiency, Employee satisfaction, Productivity, Leadership, Communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Morale is essentially akin to job satisfaction. It represents the integration of an individual with the team and the organization itself. It is the attitude of employees and group towards their work environment and towards voluntary cooperation to the goals of the organization, where there is confidence in the attainment of these goals and the confidence in the means of attainment in the leader, organization and finally in oneself.

A company’s work force is one of its greatest resources. Morale describes how people feel about their jobs, employers and companies. it’s important for employers to take care of their work force and foster high morale so that they can keep their organizations running smoothly.

Morale has a positive relationship with the satisfaction. High morale is the result of job satisfaction which result of motivational attitude of the management. There are three approaches to Morale:

- 1. CLASSICAL APPROACH:** This approach assumes that satisfaction of basic needs leads to morale. Higher the satisfaction leads to high morale.
- 2. PSUCHOLOGICAL APPROACH:** This approach emphasizes that apart from basic needs, psychological needs also influence the morale of the people.]
- 3. SOCIAL APPROACH:** It recognizes the morale as social phenomenon which persuades the people to live in society or groups in achieving the common goals.

2. INDICATORS OF MORALE

A manager should always be interested in knowing the level of morale in his organization. Morale cannot be quantified. However, it can be talked of his comparative terms.

Though it is always possible or advisable that a manager conducts morale surveys, which can help a manager to know the status of morale the following are the morale indicators that give an idea to the manager about the status of morale.

1. The rate of rejection of finished products by Quality Assurance Dept.: The higher the rate of rejections, the lesser is the morale.
2. The rate of wastage of raw material: The higher the wastage, the lower is the morale.

3. Petty grievances: The higher the number of the petty grievances the lower is the morale.
4. Absenteeism: In the Indian situation, absenteeism is dependent upon seasons such as sowing etc. and the festivals. High absenteeism during these periods need not indicate low morale.
5. Resignation of skilled personnel: There being large unemployment, an unskilled or a semi-skilled person, even if unhappy with the job cannot leave the job. On the contrary, however, a person having higher levels of skills can leave the job in case he is unhappy with the job. Therefore, exodus of skilled personnel is a morale indicator.
6. Exit Interviews: Since an employee who is leaving the organization is not inhibited by the organizational constraints, he can afford to give his feeling with regard to any practices in the organization. The exit interviews do constitute a good source of information for the management to set right many non-productive or the pernicious practices or procedure in the organization

Employees of an organization with high morale

1	Consider themselves winner.
2	Censure any member who brings discredit on the department.
3	Are among the best in the world at what they do and they know it.
4	Express admiration for their leaders.
5	Brag about the accomplishments of colleagues.
6	Have a very low rate of supervision.
7	Require virtually no supervision.
8	Cooperate with one another.
9	Do their jobs even when the boss is not working.
10	Display a relaxed camaraderie.
11	Make suggestions for improvement.
12	Voluntarily come early and stay late.

3. VARIOUS ASPECTS OF MORALE

1. Morale and happiness are not the same.

Supervision often confuses the concept of morale and happiness. Morale and happiness are two different things. Some happy employees have poor morale and some have high morale some unhappy employees have high morale and some have low morale.

2. Elitism is the cornerstone of department morale.

Elite department tend to have high morale because members take pride in their membership. They develop camaraderie, cohesiveness and loyalty to one another and their leaders.

3. Departments have to earn high morale.

High morale cannot be bestowed on a department or its members. A leader must set the stage so that department members can become the best at what they do. Department members know department deficiencies. The leader must set high standards and relentlessly enforce them. The department must adopt a culture of excellence.

4. The department must rid itself of employees who do not meet standards.

Department leaders must ensure that poorly performing employees do not remain in the department. Unless some weak employees has some decisively and clearly remediable problem, the department of the employees. Particularly in soft skills jobs, poorly performing employees tend not to improve.

5. Money and goodies cannot buy morale.

Give people enough money or goodies and they will do ALMOST anything. There is no doubt that money motivates people to do things. While money may motivate people to do something, it does not raise morale.

6. Goods leadership is essential for high morale.

Department members must have confidence in their leaders. The leaders must be leaders, not just by virtue of their rank, but by earning the respect and admiration of department members. A poor leader can quickly destroy department morale

7. Leaders of departments with high morale are vulnerable.

Leaders of departments with high morale are very vulnerable. Peers and superiors envy them. Envy is a vicious enemy. Insecure bosses feel threatened by subordinate supervisors receiving too much praise.

8. Leaders have to keep lines of communication open with department members.

This is a truism. Yet, so many bosses are “too busy” to maintain a dialogue with their subordinates. One wonders why so few people in leadership positions actually do keep open the lines of communication.

