

Does **LOYALTY** really exist?

Executive teams that don't practice what they preach should not expect employee loyalty.

Employees are considered to be the core of an organization, and the success or failure of the organization is, to a great extent, attributed to their performance. They pave the road to prosperity or the road to doom. Therefore, and for that reason, organizations are seeking, demanding and insisting on employee loyalty to fulfill their vision, but the question here is: Does this phenomenal that we teach at college or announce in the company really exist and do we positively practise it? Let us explore this!

"Plato originally said that only a man who is just can be loyal, and that loyalty is a condition of genuine philosophy."

WHAT IS LOYALTY?

In general, loyalty is standing up for something we believe in, having unwavering faith. Loyalty is the way that a mature and integrated mind behaves. It indicates undivided wholeness of consciousness and shows richness of the mind. When the mind is not integrated, it is agitated, disloyal and opportunistic. Loyalty is, fundamentally, an emotional attachment.

Employees' loyalty can be best described in terms of a process, where certain attitudes give rise to certain behaviors, intended or actual.

Loyalty involves determination and an ability to wait, carry out and practise what is obeyed, with full awareness and responsibility, determination and ability that must be proven in the attitudes and behavior of daily life and in the act of carrying out tasks.

In 2015, the American Management Association (AMA) conducted research that found that 52% of managers considered their employees to be less loyal than they were five years ago. Just 11% considered employees to be more loyal. Employee loyalty is an increasingly rare commodity.

Loyalty has two dimensions, internal and external. The internal dimension is the emotional

component that includes feelings of caring, of affiliation and of commitment, and this is the dimension that must be nurtured and appealed to. The external dimension has to do with the way loyalty manifests itself. This dimension is comprised of the behaviors that display the emotional component and is the part of loyalty that changes the most.

WHAT FACTORS AFFECT LOYALTY?

In one of my previous articles, I pinpointed the significance of analyzing why people stay with a company (the Stayers), as opposite to why people leave a company (the Leavers). I surmise that organizational culture is important in improving employee satisfaction that will impact on their loyalty. Consequently, we cannot ignore the correlation between workplace culture and employee satisfaction, and their willingness to stay.

The organizational culture is directly linked to the issue of commitment, especially commitment to work, at the same time referring to the individual and personality characteristics of employees. Loyalty has to be built into the DNA of organizational culture.

Loyalty has become more difficult to obtain in the work place. In the past, employees believed, when they were hired by a company, that they would be with that company until they retired, but such a belief no longer exists due to the fact that, starting from the 1980s as companies sought to increase profits, workers' perceptions of lifetime employment were shattered by corporate downsizing and company relocations.

Furthermore, we have seen, very transparently, the impact of Coronavirus globally on employment, and how companies have reacted, from downsizing, layoffs, salary and wage cuts to terminations.

Loyalty is based on a symbiotic or mutually beneficial relationship between the employee and the organization. But this relationship is

much more than just a simple benefit/cost analysis, and this is where most CEOs and HR Practitioners seem to get lost.

LOYALTY RULES

The first step is to redefine loyalty as internal feelings that can be manifested in a variety of new ways. Instead, what happens most often is that the leaders of an organization feel that they are very loyal to their employees and that the organization has policies in place to reflect that,—but that workers don't understand what management is trying to do.

On the other hand, employees who feel they are very loyal to their companies aren't demonstrating it in ways management understands.

The terms of the loyalty are far different from what they were in the past. Rather than a blind corporate allegiance, employees show their commitment through their efforts for the organization and how the company responds to that.

In the 90s, I witnessed the horrific termination of my hotel General Manager, who spent more than 15 years with the company, for some trivial reasons that could have been corrected, but the embarrassing part of the story is that the divisional VP Human Resources was lecturing all managers about company loyalty.

I couldn't stop laughing and asked him, "Do you want us to be loyal to the company, while the company isn't loyal to us? Terrible silence was the answer, and this is organizational hypocrisy.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF STAYING AND LOYALTY

From an organization point of view, loyalty is associated with employee tenure and turnover. Focusing on how leadership behaviors affect subordinate loyalty, because leaders are organizational representatives, this role identification may reinforce organizational identification and thus loyalty.

Employee loyalty is directly proportional to



FROM EGYPT

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the fulfillment of the psychological contract. The psychological contract is influenced by individual differences in personality, values and beliefs. More proactive personality types tend to adjust more readily in a new work environment and during the process of sense making, or establishing personal meaning at work.

CONCLUSION

We don't have to kid ourselves! Loyalty is not about buzzing slogans, but actions to be seen. It must be from both parties (employee-employer) and it is circumstantial as well as provisional, based on the needs and wants of both parties at a given period of time.

So, before we ask our employees to be loyal, we need to confront ourselves, do we practise what we preach? ■

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