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T.Y. B.B.A.

**C - 506 : CASES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PROJECT & VIVA
(2019 Pattern) (CBCS) (Semester - V)**

Time : 2½ Hours]

[Max. Marks : 50

Instructions to the candidates:

- 1) *All questions are compulsory.*
- 2) *Figures to the right indicates full marks.*

Q1) Case 1 :

[15]

Sarita had been working in finance department of the Lakshmi Sporting Goods Manufacturing company for the four years since she graduated. From high school, she was bright, attractive and popular and had done well in the company as her recent promotion to the designation of senior accountant proved.

One of her new job responsibilities required Sarita to go to the warehouse once a week to check on and verify various inventory and shipment information. This meant that she often worked for three to four hours at a time in the shipping office. In order to reduce the noise from the operations around the office was completely walled in. On these trips to shipping, Sarita began to work closely with the shipping clerk, Aditya. Aditya, was an expert employee of 10 years with Lakshmi sporting, but was divorced. Aditya maintained all the shipping and inventory information as it was processed.

Since Sarita had never before worked in an actual manufacturing and warehouse operation, she was nervous at first. However, she was very relieved to find that Aditya was very nice and helpful. Sarita found Aditya easy to talk to because he seemed so interested in what Sarita was thinking and doing.

During her 4th visit to the warehouse, Santa and Aditya were talking as usual about the weeks shipping activity. As they were talking, Aditya casually walked to Sarita's side of the desk and sat on the edge of the desk right next to Sarita.

Sarita tried not to feel uncomfortable with Aditya so close. At a break in the discussion, Aditya looked at Sarita very seriously and asked her "Do you like to go dancing"?

P.T.O.

Sarita, a little surprised by the question, replied evenly: “Well, I like to, but I have a difficult time getting my boyfriend to go with me. Aditya interrupted: “I wasn’t talking about your boyfriend. Would you like to go dancing with me”?

Sarita, not sure what Aditya was getting at, so she -laughed and said “Well, sure, maybe some other time”. Her voice trailed off. She was trying to be polite but did not really want to commit herself. She quickly picked up a file and brought that discussion back to shipping information. She finished her work, and then returned to her department. She was uneasy about Aditya’s behavior and invitation.

When she returned to her desk, her supervisor Ramesh noticed that she seemed to be distracted, and asked if everything was OK. Sarita explained what had just occurred and wondered if Aditya had some ulterior motive for asking her to go dancing. Ramesh, not sensing a problem, shrugged off what happened. I wouldn’t give it much thought you are probably misunderstanding Aditya’s comments. He might have just asked very casually. Don’t be concerned”, he advised Sarita.

Next week at her regular time Sarita returned to the warehouse. As she walked into the shipping office and close the door Aditya jumped up from his chair and walked briskly over to Sarita smiling. He was about to put his arms around Sarita, but she quickly moved back. He stared into Sarita’s eyes and told her “Sarita, I really missed you. I am glad you are back”.

Sarita was completely startled, shocked and afraid and began to cry. Dropping the file, she was carrying, she ran from the office back to her department. And decided to go to Ramesh office to describe what just happened.

Case questions

- a) Which problem is this a case indicating to?
- b) Does the company have a responsibility and or liability?
- c) What should the supervisor do now?

Q2) Case 2 :

[15]

Looking across the rows of men suits, Brijesh spots Peter working with one of his employees, a sales associate. They are trying to complete a sales transaction on the new WIZARD information system. Brijesh watches as Peter again fumbles his way through another transaction. Almost instinctively, he rolls his eyes and shakes his head.

Brijesh manages the men's furnishing Group for the central mall store of the H&M store chain. As one of the younger group managers, Brijesh has charge of over 20 full time and part time sales and service representatives in four units: suits and outerwear, leisure clothes, shoes and accessories. Brijesh has been with central mall since joining their management associates development program after graduating from college. Peter is about 15 years older than Brijesh, with about that many more years' experience in the retail trade. Peter began his career in a floor sales position and after years of hard work, was promoted to supervisor leisure clothes unit.

Beginning about six months ago, central store began uh system migration in brackets as the data processing staff called it off replacing the somewhat old computer and information processing system with the one that was more streamlined. Under the new, integrated system all the retail functions like inventory, sales and customer tracking, returns and adjustments, accounting and profitability calculations etc. would be joined together and operated out of the same database. Further, all stores would be linked together, giving headquarters better ongoing control of the company as a whole and of stores and departments in particular.

As a result of this migration, virtually every job in the company was changed in some way. The jobs of the sales associates changed most: virtually every product, customer or financial transaction what's to be done differently. 'While the complexity of any task might be small, the combined weight of all the changes resulted in major learning stress on employees. They had to learn how to operate the system, access it, complete all transactions through it, and make any needed correction directly on the point-of-sale terminal - all while the customer waited across the counter.

As the kickoff date for the conversion to the new system near, all employees were brought in for a comprehensive 4 day training program. Managers and supervisors were trained first so that they would serve as aids and coaches to the other employees once the Wiz was operational. Brijesh and Peter attended one of the early programs together. Brijesh was impressed by how much the program covered. The trainers went through every conceivable transaction and procedure, demonstrating and explaining them. Each participant in the class was able to practice some of the procedure on the demo terminal. The notebook provided in the program was reasonably thorough, even if it was poorly organized. As was characteristic, Peter approached the training with gusto and enthusiasm. Peter had never worked much with computers before, and his anxiety about learning how to use the system was more than offset by a strong motivation to learn how to use the system. James was particularly pleased with this matter because he was concerned that Peter's strong people orientation might not have a corresponding technical aptitude.

