SUBJECT: Educational Management & Administration-Elementary. (SC4)
Human Resource Management
Dept of Education
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TOPIC: WORK SIMPLIFICATION

Work simplification-

Every organisation thinks of production and profit, keeping in mind cost-reducing and profit-increasing innovations.

The concept of Work-simplification has been coined and used to improve performance in many activities of the company, be it clerical functions, supervisory techniques, research or maintenance.

Work simplification can be described as the intelligent use of well-established human patterns to encourage and expedite the finding and implementation of more efficient work methods.

Management by Work Simplification

A lot of managers these days tend to be quite experimental. They look at everything critically and also think of how their subordinates can be more productive. In these thought processes, managers can come up with certain tasks that they think would make the general output of their group or department higher and faster. When reinforcing these practices, everyone will either be too enthusiastic to do the tasks or too annoyed about having to perform additional workload. However, the time will come when they'd already get used to it that they'll no longer care because they have considered it as a part of their job. What some do not realize though is that the time will also come when the managers themselves would realize that these tasks are not necessary, after all.

Because this kind of scenario has occurred numerous times in every company, management by work simplification has evolved.

Management by Work Simplification Overview

Work simplification is a process where by which the tasks that do not really contribute anything to the productivity of the company or more specifically, to a certain system that the company practices can be eliminated.

By doing so, the system is simplified by reducing wastage from labor, costs, space, materials, and

time.

In certain office work procedures such as the approval of reports and designs or brainstorming and filing paper works, there are steps that need not be executed.

At first, they are established to make the procedure more organized such as getting some documents approved and signed or submitting designs to the incharge for comments only to be returned by the client who had something else in mind.

Basically, work simplification is making a tailor-fit working system that responds to the needs of your business/work.

Some companies initially or automatically adapt generic systems, which lead them to have specific processes that are unnecessary and not at all useful.

Work simplification also allows you to reassess the different practices, problem areas, and points for improvement within the company.

The process of work simplification includes

1. making flowcharts in order to determine the existing system and tasks.
2. After which, the analysis of these tasks and systems will be done in order to allow the simplification process of the procedures and steps.
3. In order to assess the success of the endeavor, leaders, managers, and groups must be able to justify how the eliminated and simplified processes can help achieve their objectives.
4. The employees are heavily expected to participate during structuring and implementation because they are the ones who can evaluate the relevance of the tasks and determine how they can be simplified.
5. They are the executors, they can best tell how the tasks can be improved.

The success of the work simplification process depends on the acceptance of the employees. The simplified processes are only going to be effective if they are practiced by the each worker who falls under the designated tasks.

Objectives of Work Simplification

The following are the objectives:

- Efficiency improvement
- Elimination of unnecessary tasks
- Reduction of costs and expenses
- Increased profits

Advantages of Work Simplification

In some manufacturing companies that spend on certain procedures that are not really needed to produce the required output work simplification helps.

- We can save time and energy on the part of the employees and the company
- When employees get to finish their tasks earlier, their sense of accomplishment can be converted into having more motivation to finish other tasks.
- The employees get time to slow down and check on their own personal system for working and re-organizing things that have gotten messy or disorderly.
- Cost reduction is achieved and more time and manpower will be made available for other important tasks.
- This can lead to more income or more capital.
- The department or group can build resources that can be attributed to accomplishing useful tasks.

Disadvantages of Work Simplification

- While it looks like it benefits the productivity of the employee, but it actually is still that of the company in the long run.
- When it comes to the professional development of the employee, some would argue that management by work simplification does not help the employee grow because the main concern of this method is the completion of the tasks.
- Sometimes, the eliminated tasks may not really be necessary.
- Leaving the employee with two to three tasks within his job scope may make him feel limited and unproductive.

