

Moving Towards Building A Healthy Organization

A lot has been written in my previous articles on the impact of politics in an organization. I thought before I go ahead and discuss the values and belief systems of the individuals promoting politics in the organization it is important to understand how to build healthy culture in the organization. We will therefore discuss the values and belief systems of politics in the organization in my subsequent articles.

It is important to first understand what a healthy organization really means. An organization is primarily a set up of different groups and individuals in an environment of interdependence. Interdependence implies that individuals and groups depend on each other, for cooperation and successful implementations of the tasks. Cooperation is an outcome of trust and commitment towards the collective goal of the organization. In order to achieve this the members of the group must be competent enough to manage their tasks, only then the collective task can be achieved. Thus the essential factor again is the people. It is essential to provide an environment where individuals can nurture and develop their skills. This nurturing provides the necessary confidence and the creativity to achieve a task. When competence exists then true empowerment can be implemented. Empowerment essentially means individuals are provided opportunities to build the requisite competence, given a brief on the assignment and then a free hand and resources to execute it. And the environment which cooperates through these resources. Resources are often the source of power blocks.

Trust and cooperation is the essence of healthy organization. Firstly the leaders in the organization have to inculcate faith in the members within the organization that they themselves believe in an environment of trust and cooperation. The best way is to practice it. Do not promote backbiting and back-stabbing, and kill it at that very moment. Actions speak better than words. Promote an environment of free feedback. When a climate survey or any other activity of such kind is undertaken members want to see the issues being acted upon. Unfortunately, such surveys do not result in any outcome except data collection and analysis. The execution aspect is completely overlooked. The members then lose faith.

The personnel department needs to be empowered to take steps for clean up operation. In my workshops, I have mostly experienced personnel departments as a primarily manpower recruitment and planning set ups. The only other major activity undertaken by this department is appraisal or reviews for increments and promotions. This not necessarily true for all organizations. However a fact in a few organizations. Personnel departments not only need to be empowered for a much powerful role but also should be insulated from the politics.

It is important to discourage an environment of 'Network' in an organization. This leads to the zone of politics. I am not saying teams should not be built and then everyone is on their own. The connotation of 'Network' has a larger implication, and I am sure does not need elaborate explanation and is self-explanatory.

The top management should extensively take feedbacks and demonstrate actions towards continuous

Moving Towards Building A Healthy Organization

improvement in the work culture and work ethics. Feedbacks are important. Expose the people who play dirty. Give them a chance to improve. The message should clearly be 'shape up or ship out'. The best way to internally find out if feedbacks exist is, whether the members are giving each other sugar-coated pills as a feedback. If they are then there is no trust and cooperation within the organization.

Work towards giving a meaning to jobs of the members by helping them discover their personal mission. It is important for all of us to discover what is that special work we wish to do in this life. That special work alone gives us the job satisfaction. Align their personal missions to the company mission. The unique sense of contribution shall result automatically. Nurture an environment of growth through quality and performance than recommendations and performance alone. Emphasis on quality results in an individual's development and growth. Only performance, can happen any which way.

The final test in implementing a culture of cooperation is to be brutally true to your own self. A true answer which you know for the question "Is there dirty politics in my organization"? Either there is or there is not. Avoid the words 'little or sometimes'. These are cosmetic words for cover up. If there is politics then make a firm resolution to abolish it. It pays in the long run. What you sow is what you reap. That's the law and you must believe in it.