

Impact on Work Environment to the Organizational Success

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Abstract:

An industry is affected by general industrial environment, a business is affected by the general business environment and they all are in turn affected by social, political and cultural environment. All these varied environmental factors have direct and indirect bearing on the efficiency. Physical surroundings affect the mental state and the efficiency of and individual to a great extent. Conditions such as noise, light, ventilation, heat are some of the stimuli that can cause good, bad or indifferent responses irrespective of whether these are found to be consciously acceptable or objectionable. They are definitely factors that affect performance of the employees. A worker is affected mentally and physically such as (a) unpleasant working conditions. (b) Demand for a fast pace in performance (c) Physical effort (d) Overtime and inconvenient schedules. Workers face problems of poor lighting, heat, heat, dust, fumes and noise, leading to a sense of insulation, tension and alienation. The location of the work spot should be located in a suitable environment. An improper layout of a factor will result in unnecessary and unproductive movement of workers, delay in completion of work, industrial accident all the negative factors could be avoided. The advantages of good layout leads to reduce the physical effort of the worker, fewer material handling, reduction in the number of accident and increase the productivity in the organization. Physical environment: Lighting should be proper and appropriate. The working areas should be illuminated more than their surroundings. Noise and vibrations should be recognized as barriers to employees' productivity. The air around a worker has to be in circulation and should be clean. Factories should have fairly high roofs, large entrances, wide windows and roof top ventilators. The business premises should be maintained neatly and cleanly. All work spot should reassure the workers with a sense of security regarding faulty wiring, poor equipment leads to accidents. Spittoons should be provided at convenient places, clean drinking water should be provided for all employees. Every worker should be enabled to perform better by making the environment suitable for the performance of the task. Housekeeping makes work areas pleasant and more satisfying. It reduces fatigue and discomfort among the workmen and stimulates them to work.

Key words : Work environment , Physical effort , Environment factors , Environment hazard , Ventilation

1. Introduction

Today's environment strictly means physical conditions and surroundings that affect a person's life, in an enlarged sense it also means conditions and circumstances both internal and external that affect the growth of an individual or even an organization[1-3]. An industry is affected by the general industrial environment, a business is affected by the general business environment and they all are in turn affected by social, political and cultural environment. All these varied environmental factors have direct and indirect bearing on the efficiency, commitment and performance of a worker. But some of them are beyond the control of the organization. The political environment in which a business finds itself cannot be completely and satisfactorily altered by the business house[4,5]. At best, it can neutralize adverse factors, by adopting certain management strategies so that the worker does not capitulate to these adverse factors resulting in loss of efficiency, poor output and frustration. But physical conditions and surroundings can be manipulated to improve efficiency and output.

1.1. Work Environment: Physical surroundings affect the mental state and the efficiency of an individual to a great extent. Conditions such as noise, light, ventilation, heat are some of the stimuli that can cause good, bad or indifferent responses irrespective of whether these are found to be consciously acceptable or objectionable. They are definitely factors that affect performance. Kornhauser in his book, *Mental Health of the Industrial Worker*(1965), has clearly stated, “Poor mental health was directly related to unpleasant working conditions, the necessity to work faster, to extent a lot of physical effort; and to excessive and inconvenient hours.” This observation does not belittle the deterioration of physical health due to unpleasant conditions. So, a worker is affected mentally and physically by the following factors:

- (a) Unpleasant working conditions.
- (b) Demand for a fast pace in performance
- (c) Physical effort
- (d) Overtime and inconvenient schedules.

Repetitive work, de-humanizing work spots cause harm, physical as well as psychological. The accomplishment of jobs is invariably accompanied by stress, fatigue and ultimately sickness. In our country, we have hundreds and thousands of factories, work-shops and even offices where workers face problems of poor lighting, heat, dust, fumes and noise, leading to a sense of insulation, tension and alienation[6-8]. Even in hospitals, health workers face such problems making their work monotonous and dull. In one study in the USA, nurses reported that they worked in an oppressive visual environment in Intensive care units. If the working environment is not made conducive, workers will get a feeling of being trapped. Poor lighting can cause eye strain for people engaged in close detail work whereas bright lighting creates problems in some other work spots. Noise may not cause much of a stress in a machine-shop because it is predictable and expected. But even a little excess of it can send such-waves where it is least expected or predicted.

