

Leadership and Motivation – an Expectation From Employee in Information Technology Organizations in South India



Management

KEYWORDS : Ideal leader, Motivation factors, Leadership skills, IT employee, IT organizations.

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ABSTRACT

Leaders in an organization play a major role in the development of the organization directing their team members in achieving organization goals and objectives. An efficient leader leads the team to the right path to success of the team and the organization. A leader/Manager in Information Technology (IT) organization has influence on an employee choosing to leave an organization or staying in the organization. There are characteristics like Being friendly, Approachable, Being a good listener, Recognizing the team for good work, Motivation, Being non biased etc that an employee looks up for from their leader/manager. Motivation is a major factor in employee retention and job satisfaction with IT employees in south India. The aim of this research is to identify and analyse the characteristics of ideal leadership from an employee perspective. This research also strives to find the factors that motivates employees in IT organizations in South India.

INTRODUCTION

IT industry in India is a growing and economic booster for the country with services provided from the countries major cities with south India leading the way. There are consulting, services and outsourcing companies having set up their offices. Of late, the companies are having tough time making their employees happy and motivated. Leaders/Managers of the organization play a crucial role with the motivation of the employees and the employees expect for their leaders to have a set of characteristics that would help them enjoy their work.

A leader in any organization has the purpose of achieving a common goal set by the organization with the help of the resources one has got. A leader could be someone who just leads with the team following him/her or an organizer who assembles a team in order to achieve a common goal that of the organization.

Employee motivation is the process of upbringing the spirits of the employee and their fervor by means of enticement. Factors that motivate each employee would vary from person to person and industry to industry. A motivated employee would want to go the extra mile in terms of deliverables making the employee highly productive and efficient.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership has an important role in motivation of employees, effective communication, setting performance goals, achieving targets, maintain good relationship, etc. Leadership is believed to make a quantifiable contribution to the growth of the organizations with the resources they have [1].

Leaders do face the trouble of keeping up. Leading people, strategic planning, inspiring are the three most important skills that the future leaders are expected to be equipped with and unfortunately the weakest skills being possessed by the leaders of today's world [2].

Employees are the key resources in any organization let alone Information Technology (IT). Keeping employees motivated is very much essential for the organization and Managers play a crucial role with employee motivation [4]. With motivated employees, the organizations can gain more profit at reduced cost. On the other hand with unmotivated employees, the organization will lose key employees leading to increased cost, loss of knowledge and reduced profit and loss of reputation of the organization [5].

Motivation of employees is not a one-time activity but instead an ongoing activity. Motivation benefits both employees (leader/manager and the team members) and employer together. Motivation is one of the key areas on a day to day activity for managers in IT industry. A manager has to be approachable,

friendly and constantly motivate his/her employees in achieving targets [3].

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

An inefficient and ineffective leader de-motivates, discourages, demoralizes employees and dissatisfied employees in turn choose to leave organization for better opportunities which leads to revenue loss to the organization and additional costs besides the damage to the reputation and affecting the morality of other employees. According to a study conducted, there are about 40% of the IT employees that has troubles with their leader/manager.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The objective of this research is to identify and analyse the ideal leadership characteristics in IT industry in South India.
- The objective of this research is also to identify and analyse the various motivation factors for IT employees in south India.

HYPOTHESIS

- H0: There is no ordered preference for IT employees with respect to various leadership characteristics.
- H1: There is significance in ordered preference for IT employees with respect to various leadership characteristics.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

DATA COLLECTION

This research tries to identify the various characteristics of leadership that an employee looks for and the factors that motivates employees with respect to IT organizations in south India. One well-structure questionnaire was prepared to collect Primary data by means of survey for this descriptive research. The survey was conducted on a sample population of 219 Information Technology (IT) professionals of varying experience from 2-10 years working from various cities (Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Trivandrum, Kochi and Coimbatore) representing different organizations of South India. The survey included both Male and Female employees aging from 22 to 35, working in different section of IT industry ranging from Developers, Testers, Support professionals, Administrators and other areas.

The questionnaires consisted of 3 parts. The first part was used to collect information about the respondent including their work location, organization that they work for, experience, job role, experience in current role, age, etc. The second part consisted of factors related to various characteristics of leader (rank-order was used) and the third part consisted of factors associated with motivation using Likert rating scale.

SPSS V22 was used for analyzing data. This research used data analysis techniques like Friedman's Test, and factor analysis.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

IDEAL LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

In order to ascertain the ideal leadership characteristics for leaders/managers in Information Technology (IT) in south India, data was collected on 15 different variables and were analysed. The respondents were asked to rank the order of preference on various leadership characteristics. Based on the data collected, Friedman's test and Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance were run and the results of the tests are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Ranks

Parameter	Mean Rank	Chi Square Value	Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance value	P value
Help grow and provide valuable feedback	4.34	1376.132	.449	.000
Be friendly & Approachable	5.84			
Be flexible	7.21			
non-biased	7.09			
Motivate	3.93			
Involving in decision making (related to my work)	12.14			
Be a good listener	5.50			
Help in balancing work and life (leave, vacation, etc)	12.90			
Be Trustworthy	3.79			
Have concern on welfare & Have empathy	10.73			
Support to be innovative	7.95			
Recognize for good work, link performance to Rewards, promotions, etc.	7.55			
Respect and trust	10.02			
Taking ownership of the team	10.23			
Encourage teamwork and Collaboration	10.78			

The test was significant $\chi^2=1376.132, p<.05$ (Table 1) and the Kendall's coefficient of concordance of .449 (Table 1) indicates fairly strong differences among the 15 variables (Leadership characteristics). The result of the analysis indicates that there is a differential rank ordered preference for various characteristics of ideal leadership from an employee perspective. We can conclude that Friedman's test is a reliable test for finding the ideal leadership characteristics.

