

Happy employees as a basis for health management

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Abstract. The paper deals with one of the most pressing problems in the field of management, the problem of employee satisfaction with working conditions. The value orientation of modern Russian society has changed significantly, partly under the influence of the axiological dominants of foreign economies, and partly due to the processes of reforms in the Russian society. At the forefront were such categories as success, efficiency, flexibility, stress resistance. However, all these trends do not always have a positive effect on the physical and mental health of employees. The experience of foreign colleagues dealing with occupational physiology can be taken into account in Russian conditions. More and more attention is paid to the problem of preventing premature employee burnout, to the study of the main motivational mechanisms that contribute to improving the quality of work. The study aims to analyze the objective and subjective factors of assessing employee performance in terms of quantitative and qualitative indicators. At the same time, the authors set the following goals: the systematization of the results of the employee survey; identification of the main problems in the workplace; development of mechanisms and methods for maintaining the motivation and health of employees; and, finally, the formation of an optimal image of a modern manager, focused on improving performance indicators and at the same time maintaining a good psychological climate in enterprises (such as government agencies, educational institutions, private companies or small businesses). It is concluded that a happy employee with a certain freedom of action, deserving the confidence of their superiors, is ready to fulfill the assigned tasks even in the face of loss of wages. Internal balance acquires the highest value for a modern employable person, and this must be taken into account when forming the road map for enterprises.

Keywords: professional communication, preservation of health and efficiency in the process of work-related activities, health management.

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1 Introduction

In the modern world, no one will be surprised by the question of whether a person likes their job. You can hear different answers, for example: “I am very lucky. I take part in interesting projects. I have space for making independent decisions. We are a great team. The boss always listens to me.” This happens too...

Many things can make a person happy: someone will be happier if they have excellent health or a large family, while for others, career growth and an increase in social status are more important. People understand happiness very differently. However, under all circumstances, well-being is the key to all meaningful changes in life.

At the same time, it should be noted that both in Germany and in Russia for more than half of the population, work is associated with the need to provide for themselves and their families. The growing material needs lead to an increase in the retirement age. Many people try to work as long as possible.

Isn't this a reason to think about the positive aspects of the necessity to work? Hence the main question that is posed in this paper: is it possible to think that people who go to work happily are happier and healthier than those who work thinking only about the financial necessity of work?

2 Methods of study

In this study, we use methods of statistical analysis of the material (such as statistical observation, sampling, correlation analysis, creation of variation series, and series of dynamics). The focus is on surveys conducted by leading social institutions (World Health Organization (WHO), university centers, psychologists dealing with the problems of studying the environment within a team, specialists in the field of occupational physiology, lawyers specializing in the field of labor law [1–3]).

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Concepts for the protection of employees' health. European experience

Until the 80s, to protect occupational health, special attention was paid to the safety of employees in the workplace. Today, before starting work at some enterprises associated with work at high altitudes or low temperatures, employees still undergo mandatory medical control; at the construction site, it is obligatory to wear helmets, in laboratories the staff work in protective gloves. This example can be continued. The main thing is to avoid injury when working in life-threatening conditions and in the presence of factors that threaten one's health.

In contrast to the point of view of pathogenesis (looking at factors causing health disorders) in 1978, the Israeli sociologist Aaron Antonovsky (1923–1994) formulated the idea of salutogenesis as a concept for the development of reserve sources of health in an individual. The main question of the concept is: what preserves human health? [4]. This theory is based on the idea of the relationship between interpersonal communication and the social environment of a person with the state of their health [5]. The focus of the question has fundamentally changed. It is not so much what can harm one's health that matters. More important is what can preserve it [4].

The main idea of A. Antonovsky was the concept of a person's awareness of the unconditional significance of their professional activity, the perception of professional life as useful, meaningful, important for the world around them. Long-term dissatisfaction, negative

emotions have a bad effect on the immune system and contribute to the development of chronic diseases. A sense of self-worth and positive experiences, on the contrary, have a positive effect on health and work-related productivity [6–8].

The 1986 WHO conference in Ottawa was devoted to this topic for the first time. The so-called Ottawa Charter was drawn up, which states: Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health [9]. As a result of the proclamation of the “Life Complex” at the Ottawa Conference, WHO published a different definition of health in 1987: “Health is a resource which permits people to lead an individually, socially and economically productive life.” This is no longer the main goal of life, but rather a means to achieve goals.

This program uses a life-complex approach. It is a place where people actively use and shape their environment, which means that they raise and solve health issues. Such complexes include schools, workplaces, hospitals, towns, and villages.

Since its inception, the Ottawa Charter has provided impetus and guidance for health promotion in various sectors of society and has also promoted the development of the social and organizational sciences, including epidemiology.

