



DISCIPLINE: THE TOOL FOR INDUSTRIAL HARMONY

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Introduction

Industrial peace or harmony in a country is an important pre-requisite for its industrial development; it implies the existence of harmonious Industrial relations between the managements and workers. Industrial relations are concerned with the relationship between management and trade unions represent the labour power regarding the terms and conditions of employment and un-employment and condition at work place. IR cannot a vast complex of relationship obtaining between management and employees unions and management, unions and employees and between employees themselves. Hence, stable industrial relations are the vital prerequisite for industrial progress. The interference of government in industrial relations through legal and administrative measures is quite common. The arena of industrial relations has been extended to elations among the state, employers and employees.

Discipline is very essential for a healthy industrial atmosphere and the achievement of organizational goals. An acceptable performance from subordinates in an organization depends on their willingness to carry out instructions and the orders of their superiors, to abide by the rules of conduct, and maintain satisfactory standards of work. Industrial discipline has its roots in individual dignity need for recognition from others, a basic desire for security and a responsive horizontal and vertical relationship in the organsitiion. Until human nature attains greater perfection, the fullest measure of individual freedom of action can be realized only within the frame work of an expressed discipline. In the social situation, this take the form of laws, in industries, it is manifested as standards. Fairness in securing conformity in both instances is wholly consistent with our democratic approach.

The term discipline can be interpreted variously, which connotes a state of order in an organization. It is sometimes understood as a sort of check or restrain on the liberty of an individual. It is a training which rectifies, modifies, and strengthens or improves individual behavior. It is adherence to established norms and regulations. It also corrects improper conduct and this acts as a force leading to the observance of rules and regulations. Thus, it is essentially an attitude of the mind, a product of culture and environment and requires, along with legislative sanction, persuasion on a moral plane. The concept of discipline emerges in work situation from the interaction of manager and workers in an origination. Formal and informal rules and regulations govern the relationship between a manager and workers. The formal rules and regulations, including work-related behaviour rules, are codified in the company's



manual or standing orders. Informal rules on the other hand, are evolved from convention and culture in the organization.

Indiscipline results in chaos, confusion and diffusion of results. It gives rise to strikes, 'go-slows', absenteeism, leading to loss of production, profits and wages. There is no hard and fast rule to deal with indiscipline. The positive approach for self-discipline assumes that most employees generally behave reasonably. Counseling and educating the employee are added means that can be effectively and positively used to check indiscipline. If the management also adopts strategies like job enrichment to develop commitment to work, sets up effective grievance handling machinery, evolves proper induction and training programmes for new entrants and develops a system which provides sufficient scope and opportunity to develop employee potential, it would leave very little room for the growth of grievances which could lead to indiscipline.

Causes of Indiscipline

When individual goals eclipse organizational goals or when equilibriums between the capacity, the interests and opportunity for an individual are destroyed, the disharmony results in conflict and frustrations. These may be realized by sublimation or aggressive attitudes towards management. A non-committed workman invariably develops apathy to work. He has identified the work as "apathy to work in the form of mistake or omission, concern for quality, low interest in acquiring knowledge and picking up skills, tendency towards intensive rewards unrelated to performance, suppressed and subtle form of hostility towards others, keen interest in being away from work"

Theoretically, causes of indiscipline that appeal in the scene of industrial life are, a) non-placement of right man for the right job in the right time according to individual qualifications, experience and training. b) undesirably un-human dealings and behaviour of senior officers towards their subordinates. c) biased evaluation of persons by executives and favoritism. d) lack of upward communication system, which prevents expression of thoughts, feeling and reactions of employees to the competent authority or top management. e) lack of commitment to work, to the organization, to the industrial way of life. f) weak, flexible, incompetent, distrustable leadership of subordinates. g) improper supervision and absence of good supervisors for appraisal of subordinates' performance critically in correction of their men rather than in uprooting them. h) lack of properly drawn rules and regulations which are practicable with code of behavior. i) adoption of divide and rule policy of the management causing destruction of team spirit among the employees. j) illiteracy and low intellectual level of workers as well as social background. k) workers' reactions to rigidity and multiplicity of rules and their proper interpretations. l) workers' personal problems like fears, apprehensions, hopes, aspirations, lack of confidence and their adaptability with supervisors and colleagues. m) intolerably bad working conditions and inborn tendencies to flout rules. n) absence of enlightened sympathetic and modern scientific management system. o) discrimination based on caste, colour, creed, sex, language, regionalism and provincialism in matters of selection, transfer, promotion, placement in imposing penalties by the management. p) undesirable management practices, policies and



activities to control workers, that is employment of spies, undue harassment of workers to create fear complex and autocratic leadership of the management towards their subordinates. q) psychological and social reasons like misunderstanding, rivalry, distrust among worker and supervisors, absence of fellow feelings, apathy on the part of the management.

Consequences and Approaches of Indiscipline

Indiscipline could be dealt with using formal and informal systems, through which it is corrected. In case of informal system is being used, either a transfer, an informal warning, or a non-hierarchical about status demotion is the remedies to correct indiscipline. Managements, in order to avoid the legal complexities of the formal system, resorts to informal system. The informal approach is undesirable and created bitterness and has adverse effects on employee morale and motivation. In the case of the formal system it mainly refers to adherence to the judicial approach.

Judicial approach: it is commonly followed in India. Various kind s of misconduct are listed in the standing order and penalties are also mentioned. The decisions of the Supreme Court on various cases also serve as guidelines.

The human relations approach: it calls for treating an employee as a human being and considers the totality of this personality and behavior while correcting fault that contribute tot indiscipline. His total personality is considered, as is his interaction with his colleagues, his family back ground, etc. and then appropriate punishment for misconduct is awarded.

