

## **Workplace Shortcomings and Indiscipline**

There is a school of thought that there is a decline in the standards which are required to be observed in the workplace. It is to be expected that there are those persons who would question the basis for this assertion. Whereas there is the absence of empirical evidence to support the assertion, there are trends and circumstances which can be identified, to support that there are changes in the workplace culture.

What is being experienced is a shift from the traditional workplace practices. There are changes in the attitudes, deportment, work acumen, work ethic, etiquette and quality of service delivery. Some employers can be accused of having dropped the ball, since they have failed to enforce the observance of minimum standards by their employees. In addition, some employers have contributed to the declining standards by their failure to ensure there is a conducive and safe workplace and work environment.

The breakdown which is being experienced may also be attributed to the limited interest shown by management in the actions and behaviours of their employees. This comes about as a consequence of the apparent lack of supervision. The absence of supervision allows employees with the latitude and freedom to attempt or do things without having the fear of being cautioned or reprimanded for what is considered to be unacceptable, or a breach of policy or regulations. With such a laissez-faire approach being adopted by management, this opens the door for substandard behaviours to be exhibited by those employees who take advantage of management's failure to act.

With respect to punctuality, there are those employees who are regularly late in reporting for duty at the start of the workday. They exploit the fact that management does not pay attention or act to address the matter. The absence of any monitoring or supervision also contributes to the practice of malingering by some employees.

There are reports of employees who on reporting for work, proceeding to having their breakfast, spending time in the washroom, doing their personal business or engaging in telephone conversations. At the backend of all this, some take an extended lunch hour, which is sometimes as ridiculous as thirty minutes duration or

**Workplace Shortcomings and Indiscipline: Dennis de Peiza, Labour & Employee Relations Consultant, Regional Management Services Inc., 5 April, 2024**

beyond. These acts of abuse are extended to frequent requests made for time away from work for the purpose of attending to personal business. It is ludicrous to think that some thereafter, make a demand an hour for lunch, under the claim that there is an entitlement.

It would appear that the indiscipline which exists in some workplaces can be attributed to the callousness of some employers and management. Equally so, it can be attached to the indifference shown and unconscionable actions displayed on the part of employees. It cannot be ruled out that employees are sometimes forced to act in appropriate ways due to the declining ethical standards of their employer. The claim made by employees that the employer does not treat to them with respect and dignity, To add insult to injury, some employers stand to be accused of not complying with the labour laws, international labour conventions, regulations and show a blatant disregard when it comes to respecting workers' rights.

The combination of these factors and the failure of the employer to motivate workers, seemingly results in a display of worker apathy, negativity and a decline in productivity. The shortcomings and indiscipline which can be associated with workers, are unpunctuality, non-observance of the dress code, ignoring workplace policies and procedures, a disregard for rules, regulations, authority, and refraining from extending basic courtesies. As the workplace becomes less informal, it would appear that it will take some affirmative action and a change of outlook, attitudes and disposition on the part of employers and employees, if there is to be a return to the standards and practices of old.