Need for Management Efficiency-

The problems encountered in applying intelligent management to quality control are very complex. Effective management usually requires a great deal of data. A huge volume of records are often generated. Work simplification can give a big assist to the streamlining of these activities. What is needed is

1. Work-control procedures.

2. History records.

3. Motivation of workers

4. Training for adequate knowhow to make the required methods-improvement, tools and techniques'.

A suggestion system, a communication available for obtaining prompt management review w.r.t. improvement in proposals, a recognition for contributions and adequate rewards for achievements, must also find place in the system.

When persons working in an organisation is confronted with a problem, working on any project in the company has the **desire**

- to   solve the problem
- must have the ability to perform the tasks required and
- also the capacity to handle the human relations involved.
  The person who works on the problem will first think what is the profit specially for me
  He will also think how the loss can be avoided as it (the gain) is going to be a part of me
  Thus the employee seeks employment as a means of gaining.
- He looks for security, material reward, promotions, and participation with a view on what is my gain.
- He will work sincerely, rationally, logically and based on facts. But his mind will constantly control his interest.
  "What is in it for me?" hence, all decisions will tend to be based on emotion rather than facts.
  So actually the individual is not directly involved, in the introduction of a cost-saving proposal
  involving the use of a new piece of equipment or

a new method

but this can have the appeal of intelligent selfishness

To a person directly involved, a change from the existing implies the loss of his own know-how applicable to the old procedure or equipment.

The fear generated by the prospect of such a loss can completely cancel out any appeal of mutual benefit.

Therefore, **a work-simplification program,** with its specific management policies and practices which will assure the individual that he can gain, will not be a personal loss, as the result of implementation of the proposals.

What is needed then is a suggestion system that can provide recognition and financial rewards, but also an additional guarantee by management, indicating that participants will not suffer personal loss through downgrading or layoff etc.

An agreement to achieve force reductions via attrition (not replacing people who retire or resign) or transfer of displaced individuals to other expanding activities is often a mutually acceptable approach. With careful planning, this method is usually adequate to absorb force reductions made possible by work-simplification proposals. Reductions via layoffs (company stops employing people or downsizing the number of workers by termination) can eliminate any possibility of a successful program.

After all, the cooperation of the individual just cannot be expected if he can see that this cooperation will result in direct losses to himself, his friends, or his associates.

Many successful industrial work-simplification programs amply documents the validity of simplifying the work results

The latent **ability** of workers, along with proper motivation and training can improve working capacity and production.

It has been shown that with only minimal training the average individual can develop an

amazing ability to recognize opportunities for improvement and to implement workable solutions.

Human behavior, can be modified and to a certain extent controlled. It is important to understand the basic mechanics of human nature plus a willingness to take the prerequisite actions.

Generally the mindset is

- Resistance to change or to accept something new

- Resentment of criticism

Hence in work simplifications the important step is to find a better way to perform a task and substitute the new way for the old. Thus, this improvement implies change.

Problem? From the point of view of the user of the old way, change tends to disrupt complacency and create a fear of possible unfavorable consequences.

The firm feeling of 'All is well' is replaced with a queasy feeling that perhaps he, the current user, may also become obsolete and have to be retrained, perform a harder task, or perhaps even be replaced.

The user can see nothing in the change for him and an excellent chance of insecurity. Naturally, he resists change. It is almost a conditioned reflex. Everyone tends to be critical or, and resistant to change.

Therefore a successful work-simplification program must make provision to assist participants to become familiar with this universal reaction and to learn how to minimize its hampering effect.

A change for the better implies criticism of the old method and criticism of the user of the old method. No one likes criticism. It is always taken as a personal affront. It is resented.

To develop a successful work-simplification program, participants must learn to expect this reaction in others and in themselves. They must learn to minimize offending others, to keep criticism from improperly affecting their own judgment and to help others keep it from confusing their decisions. All **problem-solving techniques** have ways of identifying the exact problem, getting facts, testing for results, reaching conclusions and verifying what you believe to be true. Several methods exist for modern problem solving, each has its advantage.

