Organizational behavior

Unit-5

Leadership:

Leadership is the process of influencing the behavior of people by making them strive voluntarily towards achievement of organizational goals. Leadership Indicates the ability of an individual to maintain good interpersonal relations with followers and motivate them to contribute for achieving organizational objectives.

Leadership-definition:

Leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives.-**George Terry**

Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals-**Harold Koontz and Heinz Weihrich**

Leadership is a set of interpersonal behaviors designed to influence employees to cooperate in the achievement of objectives-**Glueck**

Leadership style:

There are many theories of leadership behavior and styles. Research studies have revealed certain traits and qualities which a leader might possess. However, these are not conclusive since many people may possess these qualities but may not be leaders.

There are several bases for classifying leadership styles. The most popular classification of leadership styles is based on the use of authority. Depending on the use of authority, there are three basic styles of leadership:

(i) Autocratic (ii) Democratic, and
(iii) Laissez-faire

(i) Autocratic or Authoritarian leader:

An autocratic leader gives orders and expects his subordinates to obey those orders. If a manager is following this style, then communication is only one-way with the subordinate only acting according to the command given by the manager. This leader is dogmatic i.e., does not change or wish to be contradicted. His following is based on the assumption that reward or punishment both can be given depending

upon the result. This leadership style is effective in getting productivity in many situations like in a factory where the supervisor is responsible for production on time and has to ensure labour productivity. Quick decision-making is also facilitated.But there are variations also, they may listen to everyone's opinion, consider subordinates ideas and concerns but the decision will be their own.

(ii) Democratic or Participative leader:

A democratic leader will develop action plans and makes decisions in consultation with his subordinates. He will encourage them to participate in decision-making. This kind of leadership style is more common now-a-days, since leaders also recognise that people perform best if they have set their own objectives. They also need to respect the other's opinion and support subordinates to perform their duties and accomplish organizational objectives. They exercise more control by using forces within the group.

(iii)Laissez faire or Free-rein leader:

Such a leader does not believe in the use of power unless it is absolutely essential. The followers are given a high degree of independence to formulate their own objectives and ways to achieve them. The group members work on their own tasks resolving issues themselves. The manager is there only to support them and supply them the required information to complete the task assigned. At the same time, the subordinate assumes responsibility for the work to be performed. Depending upon the situation a leader may choose to exercise a combination of these styles when required. Even a laissez faire leader would have certain rules to be followed while doing work and a democratic leader may have to take his own decision in an emergency situation.

Contemporary leadership:

A contemporary leader is a leader who uses personal influence to develop and inspire people to achieve organizational goals and make a difference in the community." Because a contemporary leader doesn't have to routinely disrupt a team's off-hours time to get the job done.
The very basic feature of leadership is the ability to influence individuals or group of people by inspiring and motivating them to realise their potential and make them believe in the process towards the ultimate goal.

Significance of contemporary leadership:

Leadership is an important function of management which helps to maximize efficiency and to achieve organizational goals. The following points justify the importance of leadership in a concern.
● Initiates action: Leader is a person who starts the work by communicating the policies and plans to the subordinates from where the work actually starts.
● Motivation: A leader proves to be playing an incentive role in the concern's working. He

motivates the employees with economic and non-economic rewards and thereby gets the work from the subordinates.

● Providing guidance: A leader has to not only supervise but also play a guiding role for the subordinates. Guidance here means instructing the subordinates the way they have to perform their work effectively and efficiently.

● Creating confidence:Confidence is an important factor which can be achieved through expressing the work efforts to the subordinates, explaining to them clearly their role and giving them guidelines to achieve the goals effectively. It is also important to hear the employees with regards to their complaints and problems.

● Building morale: Morale denotes willing cooperation of the employees towards their work and getting them into confidence and winning their trust. A leader can be a morale booster by achieving full cooperation so that they perform with best of their abilities as they work to achieve goals.

● Builds a work environment:Management is getting things done from people. An efficient work environment helps in sound and stable growth. Therefore, human relations should be kept into mind by a leader. He should have personal contacts with employees and should listen to their problems and solve them. He should treat employees on humanitarian terms.

● Coordination: Coordination can be achieved through reconciling personal interests with organizational goals. This synchronization can be achieved through proper and effective coordination which should be the primary motive of a leader.

Communication:

Communication plays key role in the success of a manager. How much professional knowledge and intelligence a manager possesses becomes immaterial if he is not able to communicate effectively with his subordinates and create understanding in them. Directing abilities of a manager mainly depend upon his communication skills. That is why organisation always emphasise on improving communication skills of managers as well as employees.The word communication has been derived from the Latin word 'communis' which means 'common' which consequently implies common understanding. Communication is defined in different ways. Generally, it is understood as a process of exchange of ideas, views, facts, feelings etc.,

Definitions of communication:

Communication is transfer of information from the sender to the receiver with the information being understood by the receiver -**Harold Koontz and Heniz Weihrich**

Communication is a process by which people create and share information with one another in order to reach common understanding **-Rogers**

Barriers to communication:

