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## **Problem identification and cause**

### ***Problem identification***

Several critical organisational issues have been identified in the Brass Rail Wanden branch that stems from the operational framework, management style and employee relations. For instance, there was low employee morale, high employee turnover, leak of effective training, disparity in team collaboration, and inconsistent management and supervision are evident.

- ***Employee Turnover***

High ***employee turnover*** in the Wanden branch demonstrated dissatisfaction among employees which is related to the managerial instability of the branch. Moreover, managerial problems were writ large which was also stated by Alice Masters. The hygiene factors comprising ***relationships*** were evident as staff shortages and staff leaving were on the rise as employees were refusing to work with Brian Masdern. Besides, the strict management style of Brian Masdern elevated the issue as staff members felt overly controlled or undervalued giving rise to an absence of motivators.

- ***Employee Grievance issues***

Low ***employee morale and grievance*** were rife, which was evident from the formal grievance of Tracey Walters. For instance, the rigid and rigorous 'three mistakes rule' undermined trust and autonomy inside the workplace, leading to the onset of demotivation among employees. Aylott (2022) mentioned that employee relations are fundamental, where employee involvement or ***EI*** and employee participation or ***EP*** are crucial. However, employee engagement was lowered as employees refused to work with Brian.

Apart from these, a proper leadership and management style is required in an organisation to get effective output from employees (Jankelová and Joniaková, 2021). In contrast, there was inconsistent management and supervision as the standard of management varied largely on the presence of Brian, reflecting inadequate empowerment or training from the leaders, including Diana Miller, who used to pass the buck several times to Brian. Therefore, the disciplinary pyramid indicates a failure to adhere to progressive discipline by middle-level managers giving rise to an excessively strict environment.

- ***Overlooking training programs***

Training and supervision from managers are of immense importance to increase workplace productivity, nurture future leaders, and teaching problem-solving and decision-making skills whereas reducing turnover (Urbancová et al., 2021). However, despite the reintroduction of training manuals, there was a lack of guidance on applying the content of manuals to real-life situations. Besides, the questions of the staff concerning the content of the manual were not addressed as there was a lack of guidance from Brian. On the other hand, commodity status, paternalism, and resource status are the pillars of ***individualism***, where performance-related pay is introduced (Week 5 Lecture Slide). In this context, there was a disparity in team collaboration and effort where sales-focused incentives in the form of '***side orders***', catering to the hygiene factor of Herzberg's theory, led to the recovery of sales at the Wanden branch at the cost of employee turnover. Henceforth, the individualistic behaviour was evident, leading to inequalities in workload distribution. For example, the demotion of Tracey Walter from 'waiter' to 'runner' despite having good records and a wealth of experience.

### **Possible causes of these problems**

Leadership and management style can be considered as the primary cause of disputes such as employee satisfaction or turnover. In this regard, motivation factors of Herzberg comprise recognition and achievement (Peramatzis and Galanakis, 2022). However, it was found that despite the presence of employee recognition with the ‘side orders’ of a £50 gift voucher, the achievement of employees such as the experience of Tracey Walters, was neglected. Moreover, **managerial instability** was a pivotal cause as two ineffective managers were employed in the Wanden branch prior to Brian, which was questionable. Moreover, employee involvement and participation are important to adhere to employee voice to increase productivity and innovation (van Assen, 2021). Contrastingly, employee participation plummeted in the Wanden branch as there were no regular team meetings to incorporate a sense of inclusion and decision-making process. There are also **structural and operational gaps**, such as inadequate training and uneven workload distribution gave rise to over-work aspects. Moreover, operational inefficiencies can cost up to \$1.3 million a year for some organisations, leading to broader business challenges (Moxley, 2023). For example, managerial problems were overlooked by the previous managers at the Wanden branch, fostering incompetency and delays in the workplace. Additionally, despite bringing innovation, Brian incorporated ‘side orders competition’ led to unhealthy competition among workers. Other than these, **respect for workers** and **intolerance** to mistakes were the causes of concern in the branch as Tracey was demoted to the ‘runners’ position despite being the second longest-serving waiter at the branch with ample experience. The job roles, such as the collection of dirty plates or laying tables, were not ethical from her perspective.

Apart from these, there was a ***cultural misalignment*** with the absence of a cohesive team culture owing to the resistance of shift supervisors and reluctance. Besides, ***intellectual and social engagements*** are key managerial objectives which were missing in the warden branch as employees felt more productive in the workplace with the absence of Brian (Secundo et al., 2020). Furthermore, a failure in the disciplinary and grievance-addressing process was a possible cause of the problem as the grievance of Tracey highlighted the poor disciplinary system. Lastly, it was a failure of the area manager of the restaurant chain, Alice Masters, to give responsibility to Brian despite knowing his stringent protocols in the workplace. Therefore, it can be said that engagement of the leader was ineffective giving rise to all possible causes in the organisation.

## **Identification of business objectives**

- ***Improving employee retention***- Stabilisation of the workforce is paramount to addressing job satisfaction. This includes increasing hygiene factors such as consistent supervision, fair treatment and sufficient training.
- ***Enhancing managerial effectiveness***- Empowering managers in the form of manager development programs are effective, along with supervision involving participatory management and emotional intelligence skills (Moon, 2021). This ensures a supportive environment for employees along with operational consistency.
- ***Fostering a collaborative team culture***- The Warden branch needs to encourage teamwork with the incorporation of systems that award collective effort instead of individual achievement. Here, managers need to address conflicting interests among employees by adjusting their approach to the power realities, giving rise to a ***pluralist approach*** (Week 5 Lecture Slide).
- ***Implementation of a strong disciplinary and grievance-addressing mechanism***- A transparent grievance-addressing possess is invariably related to employee relations, which is essential. Besides, a progressive disciplinary system is essential to reduce perception bias and ensure fairness.
- ***Optimisation of training and development***- Structured and hands-on training are of immense significance regarding real-life situations that ensure error reduction and bolster confidence among staff.
- ***Boosting employee engagement (EE)***- Employee involvement needs to be heightened to boost sales along with addressing internal conflicts.

