

Worker Empowerment

The term 'people empowerment,' is regularly referenced by politicians and social activists. Trade unionists, on the other hand, have a propensity to focus on the term, 'worker empowerment.' People's empowerment is defined as the ongoing process of enabling individuals or communities to take control of their own lives. Worker empowerment is reflected through collective action. Workers' empowerment is cemented where there is solidarity, where the law protects the workers and provides for the granting of benefits.

Emerging from the two definitions, is the understanding that the focus is on building individual or collective strength, whereby people have a say in the decision-making process. In the case of workers at the workplace, this concept dismisses the notion of micromanagement.

In creating an understanding of how employee empowerment works, it is first to be understood that it is derived from the actions of managers and supervisors who entrust a larger measure of responsibility to their employees in exercising greater control over their day-to-day functioning. This comes out of the recognition and acknowledgement by management personnel of the ability of their employees to offer input into policies and into the decision-making process. This evidently supports the claim that micromanagement becomes the complete opposite to employee empowerment.

Empowered employees are more prone to feel that their input and opinions are appreciated by management. Employees therefore have a better sense that they are trusted, appreciated and valued by the employer. This has a positive impact on worker morale and productivity. It is also the catalyst for the motivation of employees to work hard. This in turn could prove to be a major contributing factor to improving the quality of employee services rendered. The empowerment of workers can positively affect the relationship enjoyed with management and supervisory personnel. This net effect of this is accentuated where there is good communication between employees, management and supervisory management personnel. It is not only about receiving input, but

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also about securing feedback and establishing platforms for employee recognition.

Another immediate outcome of employee empowerment is the loyalty, commitment and dedication which employees demonstrate towards the job. Where this obtains, there is the distinct possibility of developing a greater bonding among the members of staff. Moreover, there is the inclination and eagerness of employees to become innovative. Moreover, there is less desire to become disenchanted, where upon there is a burning desire to part association with the company / enterprise.

The empowerment of workers is not to be trivialized or ignored by employers. It is inexcusable for an employer not to provide opportunities for training and retraining of employees. It is important to do this, for the purpose of ensuring that they benefit from gaining new knowledge and skills; thus, leading to improvements in their competencies and expertise.

It is quite unfortunate where employers and management personnel do not understand and appreciate the need to engage in the practice of trusting their employees, holding them accountable and engaging in the process of information sharing. This presents a shift in the management style from that of rigid micromanagement to being supportive, where there now a trust-based relationship.

Why is empowerment so important? It raises workplace satisfaction, increases output, and stimulates innovation, producing a workforce that is strong and forward-looking. Empowering staff members is a means for success and a must for leaders to be competitive in an always-changing environment. (Srikant Chellappa, March 17, 2025: What Employee Empowerment Really means and why it matters for Success).

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