It is generally observed that managers face several problems due to communication breakdowns or barriers. These barriers may prevent a communication or filter part of it or carry incorrect meaning due to which misunderstandings may be created. Therefore, it is important fora manager to identity such barriers and take measures to overcome them.The barriers to communication in the organizations can be broadly grouped as: semantic barriers, psychological barriers,organizational barriers, and personal barriers. These are briefly discussed below:

1)Semantic barriers: Semantics is the branch of linguistics dealing with the meaning of words and sentences. Semantic barriers are concerned with problems and obstructions in the process of encoding and decoding of message into words or impressions. Normally, such barriers result on account of use of wrong words, faulty translations, different interpretations etc.These are discussed below:

(i) Badly expressed message:
Some times intended meaning may not be conveyed by a manager to his subordinates. These badly expressed messages may be an account of inadequate vocabulary, usage of wrong words, omission of needed words etc

(ii) Symbols with different meanings:
A word may have several mean   ings. Receiver has to perceive one such meaning for the word used by communicator. For example, consider these three sentences
where the work 'value' is used:
(a) What is the value of this ring?
(b) I value our friendship.
(c) What is the value of learning computer skills?
You will find that the 'value' gives different meaning in different
contexts. Wrong perception leads to communication problems.

(iii) Faulty translations:
 Sometimes the communications originally drafted in one language (e.g., English) need to be translated to the language understandable to workers (e.g., Hindi). If the translator is not proficient with both the languages, mistakes may creep in causing different meanings to the communication.

(iv) Unclarified assumptions:
Some communications may have certain assumptions which are subject to different interpretations. For example, a boss may instruct his subordinate, "Take care of our guest". Boss may mean that subordinate should take care of transport,food, accommodation of the guest until he leaves the place. The subordinate may interpret that guest should be taken to hotel with care. Actually, the guest suffers due to these unclarified assumptions.

(v) Technical jargon:

It is usually found that specialists use technical jargon while explaining to persons who are not specialists in the concerned field. Therefore, they may not understand the actual meaning of many such words.

(vi) Body language and gesture decoding:

Every movement of body communicates some meaning. The body movement and gestures of communicator matters so much in conveying the message. If there is no match between what is said and what is expressed in body movements,communications may be wrongly perceived.

2) Psychological barriers: Emotional or psychological factors acts as barriers to communicators. For example, a worried person cannot communicate properly and an angry receiver cannot understand the real meaning of message. The state of mind of both sender and receiver of communication reflects in the effective communication. Some of the psychological barriers are:

(i) Premature evaluation:

Some times people evaluate the meaning of message before the sender completes his message. Such premature evaluation may be due to preconceived notions or prejudices against the communication.

(ii) Lack of attention:

The pre-occupied mind of receiver and the resultant non-listening of message acts as a major psychologicalbarrier. For instance, an employee explains about his problems to the boss who is pre-occupied with an important file before him.The boss does not grasp the message and the employee is disappointed.

(iii) Loss by transmission and poor retention:

When communication passes through various levels, successive transmissions of the message results in loss of, or transmission of inaccurate information. This is more so in case of oral communication.Poor retention is another problem. Usually people cannot retain the information for a long time if they are inattentive or not interested.

(iv) Distrust:

Distrust between communicator and communicate acts as a barrier. If the parties do not believe each other, they can not understand each others message in its original sense.

3) Organizational barriers: The factors related to organization structure, authority relationships, rules and regulations may, sometimes, act as barriers to effective communication.

(i) Organizational policy:

 If the organizational policy, explicit or implicit, is not supportive to free flow of communication, it may hamper effectiveness of communications. For example, in an organization with highly centralized pattern, people may not be encouraged to have free communication.

(ii) Rules and regulations:
Rigid rules and cumbersome procedures may be a hurdle to communication. Similarly, communications through prescribed channel may result in delays.

(iii) Status:
Status of superior may create psychological distance between him and his subordinates. A status conscious manager also may not allow his subordinates to express their feelings freely.

(iv) Complexity in organization structure:
In an organization where there are number of managerial levels, communication gets delayed and distorted as number of filtering points are more.

(v) Organizational facilities:
If facilities for smooth, clear and timely communications are not provided communications may be hampered. Facilities like frequent meetings, suggestion box, complaint box, social and cultural gathering, transparency in operations etc., will encourage free flow of communication. Lack of these facilities may create communication problems.

4) Personal barriers: The personal factors of both sender and receiver may exert influence on effective communication. Some of the personal barriers of superiors and subordinates are mentioned below:

(i) Fear of challenge to authority:
If a superior perceives that a particular communication may adversely affect his authority, he or she may withhold or suppress such communication.

(ii) Lack of confidence of superior on his subordinates:
If superiors do not have confidence on the competency of their subordinates, they may not seek their advice or opinions.

(iii) Unwillingness to communicate:
Sometimes, subordinates may not be prepared to communicate with their superiors, if they perceive that it may adversely affect their interests.

(iv) Lack of proper incentives:
If there is no motivation or incentive for communication, subordinates may not take initiative to communicate. For example, if there is no reward or appreciation for a good suggestion, the subordinates may not be willing to offer useful suggestions.

