PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT-THE SUPPORT FACTOR OF THE RELATION DEVELOPMENT WITH THE CUSTOMERS (CLIENTS)

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Abstract: The people is the driving force of this century and effective personnel management is the main factor of the relation development with customers if they are based on the quality management principles. All organizations need high levels of customer loyalty.

Key words: customer loyalty, innovation, outsourcing, improvement, quality management principles.

1. INTRODUCTION

The current tendencies of the business world are going towards the globalization of markets, the progress of new technologies including digital technologies. In this context quality has become a challenge for the future, is why quality must be understood in a wide sense. The role of the top management and its leadership will be very important in the future looking toward; listen to the client in order to cover its expectation and look for the competitive advantages in order to increase the competitiveness of the organization. To achieve these targets the organization will need to do an intensive use of the individual and collective knowledge and to take the advantage on its innovation potential based on efficiency, predictability and consistency which means quality, schedule and commitments. According to Miguel Iraburu [1] "quality is the great management challenge for the XXI Century".

Innovation, on the other hand, is about creativity, inventiveness, developing new products, making the exiting products more compelling to customers and reaching new types of customers. Innovation also implies streamlining product development, manufacturing and supply chain process to deliver products to market with increasing levels of efficiency, speed and quality. The innovation, in many cases, includes: finding an application for a new solution and good practice that becomes available, making mistake-proof solutions based on the lessons-learned information and selecting existent solutions analogous to the problem that needs to be.

Twenty first century organizations will strive for customer enthusiasm instead of customer satisfaction. Customer enthusiasm means the customers are excited and loyal because the services and products available to them exceed their expectation. Twenty first century organizations will create new and loyal customers through direct interaction with them [2].

Business growth depends on improving customer loyalty behavior. Organizations with higher customer loyalty usually experience faster business growth than another with lower customer loyalty. The customer loyalty is the

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primary factor responsible for driving business growth and organization value, the degree to which customers experience positive feelings for, possess allegiance to and exhibit positive behaviors toward organization.

The driving force behind a 21 century organizations will be its personnel (people) and their success is based on the people.

In the last year of the last century, Subir Chowdhury said: "People manage people, inside and outside an organization and effective personnel management is the main factor of the relation development with the customers as long as a challenge, will increasingly face in the 21 century" [2].

Due to increasing competition, managers have to react, quickly to improve products and services, but the necessary data/information to allow quick reaction to customer needs have to be provided by the trained people from any prior cultural, social or political research. The organizations must respond to different markets by adapting products, services and processes to local requirements, changing management styles, put their mark on the relation development with customers, and have to have managers with the ability to think, just as it is for entrepreneurs. These successful managers (leaders) act on their thinking using good communication, inspiring every one in the organization to believe in their actions. As soon as one action becomes real, these managers go for the next one.

The managers spend large amounts of money to improve communication system from point of view art of communication and its medium based of the effective communication from the top to the bottom, people with people, etc. It is very important to provide a friendly atmosphere in which everyone communicates quickly.

Effective communication helps to break down the traditional organizational hierarchy and encourages communication of all news (bad and good), so that any type of news care pass *from one* end of the organization to the other, and thorough all levels [2].

In the *core of relation development with customers* are the managers and personnel (people) who needs knowledge of languages, cultures and a wide range of subjects which will be vital to achieve success. They have to be experts in several fields because if they have the desire for knowledge, they care obtain it. Any skills can be learned, including the ability to encourage diversity in relation with organization customers. If organizations can embrace and manage diversity as a business strategy, they will be successful. Today, *diversity* is a business imperative, and pay more attention that in today` knowledge-rich world of competition, we never know where the best idea will come from.

2. USE OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES-IN THE PROCESS OF THE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

To lead and operate an organization successfully, it is necessary to manage it in a systematic and visible manner, based on eight quality management principles [3, 4].

One of them is very closed with personal management, as the support factor of the relation development with customers, for example:

1. Leadership
One of the best description of this item is the following: "Leaders establish unity of purpose and direction of the organization. They should create and maintain the internal environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organization` objectives, with key benefits: people will understand and be motivated towards the organization` goals and objectives, activities are evaluated, aligned and implemented in a unified way, miscommunication between levels of an organization will be minimized. The needs of all interested parties including customers, owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society are considered as a whole" [3].

