

DISCIPLINE IN THE WORK PLACE

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INTRODUCTION

Discipline is orderliness. It is the primary responsibility of the management to maintain discipline. In doing so, it must have its own standards known to its employees. If the employees are not aware of these standards, their conduct is likely to be misdirected. So an organisation has to have a framework of policies, rules, regulations and procedure to carry on its task. This enables its members to discharge duties smoothly, efficiently and profitably and function in an orderly way.

MEANING

'Discipline indicates the spirit and confidence with which the members of an organization perform their task.' S. K. Datta. 'Discipline means an orderly and systematic behaviour which is opposite of confusion. It has been derived from the word "disciple" which means learner or follower (ie) one who takes another as his teacher or leader.' R. C. Goyal

COMPONENTS

Discipline to be effective in a work place, should contain certain ingredients. According to George Strauss and Leonard the components have been explained in the proverbial heater rule.

◆ **ANNOUNCEMENT** A heater when used, announces that it is hot, similarly the pattern of behaviour expected must be announced in unambiguous terms by laying down clearly the standards and norms.

◆ **WARNING** Any person approaching the heater feels the growing intensity of heat and gets an advance warning, likewise the employees should be cautioned before hand.

◆ **IMMEDIACY** A person who
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touches the heater gets his finger burnt instantly, on the same analogy in case of a breach of discipline, action should be initiated immediately.

◆ **IMPARTIALITY** On touching the heater a person gets his fingers burnt no matter who he is or what he is, same way discipline enforcing authority should be impartial and make his actions consistent.

◆ **IMPERSONALITY** As the heater has no feeling of happiness or unhappiness for the person who gets his fingers burnt, the authorities should not feel like over punishing or letting off an employee (i.e.) the authority should not become emotionally involved.

PROMOTION OF DISCIPLINE

Firstly the standards of conduct, codes, conventions and norms to be observed by the employees should be laid down properly with explanatory reason. It is better to take recourse to this course of action than adopting "do-it-because-it-is-the-rule" approach.

Secondly conscious efforts should be made to create condition for easy acceptance of the laid down norms and standards by the group spontaneously and willingly.

Thirdly the standards should be promptly and properly enforced, mere laying down of the standards without insisting on their observance would be an exercise in futility.

Finally the laid down standards require modification with the changing time, it is necessary to review them at suitable intervals and make appropriate changes.

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS

- ◆ Develop a positive attitude towards employees.
- ◆ Have faith on the bonafides of the staff and accept their potentialities.
- ◆ Investigate carefully.
- ◆ Avoid unnecessary display of authority and status.

- ◆ Share relevant information and encourage free and frank exchange of views.
- ◆ Be prompt.
- ◆ Protect privacy.
- ◆ Give credit generously.
- ◆ Criticise deficient performance without hurting person.
- ◆ Focus on the act.
- ◆ Enforce rules consistently.
- ◆ Be empathetic to the grievances of the staff and arrange for speedy redressal.
- ◆ Be flexible.
- ◆ Advise the employees as per needs.
- ◆ Communicate directly and be visible, audible and avoidable.
- ◆ Generate an atmosphere of co-operativeness, assertiveness and accountability from the staff.
- ◆ Never hesitate to negotiate with the employees.
- ◆ Safeguard common interest.
- ◆ Take corrective and constructive action.
- ◆ Follow up.

CONCLUSION

The degree of discipline should be maintained in a constructive manner and not in a spirit of anger. After disciplinary action the manager should assume a normal attitude towards the employee treating the chapter as closed. The attitude of the manager should be one of counselling and understanding rather than "police and punish". His goals should be to effect a change for greater consistency with the organization requirement, when he fails to bring about the desired changes he should adopt disciplinary procedure as a last resort.

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