



TESS Newsletter

Accordance to Article 7
Section 3 of its Constitution

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“Turning Possibilities into Realities”

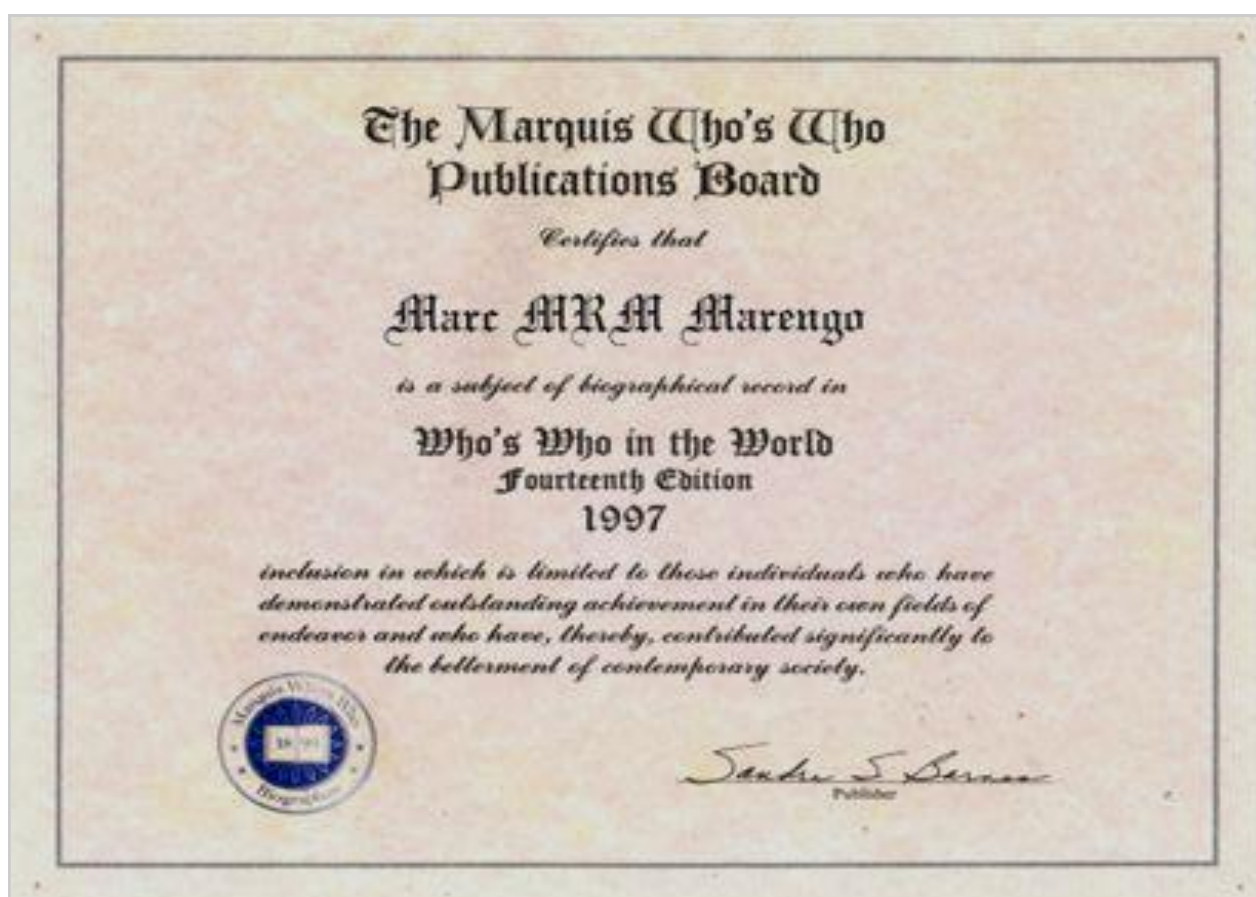
Building a Global Movement for Change [UNSG]: The Promise (part 16)



Striving for our Seychelles

“Working Hard at Working Smart” (part XXVII)

Labour Day 2013 - The Quest for Job Satisfaction



“He that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground”.

*Samuel Johnson - English writer; poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer.
September 18, 1709 to December 13, 1784*

The future we want: The Promise: The Force Beyond

Job Satisfaction

Source: Encyclopedia of Business and Finance, ©2001 Gale Cengage.

Job satisfaction, a worker's sense of achievement and success, is generally perceived to be directly linked to productivity as well as to personal wellbeing. Job satisfaction implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well, and being suitably rewarded for one's efforts. Job satisfaction further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work. The Harvard Professional Group (1998) sees job satisfaction as the key ingredient that leads to recognition, income, promotion, and the achievement of other goals that lead to a general feeling of fulfilment.

Importance to Worker and Organisation

Frequently, work underlies self-esteem and identity while unemployment lowers self-worth and produces anxiety. At the same time, monotonous jobs can erode a worker's initiative and enthusiasm and can lead to absenteeism and unnecessary turnover. Job satisfaction and occupational success are major factors in personal satisfaction, self-respect, self-esteem, and self-development. To the worker, job satisfaction brings a pleasurable emotional state that often leads to a positive work attitude. **A satisfied worker is more likely to be creative, flexible, innovative, and loyal.**

For the organisation, job satisfaction of its workers means a work force that is motivated and committed to high quality performance. Increased productivity the quantity and quality of output per hour work deems to be a byproduct of improved quality of working life. It is important to note that the literature on the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity is neither conclusive nor consistent. However, studies dating back to Herzberg's (1957) have shown at least low correlation between high morale and high productivity, and it does seem logical that more satisfied workers will tend to add more value to an organisation. **Unhappy employees, who are**

motivated by fear of job loss, will not give 100 percent of their effort for very long. Though FEAR is a powerful motivator, it is also a temporary one, and as soon as the threat is lifted performance will decline.

