Trusting relationship at work

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Having a good relationship at work between the employee and others in an organisation is an important part in job satisfaction and organisational commitment. The working attitudes of employees and their performance is affected by the trust they have in an organisation, and this relates to motivational factors which affect contribution to work. The relationship an employee has with an organisation can be defined as either an economic relationship, or a social relationship.

The social relationship is basically the action of an employee, and this is motivated by what they expect from others. The social relationship can also be an exchange of behaviours and can relate to doing someone a favour. For example, if an employee does another employee a favour, then it is expected that there will be some return in the future for that behaviour. The manner in which this favour will be returned is not always specified and there is usually no time limit set, but there is basically an expectation that the favour will be returned. Another relationship an employee might have with an organisation is an economic relationship. This relates to setting a formal contract whereby specific benefits for behaviours are set, and this also has an impact on the relationship and employee has with an organisation.

The social relationship is affected by the way the organisation treats its employees. For example, an employee will be more motivated to do a favour for someone if they believe that they will benefit from it or get some sort of return on the work they put in, and this is also based on a level of trust. Trust can be defined as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other party will perform a particular action important to the trust, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). Vulnerability is related to the risk which an employee feels that another person will act in the manner in which they expect. So one factor which affects the social relationship is trust and the employee trusting that the other party will reciprocate.

Previous research has shown that an employees trust in an organisation grows when supervisors are able to fulfill the employees perception of what they think the organisation should do (building on

relationships) (Whitener, 1997). This reciprocation contributes to developing trust and trust relates to employees having a positive work attitude and increased organisational commitment. Therefore, having trust in an organisation maintains the relationship between an employees work attitude and behaviour outcomes.

References

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