Building on Antonovsky’s concept of salutogenesis, Professor Badura of Bielefeld University developed the concept of health management, which has found widespread use in the European Union. This concept prioritizes the following: participatory management style, the culture of trust, transparency of decisions, process-oriented work organization, teamwork; psychosocial well-being (elimination of feelings of anxiety and a state of helplessness), high self-esteem and self-confidence, high job satisfaction, high motivation, close relationship with the company, social and managerial competencies are clearly expressed and generally accepted; low staff turnover, willingness to innovate, mutual assistance, low consumption of addictive substances, a healthy lifestyle including good nutrition, high physical activity, etc.).

This structure is completed by the image of a manager who is focused on maintaining the health of employees and can correctly build work processes taking this task into account.

3.2 What is health management?

In economics, management is understood as a “direct and indirect influence on the process of achieving the goal” [10]. Who is suitable for this position? There is an opinion that managers focused on preserving the health of employees are better at structuring, optimizing work processes, and competently justifying their requirements. Besides that, they are capable of other things. They put the relations in the team at the forefront, contribute to improving the climate, raising the motivation of employees, and have unconditional social competence. They can combine the personal aspirations of an employee and the goals facing the organization, setting an example thanks to sincere involvement and interest.

A 2013 study by Professor Heike Bruch from the University of St. Gallen shows how much more effective is the work of the managers who are focused both on achieving high production indicators and on providing creative freedom to employees [11]. The group formed by Professor Bruch identified six main factors of a healthy management style [12]:

1. Employees are focused on maintaining a sense of confidence. The manager ensures transparency in the company’s activities.
2. Employees whose work is not appreciated are more likely to demand a salary increase: “a word of appreciation is a second salary”.
3. The manager should measure the employee’s capabilities when defining their workload since overwork or insufficient workload makes the employee sluggish, unhealthy, unhappy, and dissatisfied.
4. Health management nurtures people’s forces and doesn’t squeeze them out.
5. The employee needs to be provided with freedom when performing work assignments.

6. It is important to maintain a healthy climate: good relations with colleagues and, importantly, with management make the work environment better.

3.3 Theoretical grounds

The German-Russian project implemented at the I. I. Mechnikov Northwestern State Medical University in St. Petersburg (2015-2018) was devoted to the study of working conditions of Russian employees at foreign enterprises operating in the Russian Federation. The emphasis was placed on the question of how the systematic maintenance of the employees' health affected the results of work.

We took the Siemens gas turbine technologies plant in the Leningrad region as an example. 144 employees of the company took part in the survey. As part of the study, we used the Weissman method, which allows us to study the level of employee stress, and the method of the research group of Finnish Professor Ilmarinen, associated with the study of the level of employee performance. Researchers have concluded that for most people, stress at work means the following: lack of information about the prospects of professional growth; about the assessment of the work carried out by the management; a sense of anxiety in connection with the decisions taken; the inability to influence the decisions of the management.

In this regard, an obvious question arose on how we could influence the situation [13].

One of the ways out was a systematic study of the conditions of employees. Today, many European companies have a position like a Chief Happiness Officer or a Feelgood Manager. In Germany, such departments can be quite large (it depends on the size of the enterprise).

Some firms invite experts who assess the psychological state of employees and their level of working capacity in different conditions. For example, a research team from Oxford interviewed 1,800 call center employees of British Telecom in eleven offices for six months. Data on the psychological state of employees were correlated with production indicators. It turned out that employees were 13% more productive in the weeks when they felt happier [14]. The results speak for themselves.

3.4 Does money make one happier?

The relationship between earnings and psychological well-being cannot be unambiguously determined. It can be stated that healthy people with a family who are satisfied with their work and live in harmony with others are happier. Men are generally happier than women; children and the elderly are happier than middle-aged people.

The studies of the Nobel laureates in the field of economics Daniel Kahnemann and Angus T. Aton are illustrative. They studied the value orientations of Generation Y, young people born in 1980 and 1999. It turned out that the following pattern is observed concerning income: an increase in wages from 15,000 to 30,000 euros per year significantly improved the mood of the respondents; an increase from 30,000 to 60,000 euros improved it even more. However, after exceeding the income limit of 120,000 euros or more, the respondents felt a sense of anxiety. Such income requires more responsibility, concentration, takes away what helps to be happy, i. e. free time for communication with family and leisure, emotional comfort, maintaining a work-life balance [15].

Happiness is not a privilege, says Jurgen Weibler, a specialist from the University of Hagen (Fern-Universität, Hagen) [16]. The professor focused on Generation Z, focused on internal balance and psychological comfort. These young people who have been digital natives since childhood, who grew up on the Internet, with smartphones and other gadgets, least of all want to sit in offices, doing boring work while waiting for Friday. Stress, even with good earnings, is not for them. Today work can be done online. When building a

management model, it is necessary to take into account these important socio-psychological factors.

4 Conclusion

Today's university graduates are potential leaders. It is important to realize that in modern management, professional knowledge (hard skills) and social competencies (soft skills) are equally taken into account when applying for a job. The happy state of employees is one of the indicators that is taken into account when summarizing the activities of enterprises. This is something that should be learned.

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