Defining Stress
Stress is defined in terms of its physical and physiological effects on a person, and can be a mental, physical, or emotional strain.
Negative or overwhelming work experiences can cause a person substantial distress. Burnout, depression, and psychosomatic disorders are particularly common outcomes of work-related stress. In general, individual distress manifests in three basic forms: psychological disorders, medical illnesses, and behavioral problems.
Stress management:
Stress management refers to a wide spectrum of techniques and therapies that aim to control a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, to improve everyday functioning. To reduce workplace stress, managers can monitor each employee's workload to ensure it is in line with their capabilities and resources.

Stress at Work
While it is generally agreed that stress occurs at work, views differ on the importance of worker characteristics versus working conditions as its primary cause. The differing viewpoints suggest different ways to prevent stress at work. Different individual characteristics, like personality and coping skills, can be very important predictors of whether certain job conditions will result in stress. In other words, what is stressful for one person may not be a problem for someone else.

Stress-related disorders encompass a broad array of conditions, including psychological disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder) and other types of emotional strain (e.g., dissatisfaction, fatigue, tension), maladaptive behaviors (e.g., aggression, substance abuse), and cognitive impairment (e.g., concentration and memory problems). Job stress is also associated with various biological reactions that may ultimately lead to compromised physical health, such as cardiovascular disease.

Categories of Work Stress
Four categories of stressors underline the different causal circumstances for stress at work:

Task Demands –
This is the sense of not knowing where a job will lead you and whether the activities and tasks will change. This uncertainty causes stress that manifests itself in feelings of lack of control, concern about career progress, and time pressures.

Role Demands –
Role conflict happens when an employee is exposed to inconsistent or difficult expectations. Examples include: interrole conflict (when there are two or more expectations or separate roles for one person), intrarole conflict (varying expectations of one role), person-role conflict (ethics are challenged), and role ambiguity (confusion about their experiences in relation to the expectations of others).

Interpersonal Demands –
Examples include: emotional issues (abrasive personalities, offensive co-workers), sexual harassment (directed mostly toward women), and poor leadership (lack of management experience, poor style, cannot handle having power).

Physical Demands –
Many types of work are physically demanding, including strenuous activity, extreme working conditions, travel, exposure to hazardous materials, and working in a tight, loud office.

Individual differences and experiencing stress:

Individual differences in experiencing stress There are many individual differences which may influence the onset of stress. The majority of these individual differences will fall into one of 4 categories:
1. Life stages
There are a number of different stages of life - childhood, adolescence, early adulthood, midlife, pre-retirement and post-retirement. Each of these stages brings its own pressures e.g. trying to find your identity in adolescence, having children in early adulthood, dealingwith the life adjustments of retirement. Also, with time the age at which people change stages changes e.g. people are now having children later than before.

2. Major personal events
There are many major events which can occur during a person's life. These include deaths, births, marriage, divorce, redundancies etc. To make matters worse many of these events lie outside of the control of the individual which makes them harder to manage.

3. The daily grind
No 2 people will have exactly the same day. There are many small events which may occur during the regular day. These events may be small on their own but the cumulative impact can be too much to cope with.

4. Personal resilience
A person's ability to manage their energy and release pressure and tension has a massive influence on their ability to avoid, or cope with, stress. The better they are at managing their energy and releasing tension and pressure, the less likely they are to experience stress. Stress is an individual experience.
There are individual differences which will influence whether someone will experience stress and, if they do, how bad that experience will be. Being aware of these individual differences provides them with the best opportunity to manage stressful situations and minimize their impact.

Managing workplace stress:
A combination of organizational change and stress management is a productive approach to preventing stress at work.
Stress management refers to a wide spectrum of techniques and therapies that aim to control a person's levels of stress, especially chronic stress, to improve everyday functioning.

Preventing Job Stress
If employees are experiencing unhealthy levels of stress, a manager can bring in an objective outsider, such as a consultant, to suggest a fresh approach. But there are many ways managers can prevent job stress in the first place. A combination of organizational change and stress management is often the most effective approach. Among the many different techniques managers can use to effectively prevent employee stress, the main underlying themes are awareness of possibly stressful elements of the workplace and intervention when necessary to mitigate any stress that does arise.Specifically, organizations can prevent employee stress in the following ways:

Intentional Job Design
- Design jobs that provide meaning and stimulation for workers as well as opportunities for them to use their skills.
- Establish work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job.
- Consider flexible schedules—many organizations allow telecommuting to reduce the pressure of being in a certain place at a certain time (which enables people to better balance their personal lives).
- Monitor each employee's workload to ensure it is in line with their capabilities and resources.

Clear and Open Communication
- Teach employees about stress awareness and promote an open dialogue.
- Avoid ambiguity at all costs—clearly define workers' roles and responsibilities.
- Reduce uncertainty about career development and future employment prospects.

Positive Workplace Culture
- Provide opportunities for social interaction among workers.
- Watch for signs of dissatisfaction or bullying and work to combat workplace discrimination (based on race, gender, national origin, religion, or language).

Employee Accountability
- Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions and actions that affect their jobs.
- Introduce a participative leadership style and involve as many subordinates as possible in resolving stress-producing problems.