## Potential solutions

### ***Solution 1- Adopting a managerial hybrid approach***

The managerial hybrid model caters to the managerial development required for effective management of the workforce (Rees, 1996). The managerial hybrid model incorporates both theory X and theory Y, enabling managers to adhere to their leadership styles based on employee needs and situations. As per theory X, employees need control while responding to a situation. This is effective as the former managers of the Warden branch were ineffective. Furthermore, theory Y principles foster the commitment of employees along with emotional satisfaction at the workplace. Thus, managerial effectiveness can be improved while Brian becomes less rigid in his principles, providing the right direction and motivation to employees.

### ***Solution 2: Establishing a comprehensive reward management system***

Motivating employees through incentives and recognition is the cornerstone of engagement. Besides, an effective rewards management system attracts, retains and motivates competent employees along with pay determinants (Díez et al., 2020). Therefore, the incorporation of team-based incentives is related to increasing overall performance. This can be achieved through group outings or quarterly bonuses along with non-monetary rewards such as 'employee of the quarter' programs. In this way, EE and employee retention can be fostered through performance-based rewards or PBRs.

### ***Solution 3: Enhancing training and development programs***

Error and dissatisfaction among employees arise through training gaps which are present in the Warden branch despite giving training manuals. For this reason, a structured training program is essential that is aligned with the operational needs of the restaurant.

In this regard, the training manuals need to be complemented by regular updates and hands-on learning. For this reason, mentors need to be recruited to provide guidance to the workers. Besides, adhering to technology by leveraging online training modules can optimise the training and development process (Giannakos et al., 2022).

#### ***Solution 4: Participatory decision-making mechanisms***

The creation of platforms for collective employee participation is necessary where employee voices are valued and heard. Setting up regular staff meetings and feedback sessions would encourage collaboration while providing insights into operational challenges. In this regard, a ***collectivist approach*** is crucial where the collective interest of an employee group is prioritised to foster a collaborative team culture (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2022).

#### ***Solution 5: Improving grievance and disciplinary process***

The disciplinary process is punitive, whereas the grievance process lacks transparency. In this regard, the “***Employee Rights Bill 2024***” is highly significant to foster worker protection from harassment, and unfair dismissal, along with legal compliance (UK Parliament, 2024). Furthermore, an HR advisory support team is also essential with the presence of a trade union or TU for a proper grievance-addressing mechanism. Apart from these, the “Employment Rights Act 1996” is effective concerning the rights, and responsibilities of employees are monitored with flexible working arrangements.

Criteria	Implications
Employee-centricity	Prioritisation of employee welfare is carried out to foster satisfaction, engagement and retention of employees. In this regard, the “Employment Rights Act 1996” needs to be adopted

	by the organisation (UK Legislation, 2024).
Alignment with ethical and legal standards	Solutions need to be aligned with the “ <b>Employee Rights Bill 2024</b> ” to ensure ethical practices and adherence to labour laws.
Operational feasibility	Operations within the Warden branch need to be implementable and practical where managers play a pivotal role.
Sustainability	Solutions need to deliver long-term benefits to the organisation instead of temporary solutions.
Meeting the organisational objectives	The solutions must directly address the problems of the Warden branch to reduce turnover and achieve business goals.

**Table 1: Criteria for solutions**

(Source: Author)

### **Recommended solutions based on criteria**

#### ***Leadership development through a managerial hybrid approach***

This solution is essential for transforming the culture of the branch as the branch can achieve EE and sustainable improvement while Brian Masdern is equipped with skills to balance sympathy and rigidity. Moreover, the root causes of employee dissatisfaction can be addressed with the managerial hybrid approach with the incorporation of team supervision.

#### ***Comprehensive reward management system***

Managing individual and team dynamics is effectively maintained by a balanced rewards system fostering fairness and collaboration (Khan et al., 2020). This solution is sustainable and practical and directly addresses the business objectives to enhance

employee retention and EE. A balanced reward system is likely to be addressed to monitor long-term effects while improving the emotional resilience of the employees.

### ***Enhancement of training and development programs***

Operational inefficiencies are writ large in the Warden branch, with managerial instability and rigidity. For this reason, training the employees significantly contributes to compliance, ensuring employees are abreast with their job roles to meet job requirements (Giannakos et al., 2022).

### ***Participatory decision-making mechanisms***

It was evident that the Warden brand lacked employee centricity as employees felt more productive in the absence of managers. Therefore, integrating employees into the decision-making process will be effective in handling issues of collaboration and trust deftly. In this way, employee grievances can be properly addressed, which is paramount in the Warden branch heightening ethical standards.

Hence, based on the above discussion, it can be said that Brass Rail's Warden branch will be able to deftly address its challenges by incorporating a managerial hybrid, reward management, participatory decision-making and an increase in the training process to meet organisational objectives. On the other hand, an entirely authoritarian leadership in the form of Theory X needs to be rejected as it leads to employee disengagement and dissatisfaction while worsening retention.

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