

Attitudes

In management studies, it is established that values are linked to attitudes that a value serves as a way of organizing. Theorists stated that attitudes are formed by the interaction of situations, experiences and values. Attitudes are learned, and carried into the work environment. Attitudes are an essential part of the place of work that directly affects behavior of employee. Attitudes are generally positive and negatives views of person, place, thing or event. Company managers can improve counterproductive attitudes and gain success in marketplace through proper understanding of how people form attitudes, how those attitudes affect work behavior. It is documented in studies that attitude of an individual reproduces his/her determined tendency to think, feel and behave towards an object in a particular way, involving favour or low esteem. Attitude towards some situation or people is thought to be unrelenting, because for changing requires efforts and willingness. Attitudes help a person to cope up to a new situation or a context and to decide how to behave in future to succeed in their target. When the environment seems unfriendly, attitude has 'ego-defensive' role for protection of the self-image of the individual.

Theoretical studies have shown that all attitudes are learned, and people's attitudes vary based on their experiences and learning environment. Attitudes of people are formed is through social learning which involves the influences of family, peers, colleagues, and institutions. The association between attitudes and behaviors intrigues researchers. Attitude performance is not as simple as thinking positively to produce positive results. The degree to which behavior of person matches their attitudes has to do with relevance, personality factors, and social context.

A person may possess hundreds and thousands of attitudes, but organizational behavior focuses our attention on a very limited number of job related attitudes. These attitudes are generally evaluations which employees hold about their work environment. These attitudes may be favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative.

Meaning: Attitudes are evaluative statements indicating one's feelings either favourably or unfavorably towards persons, objects, events or situations.

Following are the salient features of attitudes:

1. Attitudes refer to feelings and beliefs of individuals or groups of individuals. For example "He has a poor attitude", "I like her attitude."
2. The feelings and beliefs are directed towards other people, objects or ideas. When a person says, "I like my Job". It shows that he has a positive attitude towards his job.
3. Attitudes often result in and affect the behavior or action of the people. Attitudes can lead to intended behavior if there are no external interventions.

4. Attitudes constitute a psychological phenomenon which cannot be directly observed. However, an attitude can be observed indirectly by observing its consequences. For example, if a person is very regular in his job, we may infer that he likes his job very much.
5. Attitudes are gradually acquired over a period of time. The process of learning attitude starts right from childhood and continues throughout the life of a person. In the beginning the family members may have a greater impact on the attitude of a child.
6. Attitudes are evaluative statements, either favourable or unfavourable. When a person says he likes or dislikes something or somebody, an attitude is being expressed.
7. All people, irrespective of their status and intelligence hold attitudes.
8. An attitude may be unconsciously held. Most of our attitudes may be about those which we are not clearly aware. Prejudice furnishes a good example.

Components of Attitudes

1. Job Satisfaction:

The term job satisfaction refers to the general attitude or feelings of an individual towards his job. A person, who is highly satisfied with his job, will have a positive attitude towards the job. On the other hand, a person who is dissatisfied with his job will have a negative attitude about the job. For example, a person who is satisfied with his job will always be punctual, absenteeism will be minimum, performance will be high, his attitude towards his co-workers and boss will also be very positive.

In case of an unsatisfied person, he will generally be late for office, on small pretexts he will absent himself from the job, turnover will be high, performance level will be poor and his behavior in the organization will be very good.

2. Job Involvement:

As compared to job satisfaction, job involvement is a more recent addition to the literature of organizational behavior. Different authors have given different meanings to this term and there isn't complete agreement over what the term means. A general definition of job involvement states that job involvement measures the degree to which a person identifies psychologically with his or her job and considers his or her perceived performance level important to self worth.

Employees who have a high level of job involvement very strongly identify with their jobs and really care about the kind of work they do. High degree of involvement just like job satisfaction will lead to less absenteeism and lower resignation rates.

3. Organizational Commitment:

The third job attitude that affects the organization behavior is the organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. In such a setup the employee feels proud of being the employee of a particular organization. Whereas job involvement refers to identification with one's specific job, organizational commitment means identifying with one's employing organization and its goals.

Sometimes an employee may be involved or attached to his job but may not be committed to the organization and its objectives. Turnover and absenteeism are low when an employee has organizational commitment. In fact, studies have indicated that organizational commitment is a better indicator of turnover than the far more frequently used job satisfaction predictor.

Sometimes, an employee may be dissatisfied with the job, but he may not be dissatisfied with the organization as a whole. In such a case, he may stick with the organization because he may consider it a temporary situation. But once the dissatisfaction spreads to the organization as a whole, he is most likely to consider resigning from the job.