4. FACTORS AFFECTING MORALE

The employee morale is a very complex phenomenon. There are important factors which influenced the levels of morale which are described below:

1. The Organization: The first most factor which affect the employee morale is organization itself. The organization influences the worker’s attitudes to their jobs. The better or worse reputation of an organization to the public, their employees have same attitudes towards it.

2. The Nature of work: The nature of work also affects the attitude of workers towards their job as well as his morale. If employee is performing routine and specialized job again and again, he will feel bored and alienated. this repetition of task makes the working situation worse. Lack of understanding organizational goals may also affect the employee’s morale.

3. The level of Satisfaction: a worker with high morale derives from his job to another for better level of satisfaction. If employee perceived better job factors and satisfaction, his morale will tend to be higher than earlier. The factors which tend to employee’s satisfaction are as opportunities for promotion, job security, steadiness of employment, opportunities to learn the job and use his own idea, pay, working conditions, recognition, co-operation of co-workers, group relationship, etc.

4. The level of Supervision: The level of supervision by the organization to thee employees has a tremendous influence on his morale. The employee with freedom to do the job has high level of morale. High rate of employee turnover indicates that the leadership is ineffective.

5. Worker’s perception of Reward System: The worker’s perception of past rewards and future opportunities for reward affects their morale. If the workers regard the rewards as fair and satisfactory, their morale will tend to be higher. If the rewards and opportunities for the future tend to be bleak, morale will tend to be low. Opportunities for satisfaction lie ahead in the future.

6. The Employee’s Educational level: studies have concluded an inverse relationship in the educational level of the employee and his morale. Higher the educational level, lower will be the job satisfaction and vice-versa. The higher he thinks he should be; the more dissatisfaction he will be.

5. IMPROVING EMPLOYEE MORALE

Improving employee morale benefits everyone involved in a work place. Boosting employee morale means that people will take more pride in their work. Showing appreciation and boost employee morale is by being friendly and interested in your employees. A warm smile and a sincere query about how one is doing will in turn motivate employees.

Encouraging social interaction between employees and immediately resolving conflict is another way to improve employee morale. social interaction positively influences cooperation and a general enthusiasm about coming to work every day. Isolation, on the other hand, causes depression and a lack of motivation. Having a goal to work towards that directly benefits the employee can help create enthusiasm, which tends to be contagious.

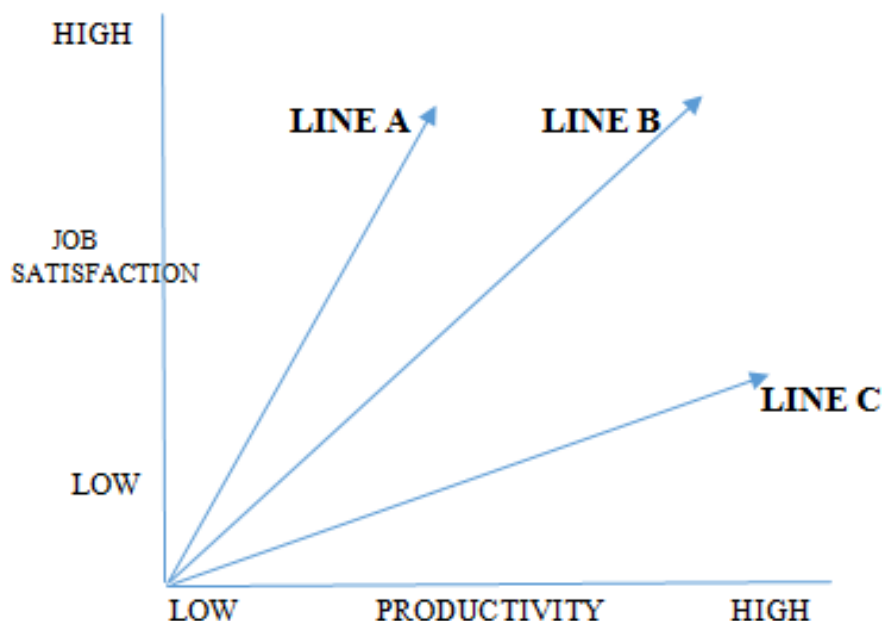
A very important factor in improving employee morale is the work environment. Psychological research shows that atmosphere greatly and directly affects the motivation level and feeling of well-being of the employees in a work place.

Following are some of the ways to build employees morale:

- 1. Use variety:** Employees have different ideas and expectations for their jobs, so offering varied morale boosters is the best way to impact employee morale across the board. Forms of morale booster might include motivation, compensation or recognition.
- 2. Allow employee a sense of ownership in their jobs:** Invite and encourage their ideas and inputs. Let them know that you value them and their opinions. Implement their suggestions when feasible. Treat your employees with respect and it will go a long way to do a better job and remain loyal to your company.
- 3. Recognize their efforts:** A simple recognition for a job well is simple and inexpensive way to acknowledge your employees and let them know how much you appreciate them and they work they do.
- 4. Help them improve:** Most employees want to do a good job. You can offer them training opportunities and a variety of subject areas related to specific tasks, customer services, leadership and more. Helping employees feel better about themselves will help them feel better about the company. This give a tremendous boost to morale and job satisfaction.
- 5. Communication:** The combination of fear and ignorance is powerful, indeed, so keep your employees in the loop. Weekly meetings, open door policies and regular visits with employees will help quell the rumors that are often damaging to staff morale.