The management` increasing sensitivity leads to pay more attention to quality improvement and, consequently, to search for new ideas. External *customer demands* seem to be more powerful force than internal change pressures. The changing competitive situation in the longer run proves the main external driver. Leadership means that is necessary to promote the quality in all actions because the quality will be the leading factor and it

is concentrated in the role of the leading manager in a tougher competitive world. The difference between how quality was understood in the past and in the present is that nowadays quality is a reality identified with leadership and is improving continuously, a moving target, never being satisfied with the goals achieved.
The development of quality ideology involves incremental *cultural change* which only permeates on the terms of structures, in other words, taking into consideration the system of labor market relationships. The creation of an *employer-employee cooperation* system is a time-consuming process reflecting, in this case, the industry-specific features of craft culture. It requires awaiting ripening of the times for new ideas and manifests itself in various forms of spreading the policy to the organizational arenas, for example through increasing cooperation between employees and management.

2. Involvement of people (personnel)
According to [3] "People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organization`s benefit, with key benefits: motivated, committed and involved people within the organization; innovation and creativity in furthering the organization`s objectives; people being accountable for their own performance; people eager to participate in and contribute to continual improvement; people understanding the importance of their contribution and role in the organization and constraints to their performance; people assess their performance against their personal goals and objectives; people actively seeking opportunities to enhance their competence, knowledge and experience, and they are understanding that: goods manufactured in organizations are cheaper and better than those manufactured in low cost labor countries; each product is customized to an individual order or it may be that they are able to vary the production rate to market demand; they have striven to deliver world-class manufacturing performance and have high confidence in their manufacturing competitiveness; they are regularly innovating the manufacturing processes and support systems to meet the needs of the market, while keeping ahead of the competition; the organization have the people who have <<a sparkle in their eye>>, an enthusiasm for their task, and a pride in what they do".

All factors that influence motivation, satisfaction and performance of people, potentially enhancing the performance of the organization that means – a good work environment offers an atmosphere for creativity [3, 4, 5].

Responsible business attracts the best people and improves performance in relation with customers, because: employees are convinced that a talented and diverse workforce enhances creativity and innovation and contributes to increased focus on customers, improving competitive edge; they want to be treated as individuals-not categorized according to whatever "diversity" group they fall into; they want to see the organization`s values practiced throughout the business-from corporate social responsibility through human resources to products and services. A commitment to corporate responsibility is a basic requirement for attracting and retaining the best people, being the best partner and achieving the best performance.

People put into practice the key characteristics of a responsible employer identified by employees. These are: treating individuals fairly; responding to the changing needs of individual employees over time; providing good quality products or services; listening to employees; understanding the importance of values.

Attention to young people. The excellence level required by the world market put unprecedented demands on all business, which in turn translate directly into unprecedented demands for young people. It is therefore imperative that each society has ways of addressing the issue of insuring that students are prepared to the world of work. Quality for people is now inextricably linked to quality for business and industry. Society can no longer afford to maintain strict lines of separation between business and school, and between institutions such as the quality associations and other professional societies. Strengthening the bond between business and education should now be seen as a universal need-one in which quality profession can play a key role. Because the business world typically reacts to change faster than does the world of education, today` corporations and large organization must bear some responsibility for preparing students to take on challenges that can not be foreseen from the building the workforce of tomorrow. Business-education partnership is a golden opportunity for students to display their skills and ease their transition into working world.

3.   Continual improvement
Continual improvement of the organization`s overall performance should be a permanent objective of the organization with key benefits: performance advantage through improved organizational capabilities; alignment of improvement activities at all levels to an organization`s strategic intent; flexibility to react quickly to opportunities; providing people with training in the methods and tools of continual improvement; making

continual improvement of products, processes and systems an objective for every individual in the organization; establishing goals to guide, and measure to track, continual improvement and recognizing and acknowledging improvements.