Tangible ways in which job satisfaction benefits the organisation include reduction in complaints and grievances, absenteeism, turnover, and termination; as well as improved punctuality and worker morale. Job satisfaction is also linked to a more healthy work force and has been found to be a good indicator of longevity.

And although only little correlation has been found between job satisfaction and productivity, Brown (1996) notes that some employers have found that satisfying or delighting employees is a prerequisite to satisfying or delighting customers, thus protecting the "bottom line." No wonder Andrew Carnegie is quoted as saying:

"Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory" (quoted in Brown, 1996, p. 123).

Creating Job Satisfaction

So, how is job satisfaction created? What are the elements of a job that create job satisfaction? Organisations can help to create job satisfaction by putting systems in place that will ensure that workers are challenged and then rewarded for being successful. Organisations that aspire to creating a work environment that enhances job satisfaction need to incorporate the following:

- *Flexible work arrangements, possibly including telecommuting*
- *Training and other professional growth opportunities*
- *Interesting work that offers variety and challenge and allows the worker opportunities to "put his or her signature" on the finished product*
- *Opportunities to use one's talents and to be creative*
- *Opportunities to take responsibility and direct one's own work*
- *A stable, secure work environment that includes job security/continuity*
- *An environment in which workers are supported by an accessible supervisor who provides timely feedback as well as congenial team members*
- *Flexible benefits, such as child-care and exercise facilities*
- *Up-to-date technology*
- *Competitive salary and opportunities for promotion*

Probably the most important point to bear in mind when considering job satisfaction is that there are many factors that affect job satisfaction and that what makes workers happy with their jobs varies from one worker to another and from day to day. Apart from the factors mentioned above, job satisfaction is also influenced by the employee's personal characteristics, the manager's personal characteristics and management style, and the nature of the work itself. **Managers who want to**

maintain a high level of job satisfaction in the work force must try to understand the needs of each member of the work force. For example, when creating work teams, managers can enhance worker satisfaction by placing people with similar backgrounds, experiences, or needs in the same workgroup. Also, managers can enhance job satisfaction by carefully matching workers with the type of work. For example, a person who does not pay attention to detail would hardly make a good inspector, and a shy worker is unlikely to be a good salesperson. **As much as possible, managers should match job tasks to employees' personalities.**

Managers who are serious about the job satisfaction of workers can also take other deliberate steps to create a stimulating work environment. One such step is *job enrichment*. Job enrichment is a deliberate upgrading of responsibility, scope, and challenge in the work itself. Job enrichment usually includes increased responsibility, recognition, and opportunities for growth, learning, and achievement. Large companies that have used job-enrichment programs to increase employee motivation and job satisfaction include AT&T, IBM, and General Motors (Daft, 1997).

Good management has the potential for creating high morale, high productivity, and a sense of purpose and meaning for the organisation and its employees. Empirical findings by Ting(1997) show that job characteristics such as pay, promotional opportunity, task clarity and significance, and skills utilization, as well as organizational characteristics such as commitment and relationship with supervisors and co-workers, have significant effects on job satisfaction. These job characteristics can be carefully managed to enhance job satisfaction. Of course, a worker who takes some responsibility for his or her job satisfaction will probably find many more satisfying elements in the work environment. Everett (1995) suggests that

employees ask themselves the following questions:

- *When have I come closest to expressing my full potential in a work situation?*
- *What did it look like?*
- *What aspects of the workplace were most supportive?*
- *What aspects of the work itself were most satisfying?*
- *What did I learn from that experience that could be applied to the present situation?*

Workers' Roles in Job Satisfaction

If job satisfaction is a worker benefit, surely the worker must be able to contribute to his or her own satisfaction and well-being on the job. The following suggestions can help a worker find personal job satisfaction:

- *Seek opportunities to demonstrate skills and talents. This often leads to more challenging work and greater responsibilities, with attendant increases in pay and other recognition.*
- *Develop excellent communication skills. Employers value and reward excellent reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills.*
- *Know more. Acquire new job-related knowledge that helps you to perform tasks more efficiently and effectively. This will relieve boredom and often gets one noticed.*
- *Demonstrate creativity and initiative. Qualities like these are valued by most organisations and often result in recognition as well as in increased responsibilities and rewards.*
- *Develop teamwork and people skills. A large part of job success is the ability to work well with others to get the job done.*
- *Accept the diversity in people. Accept people with their differences and their imperfections and learn how to give and receive criticism constructively.*

- *See the value in your work. Appreciating the significance of what one does can lead to satisfaction with the work itself. This helps to give meaning to one's existence, thus playing a vital role in job satisfaction.*
- *Learn to de-stress. Plan to avoid burnout by developing healthy stress-management techniques.*

Assuring Job Satisfaction

Assuring job satisfaction, over the longterm, requires careful planning and effort both by management and by workers. Managers are encouraged to consider such theories as Herzberg's (1957) and Maslow's (1943) Creating a good blend of factors that contribute to a stimulating, challenging, supportive, and rewarding work environment is vital. Because of the relative prominence of pay in the reward system, it is very important that salaries be tied to job responsibilities and that pay increases be tied to performance rather than seniority.

So, in essence, job satisfaction is a product of the events and conditions that people experience on their jobs. Brief (1998) wrote: "If a person's work is interesting, her pay is fair, her promotional opportunities are good, her supervisor is supportive, and her co-workers are friendly, then a situational approach leads one to predict she is satisfied with her job" (p. 91). Very simply put, if the pleasures associated with one's job outweigh the pains, there is some level of job satisfaction.

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The journey continues...