6. MORALE AND PRODUCTIVITY

Morale reflects the attitude of employees towards their work, it will be of interest to know if it has any bearing on productivity. Morale represents the integration of an individual with the team and the organization itself. There is positive relationship between morale and productivity. The higher the morale the higher is the productivity. This can be seen from the following graph:



In the above graph,

Line A represents high morale, low productivity.

Line B represents high morale, high productivity.

Line C represents high productivity, low morale.

High productivity involves a combination of ability, training, work habits, performance goals, etc. curve A above where morale is high but productivity is low indicating the management's failure in the proper discharge of management functions, chiefly, the planning function.

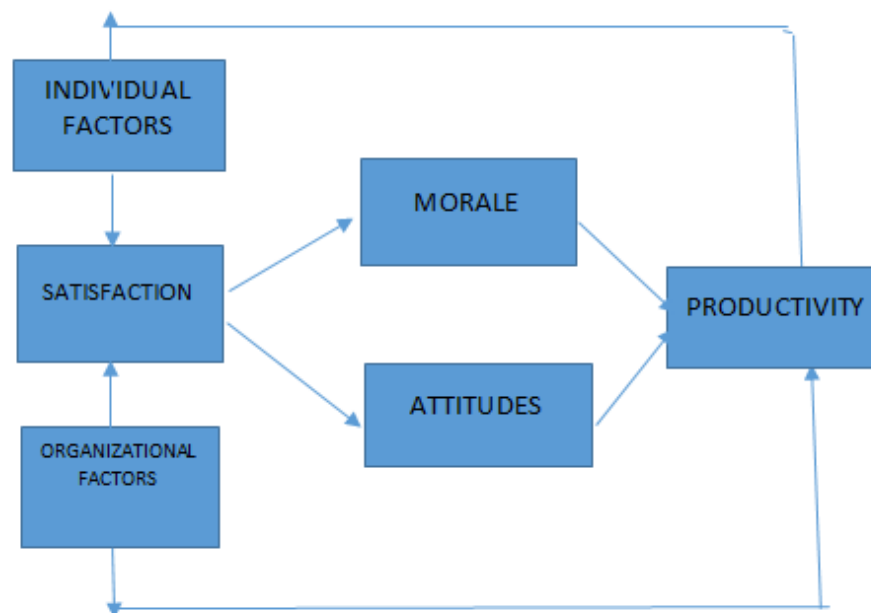
Productivity can be high in spite of morale being low because of the rigid systems and controls imposed by the management.

The situation where productivity is higher in spite of morale being low or productivity being lower in spite of morale being high do not last long. In the first situation, productivity is high because of the strict management controls and close supervision. It also happens in an atmosphere where the people are treated as machines. In this situation, the management is apparently creating discontent in the organization, which may blow up in its face. When this happens, the productivity also dips.

In the second situation, when morale is high but productivity is low, slowly people distance themselves from the organization because of the disillusionment about the management abilities. In this situation, after some time, the morale comes down. Thus in both these situations ultimately morale as well as productivity are at their nadir.

Every manager is always interested in curve 'B' indicating high morale as well as productivity. But morale is not a static phenomenon. Today the morale high but something many go wrong and the morale might start coming down. In other words, a manager must have his fingers on the morale in the organization. No doubt, a manager can know the level of morale in his organization by morale surveys. These morale surveys involve drafting of questionnaires, interview people, tabulate and analyze the data. This may be time-taking process, instead he may pay due attention to some of the morale indicators that give an idea about the status of morale at a particular time.

FACTORS THAT DETERMINE PRODUCTIVITY



7. CONCLUSION

Even in the best times, morale is a delicate, unpredictable thing. Most companies are reactive. No organization is good at being when it comes to morale.

Morale is more than a people issue; it is a business issue. Low morale increases turnover, and turnover (when unplanned) is bad for the company and its reputation, department and efficiency. The most important tool for recognizing and combating bad morale is communication. Building morale through communication means more than smiling and keeping an open door, however. It means developing trust between company and employees and that kind of connection is made by both personally and professionally.

Bad morale is a very real, very serious problem that demands good leadership. The first step is to acknowledge the existence of a morale problem. If the efforts are made to examine the management and communication skills and need for improvement, morale will go up and employees are find with loyal, resilient team that will not bolt for the hills once the economy improves.

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