

# DEVELOPING PRACTICAL EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT—SOME GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS

*\*Rajesh Singh*

External competitive environment with increased social complexities have offered numerous challenges for the manager of today faced with to be competitive. This places greater demands on the managers. Among the many, developing practical 'Employee Involvement' is one of the important challenge which managers to quickly and constantly update their knowledge and prepare themselves to meet the challenges.

Developing Employee involvement evokes an easy sense of familiarity. Success stories from the west and from Indian situation have been reported in the literature. However, inspite of this available experiences, the managers find it hard to get abrest with available knowledge because of extremely busy schedules and at times conflicting demands. This article presents useful guidelines for managers to develop practical employee involvement in their organisations. The guidelines suggested in this article have their basis in the literature. An attempt has been made to synthesize experiences gained during last fifteen years as behavioural sciences teacher for Post graduate management programmes and trainer

in 'Executive Development Programme'. It is assumed that these guidelines will emensely help managers in eliciting employee involvement in their organisations.

Practical employee involvement addresses to two important dimensions of employee behaviour in work setting. The first relates to basic understanding of human behaviour-why there is a need to involve employees and other is its management - how to involve employees?

## **A. Why Involvement Employees?**

What the managers must know?

**Motivation** People have varying degree motives/needs, such as : need to achieve; need for recognition; need to have interesting work; need to take up responsibility and need for advancement and growth. These trigger them to choose course of action and satisfaction of these needs enhance employee motivation resulting in employee involvement. The motivation comes from

feelings of Participation

Recognition of ability to help

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\*Dr. (Mrs.) Rajesh Singh is Reader (Behavioural Sciences), Indian Institute of Public Administration, I.P. Estate, New Delhi. The author wishes to acknowledge her intellecutual debt to her Guru Prof. Ishwar Dayal who kindled her interest in behavioural sciences studies.

- Achievement of own solutions
- More interesting and creative job
- Increased responsibility and scope
- Know Value's Attitudes, Needs and Expectations of your subordinates.
- Understand the 'Expectation Signals' of your subordinates to create opportunities to meet them by designing various motivational strategies.

### Channel Efforts

It has been recognised that performance depends not only on motivation and ability but also on the person's perception of how they can achieve their own objectives.

- This can be achieved by sharing their and organisation's objectives, problems and opportunities.
- Reduce incongruity between employee needs and organisational needs.

### Increased Loyalty

Creating loyalty for organisation is important to generate employee involvement

- Increase Loyalty by helping employees to see how their future and the company's future can be achieved together.
- Increasing loyalty by recognising ability of all employees to help the company by:

- Doing their job
- Solving problems
- Giving ideas

### B. How to involve Employees

How to involve employees can be addressed at two levels. The first relates to developing Involvement by focussing on day to day activities and the others refers to designing systems of Involvement.

#### Day to Day Involvement

Being developing employee involvement in day to day activities as follows:

- Demonstrate good listening skills;
  - Ask Questions on comments which focus on what was said;
  - Provide feedback on what is said;
  - Request clarification to get additional facts to enable you to explore all sides of problems;
  - Demonstrate restatement by showing you are listening an understanding and check your interpretation with the speaker;
  - Have a neutral stance and encourage the speaker to continue talking;
  - Present a reflective response by showing you understand how the speaker feels;

- Give positive response by summarising and bringing all the discussion into focus. That will serve as a springboard for further discussion.
- Demonstrate openness in your behaviour by using Exposure and feedback processes to develop interpersonal trust and confidence.
- Behave authentically, be a 'role model'.
  - Others should know how you feel?
  - Others should copy how you behave?
  - Consider facts and feelings of yours and your subordinates.
  - Do not cherish grapevine, reasons of not telling some thing must be told.
- Build Teams
  - Through increased communication
  - Group Problem solving - Bring group together to recognize and work on their problems
- organisation by briefing one group who then brief their subordinates.
- Propagate and develop Quality Circles.
- Quality Circle is a group voluntarily opted and designed by group members to discuss and solve quality and production problems with the help of facilitators and pass ideas up the organisation for action to be taken.
- Man Power Planning -
  - Identify existing skills of subordinates
  - Assess the skills requirements of subordinates for future.
  - Plan future progress - Give staff opportunity to grow.

### Conclusion

The board guidelines suggests that basic understanding of motivation to channelise employee efforts and build loyalty are essential for managers to develop 'Employee Involvement'. This can be achieved through handling day to day activities by demonstrating listening, interpersonal and Team building skills. Briefing groups, Quality circles and Manpower planning have also been found to be of immense help in developing 'Employee Involvement'.

### Systems for Involvement

The managers can design and use the following systems.

- Use 'Briefing Groups'  
Pass down ideas down the