The main conditions to improve the relation with customers are: a strict requirement of a discipline (in a broad sense) on every level, from a worker to a general manager; creation of an ideological basis of business, a organization` philosophy which, at the utmost degree, contributes to creation of a stable position in business; customer` needs are a main target of activities of a organization; establishing a friendly atmosphere at all levels; active use of "new" and "clean" technologies in the fields of advertisement and a public opinion making, mandatory knowledge by a company` management. Innovation as well as improvement and learning are based on analyses of data and information, all processes overlap one another. Learning process implies acknowledgement of information and data for future reference and improvement is a practical use of information and data to develop better solutions. Innovations take it a step further in using information and data to produce new solutions. For this processes are needed the best people.

Some principles of modern attitude towards the customer are: increase investments in promotion of a corporate trade mark; express delivery of goods at any time, at any period of time; struggle for a degree of customer satisfaction and a frequency of demands; acknowledge faults without waiting for complaints; to react immediately at any request of a customer and not to give a customer cause for discontent and not to make the same proposal twice.

4. Mutually beneficial supplier relationships
An organization ant its suppliers are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances the ability of both to create value with key benefits: increased ability to create value for both parties; flexibility and speed of joint responses to changing market or customer needs and expectations; optimization of costs and resources; establishing relationships that balance short-term gains with long-term considerations; identifying and selecting key suppliers and clear and open communication; establishing joint development and improvement activities; inspiring, encouraging and recognizing improvements and achievements by suppliers. To be successful in today competitive economy, more and more organizations rely on suppliers and expect them to be on the top in the areas of quality, cost and delivery, and for them, measuring and monitoring the performance of suppliers is crucial to ensure it is spending resources wisely, staying in front of competitors and meeting customer expectations.

The need to provide well specified requirements for suppliers with a maximum of clarity of instruction is well understood by organizations and many now have well managed systems in place to measure supplier performance in terms of quality, delivery and business management, price, support culture and flexibility.

The success of the process outcome will depend to a large extent on the effectiveness with the process management team monitor supplier measures and take prevention action when is an indication of under performance. In the last 10 years, organizations realized there was no longer a comprehensive way to report supplier performance and analyzed the impact suppliers were having on business and the action needed for effective, reliable, accurate, comprehensive and efficient system to improve suppliers performance .

It is possible to have three areas in which suppliers are evaluated for acceptance:
        1) general performance assessment based on four business models : a- row material; b- development, which includes research, concept and technology development suppliers; c- support services, such as providers of spare parts, modifications, training and product support; d – shared services , such as IT procurement, employee financial services and site - services suppliers;
        2) delivery on time according contractual requirements;
        3) quality – percentage of pieces accepted during a 12-month period,-cost of nonconformance which include costs incurred from defect detection and resolution to corrective action [6, 7].

Within organizations, supplier management and supplier professionals, project managers and other integrated team members use the supplier performance measurement report to make source selection decisions and to monitor supplier performance, related impacts and risk to the business. By providing the requirements to suppliers about their own performance, suppliers understand organization expectations, and can monitor their own operations and can take action to ensure continual performance improvements and, also have opportunities to rectify data inaccuracies.

Many times is necessary that the organizations to develop ways to identify risks associated with sub supplier performance. Many suppliers are also direct suppliers to organization, and by understanding at all levels of the supply chain is possible the better use performance data to reduce risk. Using the industry common best practices in supplier performance measurement and reporting helps ensure consistency and understanding at all levels of the supply chain.

Even activities once thought of as an organization` strengths, requiring unique expertise and producing competitive advantage, are candidates for external procurement for some (services supplier-outsourcing) [7].
The outsourcing of function once performed by organizations internal departments has been increasing in quantity and scope. What began as an effort to shift low-value activities to outside suppliers has steadily grown to the point at which function may be subject to outsourcing from corporate administrative functions (IT, finance, human resources, security, legal and customer services) to basic production , research and development and so on).

