

Responsible Behaviour and Actions

Those in the leadership or management of organizations and enterprises, should be aware that the power of accountability lies in their ability to help the body to achieve its goals and to build better relationships. In being accountable, is reflected in the transparency, honesty, integrity and professionalism demonstrated by the office holder in the execution of their duties. Those who are overtaken by the power and authority which they hold, tend to assume a sense of arrogance. Such persons usually find themselves prone to being misguided in the actions, decision making, personal and professional behaviour. This is where the signs of dishonesty, corruption and the abuse of authority become apparent. The individuals to which this applies, have the responsibility to do some self-introspection. To do this, is an indication that the individual is demonstrating both wisdom and maturity.

At the individual level, leaders and managers ought to understand what responsibility is all about. They ought to be aware that it involves being accountable for one's actions, to know and follow various rules, laws, and conduct codes. In acting or behaving responsibly, it is imperative that individuals demonstrate that they are trustworthy, prepared to observe established guidelines, follow the rules, regulations, practices, processes, procedures, and to treat others fairly.

Leaders at the level of organizations, enterprises and at the national level, are to be reminded of the four characteristics of responsibility. These are social obligation, social responsiveness, social responsibility and social impact management. The understanding of this, is that there is a responsibility to constituents, whether there are members of the general public, or more specifically, members of individual organizations, customers, clients and employees.

Starting with social obligation, it is to be understood that this is about the requirement and organization has in making a positive impact on people. This means acting in a manner benefiting society. As this relates to the corporate sector, enterprises are expected to engage in philanthropy, supporting social causes, promoting volunteering, ethical labour practices, environmental changes. When it comes to social responsiveness, this is about a person's obligation to contribute to their community or country in a way that makes the quality of life and environment better for those around them. The key to this, is the understanding that social responses are influenced by cultural norms, personal beliefs, and situational factors. These are known to play a key role in shaping the dynamics of human relationships and the society as a whole.

The issue of social responsibility is underpinned by the identifying and exercising personal and professional ethics. It is however primarily about delivering on one's civic duty, with actions that are directed at benefiting the whole of society. The seven core features of social responsibility are organizational governance, human rights, labour best practices, the environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues, community involvement and development.

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When it comes to social impact management, this relates to organizations and individuals who in striving for positive social impact, place attention on improving the society by addressing social issues and promoting positive change. They are expected to have an immediate interest in matters of health and wellness, education, promoting equality, and the development of the local economy.

As far as trade unions are concern, it is to be expected that there is a consciousness of the importance attached to four characteristics of responsibility, of social obligation, social responsiveness, social responsibility and social impact management. It can be said that as trade unions lobby to influence change, engage in collective bargaining and negotiations, that these are focal points that at the core of their formulation of policies and decision making.