

Taking Responsibility for your Actions

Persons who hold a leadership of leadership, management or supervisory position have the responsibility of accounting for their stewardship. They have a responsibility to own up for what they did, failed to have done or incorrectly did. They are expected to accept the consequences of your choices, decisions and behaviour. Engaging in the practice of attributing one's failing or inappropriate actions to external factors or others' actions can be best described as a convenient or cowardly act.

Those in the leadership or management of organizations and enterprises should be aware that the power of accountability lies within their ability to help the body to achieve its goals. It should also be geared towards the building of better relationships, and for helping individuals to become more successful in their personal and professional lives. Those who are overtaken by the power and authority which they hold, tend to assume a sense of arrogance. These persons usually find themselves prone to being misguided in the actions, inconsistent in decision making, personal and professional behaviours. Where this is occurring, the individual has a responsibility to do some self-introspection. To do this, is an indication that the individual is demonstrating both wisdom and maturity.

Those at the head of organizations, enterprises and even national governance, 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 they are members of the general public, or more specifically, members of individual organizations, customers, clients and employees.

The understanding is that the social obligation is about the requirement which organizations have in making a positive impact on people. It means acting in a manner benefiting society. For example, the corporate sector is expected to engage in philanthropy, supporting social causes, promoting volunteering, ethical labour practices, and 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 of 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.

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 the four characteristics of responsibility, which are 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, these are focal points that remain at the core of their formulation of policies and decision making.