While most organizations partially outsource some functions, it is unusual for a function to be completely outsourced. It is the decision of top management based on the answer to following questions: What are the most important attributes for internal and external suppliers? What are the top causes of supplier failure? What goals have been set for outsourced functions? To what have they been met? What functions have been outsourced? What is internal customer service levels for key functions- those that are in-house and those that have been outsourced? When evaluating the impact of outsourcing on internal service level with an effect on internal service quality, there are two perspectives to consider: - does the outsourcing effort meet an individual function`s goals, including maintaining internal service quality? And does extensive use of outsourcing across numerous functions affect the general level of internal services?

An organization highly experienced in outsourcing could be expected to avoid many of the associated pitfalls. Lessons learned from one experience would improve late outsourcing activities and relationships. Because each outsourcing effort might involve a different function, however, organizations with limited collaboration or learning systems among departments would be less likely to benefit from multiple outsourcing experiences [7].

The prime contractor's responsibility for product quality has become increasingly critical in this age of outsourcing. Subcontractor management becomes difficult in distributed outsourcing, particularly in the area of flow down of information. Common flow-down clauses include product specifications, scope of work, dispute resolution guidelines and legal requirements [4].

Communication process is very important. The breakdowns and inadequate buyer-supplier collaboration in the communication process make it difficult to align a supplier with the main organization. An outsourced service will be handled by outside individuals who have less contact with colleagues within the outsourcing organization. Communication issues and a lack of institutional knowledge could easily lead to lower levels of service performance.

More attention to the hidden cost related outsourcing. While the service provider was delivering services at a lower cost than that reflected by the previous recruiting budget, there was no method to account for the labor cost of managers who needed to be more involved in the process and is possible to lead to an overestimation of the financial benefit of the outsourcing. Perhaps organizations are placing too much emphasis on cost without developing enough knowledge of their suppliers` capabilities to be able to make an informed decision as to who should ear the contract or whether in should be outsourced at all. A more balanced or holistic evaluation might reduce this source of failure [6, 7].

5. Customer focus
Business growth depends on improving customer loyalty behavior. Companies with higher customer loyalty usually experience faster business growth than companies with lower customer loyalty [7, 8].

Customer focus should be about prevention rather than measuring after the event. In practice this means developing a customer – focused culture within an organization. Such a culture needs to cover, among other things:

- *Identifying customer needs.* The customer needs issue is well presented by [3]: "Every organization has interested parties, each party having needs and expectations. Interested parties of organizations include: customers and end-users, people in the organization, owners/ investors (such as shareholders, individuals or groups, including the public sector, that have a specific interest in the organization), suppliers and partners, and society in terms of the community and the public affected by the organization or its products. The success of the organization depends on understanding and satisfying the current and future needs and expectations of present and potential customers and end-users, as well as understanding and considering those of other interested parties".

"In order to understand and meet the needs and expectations of interested parties, an organization should identify its interested parties and maintain a balanced response to their needs and expectations, and translate identified needs and expectations into requirements, communicate the requirements throughout the organization, and focus on process improvement to ensure value for the identified interested parties" [8].

Organizations are asking the customer to look at a familiar situation in a new way, notice something that is not there and make mental "associations" that result in ideas about what could be added.

These associations comprise the *actions* of attention (looking closely at a familiar situation) *escape* (not being bound by the past or what we expect to see) and movement (making new connections among concepts in the wind.

To satisfy customer and end-user needs and expectations, the management of an organization should understand the needs and expectations of its customers, including those of potential customers, and determine key product characteristics for its customers and end-users, identify market opportunities, weaknesses and future competitive advantage.

- *Creating a culture that strives to deliver customer needs and monitoring of the process of cascading customer needs to all internal links in the delivery process and suppliers.* In implementing a customer focused culture it is worth considering the bigger picture of culture change and consider what is meant by a culture for opportunity and what is required to promote and implement such a culture within an organization and in relation with customer's development.

Defining a culture for opportunity is not easy, but some of the following ideas give a flavor for the basis of a culture for opportunity, being an environment which: recognizes the "importance of customers", both internal and external, and the importance and value of people to the organization, recognizes the value of sound supplier relationships, both internal and external, recognize the potentially huge resource within the totality of personnel employed and recognition for the individual who was the source of successfully implemented initiatives, ensures that both "solutions" and, equally importantly, "lessons learned form mistakes" are shared across an organizations.

