WORK LIFE BALANCE TRAINING – DOES IT WORKS FOR IT EMPLOYEES

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ABSTRACT

In IT Sectors were knowledge is the key and workforce of IT companies is an important strategic asset which needs to be managed and retained. This work details the results of a survey administered to 207 employees across various software companies. It is a Experimental study, which assesses the work life balance before and after training, given to IT employees. It also gathers data on the effects of training initiatives on factors that influences work life balance. IT Employees were chosen for this study as they embody the new “knowledge based working group which operates in an economy where information is very vital providing an competitive edge”. This work reveals whether training actually helps in better work life balance.

Key words: IT Employees, Training, Work Life Balance, Self Concept, Emotional Maturity, Hardiness

http://www.iaeme.com/IJM/index.asp

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, a dramatic change has occurred in the labour market and Human Capital Management has become the buzz word and companies are working on various strategies to retain their workforce. Work life balance is a serious issue today because of the quality time we plan to spend for our family and for personal pursuits are being stolen by long working hours. Globally, the corporate world is waking up to this reality and lot of intervention strategies are being proposed and implemented to overcome this.

IT Companies are now having the policy of “Employees first and customer second” by believing that happy employees can keep customers happy. There is increasing awareness of the benefits of providing more flexible HR strategies, reflecting increasing recognition of the fact that work and other life commitment cannot be separated. As the IT organizations move towards more participative and flat structures in which employees are expected to manage increased workloads, there is an increase in demands from the working environment and maintaining the balance between the demands of the environment and maintaining the balance between the demands of a career and life responsibilities, becomes more difficult.

From the Corporate point of view training and development of company employees are essential for organizational development, maintaining their operation, and organizational enhancement. From the
employee’s perspective, training is crucial and critical for developing their skills and for career advancement. Retention of employees, and the retention of valued skills, were important for continued business achievements (Mak and Sockel, 1999). The success of retaining employees helps organization to preserve the knowledge within the organization (Cappelli, 2000). High employees attrition will weaken the competitive edge corporate have over their competitors.

ROLE OF TRAINING IN AN ORGANIZATIONAL

For any training program dedicated support of top management is a must (Motwani, Frahm et al., 1994), otherwise the training provided will not meet its core objective. Organizations provide training based on employee and organizational needs (Mann, 1997), and provide the required training at the appropriate time. However, not all companies have the same emphasis on, or show the same commitment to employee training (Roberts and McDonald, 1995; Hughey and Musnug, 1997). Companies which work hard to recruit the best talents, yet spend relatively little effort to retain them once they are inducted in the organisation. There is enough evidence to prove that benefits accrue to organizations that are committed to employee training (Wills, 1994).

Organization that value training as an important factor shows commitment in deploying adequate resources to manage the training process. They allocate time for their employees to get the training program that is most appropriate for them to their existing IT skills. Such firms are most successful in maximizing their employee’s effectiveness through their training programs (Huang, 2001). Organizations that commit effort and finances to training programs and employee development do so with the objective of a pay-off in terms of increased skill-sets, motivation and knowledge transformation (Pate, Martin et al., 2000), more positive psychological and organizational dynamics, as well as a measurable competitive advantage.

METHOD OF STUDY

This study tries to find out whether Work life Balance Training works for IT Employees personal factors such as Self Concept, Emotional Maturity and Hardiness thereby helping the employees to have a balanced life and perform better in their work place.

As there is a wide range of need for work life balance it was planned to measure IT professionals, training needs on work life balance. By considering relaxation and leisure, ten factors has identified as the most contributing factor to balance one’s work and life. The factors chosen are Salary, location of work place, holidays, interest in job, career development opportunities, leave arrangements, flexible working hours, training opportunities, job security, and friendly environment.

To find out the need for work life balance, all the selected respondents were asked to mark their level of expectation and the level of satisfaction. From the analysis we can infer that for majority of factors, there existed a significant gap between the expected level and their level of satisfaction. From the study it is clear that respondents of this study also faced higher levels of work life imbalance which need to be addressed immediately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Z value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of expectation</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>4.4671</td>
<td>0.65281</td>
<td>15.366</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of satisfaction</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>3.7945</td>
<td>0.78337</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Relationship between level of expectation and satisfaction for location of work place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work place</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Z value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of expectation</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>4.1766</td>
<td>0.75927</td>
<td>10.388</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of satisfaction</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>3.6565</td>
<td>0.82806</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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To find out the need for work life balance, all the selected respondents were asked to mark their level of expectation and the level of satisfaction. From the above Tables 1 to 10, it is very clear that for majority of factors, there existed a significant gap between the expected level and their level of satisfaction. From the mean value, it is observed that for the factors of salary, location of work place, holidays, interest in job, career development opportunities, leave arrangements, training opportunities and friendly environment, respondents, expectation was found to be more than their level of satisfaction. For the factors of flexible working hours and job security, their level of satisfaction was found to be more than their expectation. The obtained z-values and their corresponding p-values indicated that there was statistically significant difference between respondents, level of expectation and their level of satisfaction.

Senthilkumar (2012) conducted an empirical study on Teaching Professionals' Work-Life Balance in Higher Learning Institutions, in order to bring out the satisfaction level of teaching professionals in balancing the work and personal life. The results of the chi-square test illustrated that there was a close relationship between the demographical variables taken for the study and the level of stress in balancing work and personal life. It is inferred from this analysis that majority (90%) of respondents were not satisfied with their work life balance. In this fiercely competitive world, to be successful, it is mandatory for any organisation to provide work-life balancing programs to their workforce to balance their work and personal life.

From the above study it is clear that respondents of this study also faced higher levels of work life imbalance which need to be addressed immediately.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their opinion about work life balance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work life balance</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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instead as a threat. Increase in hardiness ie., increase in resistance towards stress, will help the individual to enjoy good mental health.

CONCLUSION
Evidence suggests that improvements in people management practices contribute to increased work-life balance. To have better work balance in life individuals need to undergo some amount training which helps them to have better balance to some extent. We can’t predict what the workplace or the family will look like later in this century As one pointed out, people tend to ignore work/life balance until “something is wrong.” But that kind of disregard is a choice, and not a wise one.

Similarly, at home different solutions work for different individuals and families. Some people have a stay-at-home partner; others make trade-offs to enable both partners to work. The questions of child care and other household commitments at the dining table don’t have “right” answers.

Finally, self-management is important; people need to control their own behaviour and expectations regarding work-life balance.

REFERENCES