The physical design of the work-place that constitutes a major part of work environment should be planned carefully. There are also related environmental factors such as working conditions, shift timings, long hours of over-time work, work-load, variations of speaks and valleys, risks, dangers and new technology.

2. Unpleasant working conditions and Measures to correct them:

Location of the work spot: The work spot, be it a factory, office or hospital should be located in a suitable environment. Work spots that involve long distance commuting, poor transport facilities and communication facilities will tell upon the efficiency and performance of a worker. So, in such cases suitable transport can be arranged for them[9-11]. Also, if educational, recreational, medical and religious facilities, etc., are provided for in the site chosen, then the organization can rest assured that its employees’ needs are met properly which will make the entire work-force happy, contented and in high morale.

2.1 Layout within the work spot:

The work spot should help the free flow of work and free movement of the personnel. For example, an improper layout of a factory will (a) result in unnecessary and unproductive movement of workers, (b) cause delay in completion of work schedule; and (c) may also result in industrial accidents. All these negative factors could be avoided if the layout of a factory or an office is planned properly. Mostly factories and offices prefer a straight line flow of work and an equitable distribution of work. Crowded and cluttered work spots will create an adverse psychological impact on the workers which should be avoided.

2.2 Advantages of a good layout: The advantages of a good layout are:

- a) Reduction in the physical effort of the worker
- b) Fewer material handling operations
- c) Better working conditions and reduction in number of accidents
- d) A good layout will enhance productivity and will enable an organization to execute its orders in time which results in more profitability in the long run and will fetch more monetary benefits in the form of incentive, promotion etc., for the workers. This will motivate them further to reach greater heights in production.

2.3 Shift hours, overload and overtime factors:

Shift hours involving staggered working hours, long working hours, occupational hazards, risks and dangers, work overloads, both quantitative and qualitative and under-stimulating work are all factors that contribute to a negative environment. In spite of an office having the best ambience and physical surroundings, if left unattended, these factors will cause irreparable damage[12].

2.4 Physical Environment:

Lighting: Lighting should be proper and appropriate. Too much of it causing glare or too little causing eyestrain should be avoided. Good lighting improves efficiency, accuracy, improved output and provides for aesthetic satisfaction. There are recommended values for illumination of factories, offices, hospitals and educational institutions. The nature of work, the interior and color scheme should be considered as factors while deciding to provide lighting.

2.5 Basic principle of Lighting:

- a) Lighting should be so designed that the employee works in complete comfort with minimum of eye strain and physical fatigue.
- b) Light should be sufficient in intensity and be suitable to the type of work, the greater the illumination, the better the eye function.
- c) Natural light and artificial light should be integrated to provide good general lighting. Light should be diffused and glare-free. Glare cause discomfort and reduces visual effectiveness. Glare is produced either when the parts of the visual field are excessively bright in relation to the surroundings or due to reflection of light from the bright surface). Glare is one which produces a sensation of high discomfort glare and discomfort in vision but does not significantly reduce the ability to see whereas disability glare is one which reduces the ability to see.

Glare can be reduced by (a) reducing the brightness of the light source, (b) Increasing the general level of illumination of the surroundings of the glare source so that a contrast between the glare source and the surroundings is reduced, (c) placing the light source away from the direct field of vision, (d) diffusing the light by baffles, window shade, etc., and (e) using light shields or hoods if glare cannot otherwise be reduced.

The working areas should be illuminated more than their surroundings. This may be achieved by supplementary lighting located in the appropriate places.

Lighting should be designed to allow safe moments of employees form one area to another. Since eyes take some time to adjust to the change in illumination, accidents can occur while passing from a well-lit room to a poorly-lit corridor, staircase or store. The luminaries over the walkways, passages and staircase leading to the exits points should be designed to act themselves as an indicator of the routes[13].