Bringing about the shift in culture that will allow such a culture to infuse throughout the whole organization is best described as a challenge [9].

It requires: the total support and commitment of the whole management team from top to bottom; a realization of what the management system is a capable of delivering throughout the organization; a critical mass of personnel who believe that it is the way forward for the benefit of all.

Bringing about this culture shift is not easy and cannot be brought about by any one single individual. The champion will need to drive this shift using a wide range of techniques. Personal enthusiasm is not sufficient-the champion will have to convince a nucleus of the key and respected members of the management team of the benefits of a culture shift.
To support such a culture shift an organization must invest in its most precious resource by ensuring that its key personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge to enable this shift to take place.

- *The process of measuring the extent to which customer needs have been met and the process of providing customer feedback to all links in the supply chain.* Customer's needs and monitoring satisfaction are at the head of a company's activity. Perception of a customer as a personality and establishment of a continuous dialog with him is a key for building up a success of cooperation. An indispensable requirement of the present days is that

one must use all available means of cooperation with a customer, provide for a possibility of choice except for one- between us and our competitor. It is insufficient now to cunningly manipulate with a customer's behavior, a success is now subject to the quality and quantity of additional services.

By way of providing an individual approach to consumers, proposing individual service, the market will help to make a fresh start for personalization of a customer-seller relationship, regenerate predictability in business relationships, simplicity and kindness that were lost in the assembly-line production era.

Process of measuring the extent to which customers need have been met/provider customer feedback consist in:

1. *Research and understand*: who our customers are and what products/service do they currently require from us; what impact does our products and services have on their business and how important are our products and services to them; what risks does our products and services have to their business and what needs they may have; what are their expectations from our service and products; what might they require in future (how will the above change in future); how do they currently feel about our products and services.

2. Output from the monitoring and analysis of an organization's environment can be input for internal innovation processes .Internal innovation processes can use ideas generated inside an organization and outside, by interested parties such as customers, partners, suppliers and end users [10].

3. *Obtain the information*, such as: if an on-going process and the information may be obtained through various means (e.g. "talking" to customers, market research, benchmarking, competitors, complaints, performance, etc.); to get a more accurate result, a combination of sources of information; to implement the customer focus principle, define responsibilities and methodologies for the process and communicate to relevant personnel (consider carefully "who" you need to ask, and "what" questions need to be asked); ensure adequate and competent resource for obtaining and analyzing the obtained information; training of staff and awareness; ensure personnel understand and are aware of their responsibilities.

4. Analyzing and the information: analyze the obtained information to ensure that they are meaningful and accurate (e.g. consider sources of information, comparison of results, reliability of information, in case of sampling consider sample size and response rate and calculate reliability factor); on occasions the use of statistical techniques may have to be considered to ensure reliable results; ensure that the analysis takes place within the planned timescale (timely response to results can be crucial); when satisfied with analyzed information, list the results and communicate to relevant personnel; review and consider the results versus organizations performance and objectives; results should be communicated and understood within the organization to ensure each individual is aware and delivers; top management must ensure that the organization policy and objectives are consistent with customer needs and expectations (this may mean establishing new policies/objectives and/or changes in processes); objectives should be measurable and communicated to the relevant departments/ personnel; where necessary, new procedures/ processes need to be defined and implemented; "TIME" in response to results can be crucial; ensure feedback to customers, if surveyed.

5. *Identify and implement actions.* Being customer focused, will help the organization to take a more *factual approach to decision making*. Results may identify a need for the following actions: changes to organization policy and objectives and development of new products and/or new processes/procedures; review of the adequacy of resources; review of the effectiveness of the processes; staff training and awareness; establishing a more suitable and effective performance measurement process (e.g. "how and what" to measure on customer satisfaction surveys).

6. *Measure*: monitor and measure the performance to assess if objectives have been achieved (internal measures and external measures); one measurement would be to measure customer satisfaction (same rules apply in terms of obtaining, analyzing and using the information); identify and communicate all measure.