Whenever work simplification process is sought it is important to:
1. Maintain an open mind.-(The simplicity to wonder)
The worker is willing to explore alternatives. He is not restricted by past practice, precedent, tradition, habits, customs, or fear of the consequences of change.
2. Observing the present way.-(The ability to question)

In work simplification, one must get use to question everything. Work simplification provides an organized plan for questioning. It is called the questioning pattern and it is a definite sequence of question:

What is done?

Where is it done?

When is it done?

Who does it?

How is it done?

Why is it done at all?

Why is it done here?

Why is it done then?

Why does this person do it?

Why is it done this way?

This is a training pattern which is to be followed literally at first but which soon becomes simply an organized way of thinking.

Exploring opportunities for improvement.- (the power to generalize)

From the answers, tentative conclusions (generalizations) can be developed. Possibilities for improvement are then investigated:

What?, Where?, When?, Who?, How?, Why eliminate?, Why change place?, Why change sequence?, Why combine?, Why change a person?, Why improve method?
The person is searching for possible solutions. If it has never been done before. This can be the way. Try to find ways to make new ideas work, not to prove them unworkable.

Implementing the new method.-(The capacity to apply)

The ability to convert an understanding of human nature into an approach to the new method will gain the cooperation of the people involved.
Observational facts are gathered until a recognizable pattern is identified. Comparisons are then made to the experiences we usually expect under normal or average conditions.

Methods such as brainstorming, deductive and inductive reasoning, new techniques of thinking and methods of problem solving can lead to process of work simplification

There are some steps to go about simplification
Look for an organized pattern of observation of the work

Work simplification suggests a step-by-step program for studying tasks:

1.- Select the task to be studied.

Look in the situations for :

- Bottlenecks.
- Time-consuming operations.
- Chasing around not reaching end-product
- Waste of materials, time, or energy

2.- Observe the present way in which the task is performed.
Get all the facts, requirements for the performance of the task.

3.- Challenge everything. Question what is done.
  Investigate the whole job.

Why, it's necessity, another way of doing or another time or place?
The what, where, who and how part are also important
This questioning attitude helps develop a point of view that considers the good of the whole operation rather than that of any one department or individual.

We can get rid of useless or unnecessary work which have no real value to product.

The type of operation or equipment needed to perform the required work must be most economical
4. There must be opportunities for improvement.
If operations cannot be eliminated, perhaps there are

unnecessary transportation and storage.
Question every handling.
Back-tracking and duplication of work
Heavy lifting or carrying
Trucking
Bottlenecks
Skilled operators doing handling work
Sometimes changing the place where the work is done or by whom it is done, helps.

Better lighting, better ventilation, better tools may be available elsewhere.

Perhaps another operator is better equipped to do the operation.
Better equipment , other materials, new techniques also help

Often relatively small rearrangements, method changes, and layout revisions will accomplish almost as much with negligible cost.

5.- Implementing the new method involves that all people should understand the objective of the task and desirability of the new method. It is also important that people involved should not lose

financially or socially as a result of the change.

Also a need for charting the whole process of simplification is needed.

It can be by flow process chart, multiple-activity process chart etc. They are a means of recording and studying activities required to perform a task.

The following are areas of effort which can greatly benefit from the **use of the work-simplification approach**, specially when equipment grows more and more complex:

Effective preventive quality control will require improved techniques for predicting when, where and how failures are likely to be incurred.

This probably involve the development of better inspection techniques, the introduction of the use of more diagnostic instruments, and perhaps the introduction of continuous monitoring techniques. The multiple-activity process charting technique provides an excellent vehicle for exploring ways to:
1. Reduce crew sizes.
2. Reduce out-of-service time.

(Please refer to websites for more information)
 WRITE NOTES ON : How can work simplification concept and process help a college advance and develop.
Next Topic will be Management of Conflict And Stress
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