2.6 Noise:

Noise and vibrations should be recognized as barriers to employees' productivity and must be considered appropriately while preparing the initial layout of a plant and design of a building. Machines which cause strong vibrations should be located on the ground floor and installed on proper mounting to absorb noise and counteract vibrations. Worn out parts such as gear, bearings should be replaced on time so that they do not unnecessarily add to the noise of the equipment.

Noise becomes a stress factor not only by its excess but also by its presence in unexpected and unpredictable places. For example, while workers in a steel factory or an erection site are used to certain levels of noise, but in a hospital, even a few decibels of it can become a stress factor. That is why we do not come across 'No Horn' signs in factory zones but fined them in hospital zones. It is the change in noise levels that makes noise an irritant. There are several methods to muffle noise in places where they become an environmental hazard.

2.7 Ventilation:

The air around a worker has to be in circulation and should be clean. Cool and fresh air is very vital to make place comfortable water vapors and bacteria are continuously discharged during breathing, coughing etc. Besides, certain industrial processes release flames, gases which contaminate the atmosphere. All these pose serious health hazards to the workmen and all efforts should be taken to neutralize bad effects. Consequently, the stale air has to be expelled outside and provision to allow inflow of fresh air should be made.

Factories should have fairly high roofs, large entrances, wide windows and roof top ventilators. Exhaust fans and electric chimneys provide fresh air and get rid of odor and smoke. Air-filters can ensure dust free air. Large vents to suck air and air-conditioners, wherever possible, will enhance the work environment.

Interior:

Interior decoration involves tasteful and careful decoration of an office or business premises with the appropriate selection of furniture, lighting and painting of walls, etc. The interior of a work spot has the greatest impact on the morale of a worker and it should not be cluttered, noisy and stuffy. In mordent times, even factories receive greater attention on the design of the interior. Not all places should be decorated. But they should be maintained neatly and cleanly.

Safety factors:

Any work spot should reassure the workers with a sense of security. Faulty wiring, poor equipment, lack of observance of safety rules lead to accidents. Fire-extinguishers, First-aid boxes, a dispensary with a medical officer in large factories should be a part of the working environment. If the safety aspects are properly taken care of, then a worker will cease to worry about his personal safety while operating a machine, etc., and will concentrate much better in his work.

2.8 Cleanliness and sanitation:

It is of no use if a factory or an office is located ideally, furnished neatly and equipped with all mordent machines and gadgets, if they are not kept tidy and clean. In a machine shop floor, tools should be put in their proper place after use; floor should be scrubbed to remove oils or grease and walls cleaned regularly.

Spittoons should be providing at convenient places, clean drinking water should be provided for all. Toilets should be maintained neatly and cleanly. Adequate wash rooms and rest rooms should be provided. No management can afford to neglect these areas without adversely affecting the moral of the worker, which may even lead to growing absenteeism among workmen.

Similarly, in an office all chairs, furniture, filing racks, fans, light fitting, ceiling, etc., should be dusted properly and regularly. An unkept office/factory will only affect the health of the employees.

3. The final word on environment:

The work spot may be a factory, an office, a hospital or a school caring on varied functions. The environment in such places should be suitable to the tasks performed there. Every worker should be enabled to perform better by making the environment suitable for the performance of the task. It should neither be stuffy nor choking, noisy nor dull, glaring nor dim, risky nor unhealthy. These are unpleasant working conditions. The physical design of the workplace can be a potential source of fatigue and stress. Bad environment invariably leads to poor communication, role ambiguity and poor relationships that affect the quantity and quality of the output.