7. *Take action on results of measure*: the path to continual improvement of the organization's products and services can be by action on the results of measurements; if results identify gaps between the organization objectives and its performance, immediate actions are necessary to find the causes and eliminate them; if no gaps, then further objectives can be set for continual improvement.

Monitoring customer satisfaction-the main input data and method [11]:

- *Telephone survey* by the company or an independent body to ask for feedback in what appears to be in an informal way;
- *Credit notes*: how many credit notes raised and why? Code the reasons for analysis;
- *Customer returns for re-stocking*: Why are the products returned?
- *Warranty claims and complaints.* Analyses the reasons and feed back to the designers; What do you call a complaint? If it is in writing? If the customer says it is a complaint?

- *Lost and new customers*. Are you gaining more new customers than you are losing?
- *Service call*. Why the call out, how are we doing, any new equipment required?
- *Focus groups* of customers or user groups who get together over a glass or wine to give you honest feedback;
- *Benchmarking*. Sounds good but can be difficult get confidential information. What are your competitors publicly stated performance objectives and how do you compare? Next day delivery, call out times, returns policy, complaints handling etc.;
- *A feedback section on the company web site*. Remember that there are lessons to learnt form compliments as well as complaints;
- *Web Sites and Programmes*. Each customer has their own logo and can place orders, track orders, view their account, see the names of their contacts, fill in on –line comments, send messages, suggestion and complaints;
- *Questionnaire:* Seriously, Questionnaires are very useful but, the questions should be focused and meaningful to organization. Select the sample of customers and prospects carefully. Make sure it goes to the right named people and it should be from a "neutral" person in your company. Try to keep them short and have a prepaid return envelope or fax-back number. Act on the results and go back to the customer and advise on action taken, where applicable.

What sets high performing organizations apart is the ability to deliver what today`s customers want and need, at the same time as preparing to deliver what they will want tomorrow [11].

3. CONCLUSSIONS

This 21 century requires new mentality of manager and creates a next mentality attitude in those around them. Organization need people who get up every time with a passion about finding a better way in the relation development with the customers.

This new mentality actually bring in our attention the ability of managers to prevent problems in relations with customers which are in force to demand perfection and uniqueness in products, and superior service in connection with these products. To bring out better product faster, successful 21 century, organizations will focus on upstream engineering, with a lot of attention paid to corrective and preventive actions as part of organization management system.

An organization must to identify its people` needs and expectations for recognition, work satisfaction, and personal development. Such attention helps to ensure that the involvement and motivation of people are as strong as possible having as references the top management commitment to protecting the health and safety of each employee should be the overriding priority and there should be no compromise of an individual` well being in anything they do. The people have to know that the implementation of actions to help employees realize a healthy, injury-free environment is a leadership responsibility and support of this effort is the responsibility of everyone.

The need to effectively manage supplier relationship with regard to the success of process out come cannot be over emphases. With the increase on reliance of goods and services, suppliers become an integral part of most processes of the organizations.

As [3] concluded: "Management must to consider the potential benefits of establishing partnerships with suppliers to the organization, in order to create value for both parties. A partnership should be based on a joint strategy, sharing knowledge as well as gains and losses. When establishing partnerships, an organization have to: identify key suppliers, and other organizations, as potential partners; jointly establish a clear understanding of customers` needs and expectations; jointly establish a clear understanding of the partners` needs and expectations, and set goals to secure opportunities for continuing partnerships".

In the same time, "Organization depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs, should meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations with key benefits: increased revenue and market share obtained through flexible and fast responses to market opportunities; increased effectiveness in the use of the organization` resources to enhance customer satisfaction;

improved customer loyalty leading to repeat business; researching and understanding customer needs and expectations; ensuring that the objectives of the organization are linked to customer needs and expectations; communicating customer needs and expectations throughout the organization; measuring customer satisfaction and acting on the results; systematically managing customer relationships; ensuring a balanced approach between satisfying customers and other interested parties (such as owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole)" [3].

The integration of a customer feedback including processes and data into the business processes ensures customer feed-back is used at all levels of the organization, from top management to front-line employees.

By incorporating key elements of a customer feedback directly into the daily business processes, the organization is able to ensure customers` needs are met.

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