It has now been more than a month since the new system started up. All the associates in the store completed the system training shortly before the conversion rate and by now, most are operating fairly well with it.

Indeed, that's what is so troubling to Bob. Brijesh in spite of the training and the time on the system, Peter just hasn't made satisfactory progress mastering it. Brijesh sees Peter's problem in various ways, like the instance he has just witnessed. There was Peter, working with one of his sales associates, trying to complete a distinct, but not that unusual, procedure. It was clear that the associate actually could complete the procedure better than Peter. Peter was following a trial-and-error process of running through different key combinations to see if any worked. The customer was growing annoyed. Brijesh thought about other instances. For example, Peter had asked Brijesh about how to complete the same procedure on four different occasions in the course of a 10 day. At times, Brijesh would watch Peter refer a customer to another sales station or have the customer wait while he asked another associate to process a complicated transaction. At one point, Brijesh asked Peter to check his manual, but Peter could only say it didn't help him that much and besides, he wasn't sure where he had left it.

On top of it all, Brijesh is now sensing that Peter is becoming more frustrated and stressed by the situation. He now thinks that Peter is trying to hide from Bob his discomfort with the system. In a way, this is Peter's method of signaling to Brijesh that Peter's knowledge of the new system cannot be discussed. Bob one Brijesh wonders how much longer he can go without taking action. Already, there are some grumblings from the other associates that Peter cannot be counted on to help them with their problems. Bob has noticed how Peter's unease with the process is putting some additional burden on the other employees, as well as the customers. Brijesh knows that Peter is smart enough to learn this material, but cannot understand why it is so difficult. Brijesh wants to help but also feels that Peter needs to show some progress and fairly soon or else Brijesh may be forced to take some actions he would rather not take.

Case questions

- a) Is there a training problem?
- b) What can Brijesh do to assist Peter in completing the learning process?
- c) What should Brijesh expect of Peter's performance in conducting and completing his own learning?
- d) How should Brijesh respond to Peter in the next few weeks?

Ravi is VP manufacturing and operations of a medium size pharmaceutical company. Ravi has a Ph.D. in chemistry but has not been directly involved in Research and New product development for 20 years. Through experience and practice he runs the operations well. The company does not have a problem of turnover, but it is obvious to Ravi and their key management personnel that the temporary workers are not working anywhere near their full potential. Ravi is very upset with the situation because with risking costs the only way that the company can continue to prosper is to increase the productivity of its workers

Ravi called the human resource manager, Rahul and wanted to know-

- What is wrong with our people?
- Our wage surveys show that we are among the best paymasters in the industry.
- The working conditions we provide are excellent.
- The fringe benefits are also good.

Yet these people are not motivated. What in the world do they want?

Rahul replied “I have told you and the president time after time that money, working conditions and benefits are not good enough. Employees also want other things to motivate them. Also, I have been conducting some random confidential interviews with some of our temporary workers, and they tell me that they are very discouraged because, no matter how hard they work they get the same pay and opportunities for advancement as their co-workers who are just scrapping by”.

Ravi then replied “okay. You are the motivation expert; what do we do about this this? We have to increase their performance”.

Question :

- a) Identify various issues in this case.
- b) How would you respond to Ravi’s last question and statement if you were the human resource manager in this company?

Q4) Case 4 :

[10]

Good people- valuable employees- quit their jobs every day. Usually, they leave for better positions elsewhere. Take Kiran, an experienced Insurance manager in a renowned insurance company who wrote the following remarks on his exit interview questionnaire.

“This job isn’t right for me. I like to have more input on decisions that affect me- more of a chance to show what I can do. I don’t get enough feedback to tell if I’m doing a good job or not, and the company keeps people in the dark about where it’s headed. Basically, I feel like an interchangeable part most of the time”.

In answer to the question about whether the company could have done anything to keep him, Kiran replied simply, “probably not”.

Why do so many promising employees leave their jobs? Why do so many others stay on but perform at minimal levels for lack of better alternatives? One of the main reasons- ken’s reason- can be all but individual, because it’s so common in so many organizations: a system wide failure to keep good people.

Corporations should be concerned about employees like Kiran. By investing in human capital, they may actually help reduce turnover, protect training investments, increase productivity, improve quality, and reap the benefits of innovative thinking and teamwork.

Human resource professionals and managers can contribute to corporate success by encouraging employee’s empowerment, security, identity, connectedness and competence.

How? By recognizing the essential components of keeping their best people and by understanding what enhances and diminishes those components.

Kiran doubts that his company will ever change, but other organizations are taking positive steps to focus on and enhance employee retention. As a result, they are reducing turnover, improving quality, increasing productivity and protecting their training investments.

Case questions :

- a) Do you think that Kiran’s self-esteem had anything to do with his leaving the firm?
- b) What do you think were Kiran’s satisfaction with and commitment to the job and firm he is leaving?
- c) What lesson can this company learn from the case of Kiran? What can and should it now do?