The human resources approach: it calls for treating every employee as a resource and an asset to the organization. Before punishing the worker, the cause for indiscipline has to be ascertained. An analysis of the causes made, to find out whether indiscipline is due to the failure of his training and motivation system or the individual's own failure to meet the requirements and accordingly correction are made.

The group discipline approach: the management in this approach set and conveys well establish norms and tries to involve groups of employees. The group as a whole controls indiscipline and awards appropriate punishments. The trade union may also acts as a disciplinary agency.

The leadership approach: in this case, every supervisor or manage has to guide, control, train, develop, lead a group and administer the rules for discipline.

Code of Discipline

The code of discipline was accepted on voluntary basis and satisfied by nearly all the central organizations of labour and employers in March 1958 and became operative from June, 1953. It applies to both public and private industries. The code has been accepted by 180 employers and 115 trade unions which are not members of any central employees' organizations.

The features of code of discipline:

- (i) It prohibits strikes and lock outs without proper notice and also prohibits intimidation, victimization, go-slow tactics, violence, coercion or instigation by both the parties.
- (ii) There shall be no on one-sided action in any matter by either party.



- (iii) The existing machinery for the settlement of disputes should be followed and the awards and agreements should be implemented without any delay.
- (iv) A common grievance procedure should be provided for after a careful consideration and negotiations for the settlement of disputes.
- (v) Both the parties should attempt to avoid any action which may disturb industrial peace in the industry.
- (vi) The employers will not increase work loads without prior agreement with the workers.
- (vii) The employers will provide full facilities for unfettered growth of trade unions. However unfair labour practices should be discouraged.
- (viii) Prompt action should be taken against those officers who instigate the workers for the breach of its discipline.
- (ix) The workers will not indulge in any trade union activity during working hours.
- (x) The workers will implement their part of awards and settlements promptly and will take action against those office bearers of the union who are responsible for the breach of code.

Core Measures of Discipline

For the maintenance of effective discipline, the contributory causes of indiscipline should be removed and favorable conditions be created. The following measures should be adopted in maintaining the discipline.

Condonation of past offenses: The real purpose of disciplinary action is to prevent the recurrence of future offenses of similar nature. As far as the past offenses are concerned, they should be allowed to be condoned after a prescribed time limit. An opportunity should be allowed to be condoned after a prescribed time limit. An opportunity should be given to employees, to rectify their faults. The employer should always try to seek cooperation from the employees.

Agreement as to Disciplinary Rules: A code of discipline should be prepared and adopted with the approval of employees. Unilateral action should not be taken by the management in framing the rules and regulations for maintaining discipline. A code of discipline duly approved by the representing of the trade unions and by the management can avoid certain unhappy consequences and impose self-discipline.

The discipline Committee: Minor cases in which reprimand, rebuke or warning is required may be settled by the supervisor or the manager, but where the offense requires a greater punishment, discipline committee should adjudge the case to ensure the unbiased justice to the employees and the employer.

Investigations by personnel Department: The discipline committee cannot successfully work unless it gets the full facts of the case. Such facts should be collected and supplied by the personnel department, because the personnel department has the



specialized staff for rendering expert service and advice on personnel matters in the organization. Thus personnel department acts as a safety value for the smooth operation of the Discipline Committee.

Careful Discipline of Employee Relations

The discipline of employee relations encompasses a broad range of concepts, transactions, practices, behaviors and objectives arising out of the relationship between an employer organization and its employees, and among the employees themselves. Its foundations, if carefully laid and maintained, will support and guide myriad decisions that human resources management will make in the course of recruiting, screening, hiring, training, compensating, assessing, coaching, counseling, disciplining and terminating employees. For a resource that broadly discusses the practice of employee relations, Employee relations involve the behavior of two or more individuals, and the effects of the organization's rules and culture, bureaucratic structures, and external influences and pressures. While it is impossible to anticipate each unique combination of factors, human resources professionals who understand the basic concepts will know how to identify needs, spot issues and formulate solutions.

Basic employee relations concepts include equal employment opportunity, fairness and consistency in the treatment of employees, effective communications between management and employees, documentation of employment actions, recordkeeping as required by law and practice, complaint resolution processes, managerial and employee training, and "best employment practices." Employee relations also encompasses the organization's overall approach to maintaining a positive, productive and cohesive work environment within the organization's particular business model and corporate culture.. Additionally, employee relations is concerned with anticipating, addressing and diffusing workplace issues that may interfere with the organization's business objectives, and with resolving disputes between and among management and employees. The organization's employee relations model supports the policies and practices governing workplace rules and conduct, and guides its compliance with the scheme of federal, state and local laws and regulations governing and impacting the employment relationship.

Conclusion

According to Aristotle, the Greek philosopher "Man is a social animal" but in today's highly competitive world "Survival of the fittest" has become the norm in this modern world, it will be more apt to redefine and say, "Man is socio-political animal and this war for sharing meager resource, it is the survival of strongest". The ultimate success and survival of an organization will invariably be determined by the quality and competence of its human resources. In fact the differences in the lives of economic development of the countries are largely a reflection of differences in the quality for their HR and their involvement in national building. Discipline is essential for the smooth running of any organization, for the maintenance of industrial peace which is the very foundation of industrial democracy, without discipline no enterprise would prosper. No doubt when work culture is good, employees are excellent, and quality is



outstanding it attracts more client's, new business, challenging projects and more profits to the organization. As the ultimate success and survival of an organization will invariably be determined by the quality and competence of its human resources, the Code of Discipline definitely improves moral level of employee's and makes them more responsible and increases quality and productivity of work by encourages more creativity, new innovative techniques and ideas from employees.

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