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THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND INNER WORK LIFE IN MOTIVATING PERSONNEL

The significance of organizational culture in organizations' performance is widely acknowledged. A strong organizational culture is found to be an important determinant to raise the motivational level among employees [1, 2]. Within a strong and inspirational organizational culture there is no need for special 'motivating' or 'committing' where the employee is treated like an objective of certain acts. Within an inspirational organizational culture employees are willing to commit themselves because they find stories of company mission fascinating and inspiring and they want to find their own place within that story [3]. Organizational culture has a critical role when organizations attempt to improve their operations in response to changes of the dynamic environment [4]. Today's successful leaders understand the complexity of bringing together a group of individuals to collaborate and pursue extraordinary accomplishments [5], as well as their own role in creating and maintaining the organizational culture for instance by showing an example how to behave and by paying attention to certain acts of their employees [6].

Across the years there have been several different models explaining factors that affect human motivation. According to Amabile and Kramer (2011) a firm's performance is highly dependent on employees' inner work attitude. Employees are more creative and productive when they feel happy and are deeply engaged in the work. A company should create conditions for good *inner work life* – the conditions

that foster positive emotions, strong internal motivation and good, favorable perceptions of colleagues and the work itself [7].

In our article we aim to enhance the research of leadership by examining the role of organizational culture in motivating personnel to participate in the development of their own work and the firm's operations. The concept of creativity is closely connected with development. Openness to new ideas and courage to do things in a totally new way are vital for the renewal of an organization. Therefore, firms should create an open-minded community where personnel are encouraged to use their creative thinking and share their development ideas [8].

Objectives, Methodology and Case Firms

In this article we explore what the concrete ways are in our case firms to motivate the personnel to participate in development. Furthermore, we explore what the role of organizational culture is to motivate the personnel and support their inner work life. In this qualitative research we have four case firms from four different industries. We selected firms which operate in quite traditional industries, but which are known to be development oriented. We used data from different industries to gain a more versatile understanding of the subject. Our data consisted of in-depth interviews of the managers of these firms. The firms and the position of the respondents are presented in table 1.

Table 1. Case firms and the respondents

Firm	Industry	Number of the employees (approx.)	Respondent's position
1	Food-processing	11	Director (Sales and R&D), entrepreneur
2	Wood-processing	65	CEO
3	Hydraulics industry	200	Business Development Manager, member of the owning family
4	Electrical installation	90	Deputy Managing Director

Findings

We analyzed the case stories according to Amabile's and Kramer's idea on how leadership and organizational culture should support the inner work life of the employees. The forces that support inner work life are: 1) Making progress in meaningful work; 2) Receiving catalysts (things that directly help get the work done); and 3) Benefitting from nourishers (interpersonal events that uplift people as they work) [7, 9]. We firstly clarify these three concepts and then describe how these forces manifest themselves in the stories of our case firms.

Making progress in meaningful work. It is important for an employee to recognize small wins, breakthroughs, progressing in general and reaching the goal [7, 9, 10].

The manager of the case firm 1 pointed out that it is important to try to find the strong area of each person. *'We want to give our staff opportunities to shine. Everyone needs to shine!'* The employees are also regularly asked how they would like to develop their skills and knowledge.

In several case firms the managers emphasized that they value their staff based on the achieved results. The manager of the firm 4 told that they all the time remunerate their staff for getting and sharing ideas how to develop their own work and the processes of the firm. The inventors of a good idea are often given financial bonuses. The manager of the firm 3 talked about how they weekly encourage their employees to develop their work. This is done via face-to-face discussions and by rewarding for good ideas. New ideas are constantly highlighted in order to give a good example also for those who are not so eager to develop their own work.

Catalysts, progress supports. People should have meaningful, clear goals, sufficient resources and helpful colleagues. Other important aspects are: allowing autonomy, learning from problems and successes, and allowing ideas to flow [7, 9].

All four case firms emphasized that it is important to give clear goals to the teams, but also freedom to find the ways to achieve those goals. As the manager of the case firm 2 put it: *'Teams are self-organized in our production. They have created their own job descriptions. By letting employees do this, we get everyone's resources in use and it is a motivational issue.'* It is important to give the teams sufficient resources to achieve the goals. Further, for a team to succeed it is vital that colleagues help each other: *'If a person is trying, our employees are willing to teach and give chances.'* (Firm 4).

In order to generate and develop new innovations it is important that organization culture supports idea and knowledge sharing. Our case firms brought up that they want their staff to participate in the development of products and services. The manager of the firm 1 gave an example of this: *'When we develop a new product, employees taste it and give feedback. Employees are interested in and excited about new products and developing them.'* It is also important that employees are encouraged to share their ideas and the leaders have the courage to test them. *'The leader needs to have courage to test totally new ideas even if there are risks involved. And if by doing this we make mistakes, we need to learn from them.'* (Firm 3).

Human connection as nourishment. The 'nourishment factor' refers to something that everyone craves at work: human connection. It is about rewarding and recognizing employees' good work and offering them emotional support [9].

All our case companies brought up the fact that they want to communicate to the whole staff when someone has succeeded especially well in his work, or when someone has presented a good development idea. *'It is important to highlight the encouraging examples.'* (Firm 3). Our case firms also talked a lot about the importance of having a heterogeneous staff with different kinds of backgrounds and versatile skills. However, they also acknowledged the need to fit into the culture of the firm: *'We recruit people who fit with us. People who don't want to be in this kind of openly communicating environment, they usually leave the organization.'* (Firm 1). *'In the recruiting process we accentuate the importance of innovative, initiative and development-oriented mindset.'* (Firm 3).

The managers of our case firms wanted their employees to enjoy their work and feel free to express themselves. They emphasized that it is important to organize time and space also for unofficial communication. Informal chats and meetings, such as coffee breaks, are good for open communicating and idea sharing.

Conclusions

A widely accepted wisdom is that a motivated workforce means better corporate performance [11]. In this article we have explored the ways how development oriented firms that operate in traditional industries motivate their personnel. In these firms there seems to exist a constructive organizational culture [see e.g. 2], which supports achievement, interaction and self-actualization, and which is humanistic and supportive. Leaders recruit people that fit in and could be part of a self-guided and development-oriented culture. Further, leaders set goals but let the teams quite independently find the ways to achieve them. The new ideas of the employees are actively highlighted and rewarded.

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