3.1 Housekeeping:

Housekeeping is the operation of maintenance of an organization. Housekeeping makes work areas pleasant and more satisfying. It reduces fatigue and discomfort among the workmen and stimulates them to work. Big organizations employ housekeepers to manage the upkeep of an organization. The landscaping around the organization has to be spruced up and maintained. The guest house, reception room, canteens and toilets required to be maintained. The interior of the organization has to be maintained. Old, worn-out equipment should have to be replaced or serviced. Linen has to be sent for laundering. All these activities related to maintenance and upkeep, conforming to stiff standards of hygiene and safety should have to be attended by the housekeeping department. The housekeeping activities, related to layout, interior as well as exterior, lighting, electricity and fittings, color scheme, replacements, repairs and service are exclusively attended to by the housekeeper. The housekeeper designs all features of the work place with proper ambience and compatibility to the nature of the tasks performed there.

3.2 Essentials of a good Housekeeping:

- a) Suitable place should be provided for everything connected with job and the workmen should be asked to keep everything in its place.
- b) Plant and offices should be divided into zones, there being one person responsible for good housekeeping and orderliness of the zone.
- c) Plant and machinery should be free from leakages of oil, grease, water, steam, etc., since they make the area dirty.
- d) Containers should be placed at the strategic locations in the plant to enable workmen to deposit waste materials, oily cotton lumps, torn hand gloves directly into them, instead of being allowed to be thrown away on the shop floor.
- e) Portable equipment should be placed at appropriate places and not allowed to hamper personnel and materials movement.
- f) Materials should be stored properly and also materials should not be allowed to protrude out of bins and racks.
- g) Windows should be kept clean and jam free. Broken glasses should be replaced as soon as such breakages are observed.
- h) Walls should be painted periodically with paints that are soothing to the eyes.
- i) Lamps, fluorescents tubes and their reflectors should be cleaned periodically.
- j) Work place should be periodically clean against insects and mosquitoes.
- k) Safety and general signs and bulletin board should be kept clean.

4. Fatigue:

Fatigue is extreme tiredness after an exertion of muscles or limbs. It is a feeling of wearing or lack of energy. It should not be confused with stress. Stress may be a stimulus or a response to stimulus. Stress causes strain. Sometimes, stress is met as a challenge by some people. But fatigue is physical exhaustion that limits the capacity to work. Fatigue drains energy and kills motivation. Stress cause fight or flight (which means you can either overcome it or run away from it). But fatigue has to be cured. If fatigue is not diagnosed properly, it will cause drowsiness, apathy to work, and ennui (feeling of weariness). Physiologically, fatigue may be caused by an underactive thyroid (a gland producing hormones).

4.1 Work-related Fatigue:

An organization has to take care that its employees do not suffer from fatigue because of the prevailing working conditions. Physical exertion, lack of sleep is the main reasons for work related fatigue. The organization should take care to see that workers are not put to enormous work-related. Target that is unrealistic is one major source of fatigue in employees. Work should be planned, designed and executed properly and optimally. Unnecessary motions cause fatigue. Such motions are not only non-productive, but also tend to be a drain on energy. An organization should design its interior work spot with good ventilation and lighting.

The furniture provided should provide comfort. Brief intervals during work are essential to stretch and ward off fatigue caused by certain boring routines. Adequate facilities for hot beverages like tea/coffee should be made available. Tea-breaks and lunch-breaks boost energy levels. Work force should not be subjected to too much uncomfortable travel to reach work spots. If the work force is large, the organization should provide for transportation instead of allowing its employees submit to the vagaries of public transport system[14]. Fatigue, because of working conditions, can be relieved by rest, adequate sleep, good nutrition and a low-stress environment. It is in these areas an organization can take remedial action to redress employees' fatigue. Subsidized nutritious lunch, tea-breaks, lunch-break, retiring-rooms and recreation, etc., are not facilities just to satisfy the demands of the unions but potential destroyers of fatigue and the related maladies. The pattern of fatigue due to work is easy to understand, appreciate and cure, whereas fatigue caused by physiological or anatomical causes have to be handled by a competent doctor.

5. Conclusion

The work environment has an effect on an organization's success through different activities such as clean house keeping, good facilities layout and conducive physical work conditions. Basically, an organization should have to minimize that affect work condition of their employees. Therefore, for smooth running of the organization better work environment should be made for increasing the motivation of employees towards to achieving the organizational objectives.

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