The Table 1 containing various ideal leadership characteristics analysed with Friedman's test gives interesting results. Out of the total of 15 different characteristics, there are 9 corresponding characteristics that are clustered with high ranked creative tensions in the order (Motivate, Be Trustworthy, Help to grow and provide valuable feedback, Be a good listener, Be friendly & Approachable, non-biased, Be flexible, Recognize for good work, Link performance to Rewards, promotions, etc. and Support to be innovative). Similarly, there are 6 characteristics that are clustered with the low ranked creative tensions (Respect and trust, Taking ownership of the team, Have concern on welfare & Have empathy, Encourage teamwork and Collaboration, Involve in decision making, and Help in balance work and life (leave, vacation, etc)).

MOTIVATION FACTORS

In order to ascertain the factors that motivate the employees working in various organizations from Information Technology (IT) industry from South India, 15 different variables were analysed. The data was collected using Likert scale having the options 'Strong Agree' given a weightage of 5, 'Agree' having a weightage of 4, 'Neither Agree Nor Disagree' having a weightage of 3, 'Disagree' having a weightage of 2 and 'Strongly disagree' having weightage of 1. Based on the data collected, Factor

analysis was performed and the result of the analysis is presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Motivation Factors

Factor Group	Factors	Component					Eigen value*	% of variance	Cumulative %
		1	2	3	4	5			
Factor 1	New project opportunities including onsite	.734	.159	.159	.130	-.195	4.52	30.13	30.13
	Competitive salary	.423	.397	-.123	-.464	.113			
	Employee engagement	.618	.256	-.154	-.278	.360			
	Respect from Manager and peers	.700	.019	-.151	-.108	-.165			
	Frequent constructive feedback	.790	.219	-.221	-.105	-.073			
	Appreciation for good work	.670	.200	.246	-.117	.028			
	Awards, Rewards & Recognizing for achievements	.120	.862	.110	-.151	.000			
Factor 2	Opportunity for employee to grow within the organization	.087	.654	-.085	.433	-.404	1.94	12.93	43.06
	Friendly, Supportive and approachable Manager	.223	.736	.000	-.160	-.066			
	Challenging roles and responsibilities	.371	.641	-.215	-.090	.342			
Factor 3	Flexible, fun and friendly work environment	-.100	-.214	.690	.264	.258	1.39	9.24	52.30
	Being able to spend time for personal life	-.072	-.020	.798	.143	.019			
	Inspiration from Manager and other team members	.088	.136	.768	-.222	-.125			
Factor 4	Visibility within the organization	-.118	-.138	.078	.862	.241	1.23	8.19	60.49
Factor 5	Involvement in decision making	-.183	-.026	.072	.192	.778	1.14	7.58	68.07

* Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

**Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Varimax rotation was applied for the 15 variables and the variables were clubbed into 5 factors.

The total variance shown in Table 2 accounted for by all of the 5 components explains 68 percent of the variability in the original 15 variables.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.698
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1231.189
	Sig.	.000

From Table 3, since the value of statistics for sphericity is large (1231.189) and the associated significance level is small (.000), it is unlikely that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. KMO value (.698) from Table 3 indicates a sizable sampling adequacy.

From Table 2, the factor groups are classified as below:

Factor 1 : This contains variables New project opportunities including onsite, Competitive salary, Employee engagement, Respect from Manager and peers, Frequent constructive feedback and Appreciation for good work – Job Enrichment.

Factor 2 : This contains variables Awards, Rewards & Recognizing for achievements, Opportunity for employee to grow within the organization, Friendly, Supportive and approachable Manager, and Challenging roles and responsibilities – Recognition and Growth.

Factor 3 : This contains variables Flexible, fun and friendly work environment, Being able to spend time for personal life, and Inspiration from Manager and other team members – Work environment.

Factor 4 : This contains variable Visibility within the organization – Work status.

Factor 5: This contains variable Involvement in decision making – Sense of achievement.

FINDINGS

- The ideal leadership characteristics from an employee perspective from IT industry are as below as in the ranking order:
- Motivate
- Be Trustworthy
- Help to grow and provide valuable feedback
- Be a good listener
- Be friendly & Approachable
- Non-biased
- Be flexible
- Recognize for good work, link performance to Rewards, promotions, etc.
- Support to be innovative
- Respect and trust the team
- Take ownership of his/her team
- Have concern on welfare & Have empathy
- Encourage teamwork and Collaboration
- Involve the team member in decision making
- Help in balance work and life
- The factors that motivate an IT employee are associated with Job Enrichment, Recognition and Growth, Work environment, Work status, and Sense of achievement.

SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on the result of this research, a leader or manager

working in IT industry can be more supportive to the employees, Be trustworthy, listen to what their team member has to say, Be approachable, Be flexible. The employees should find it easy to reach their leader/manager with their concerns or achievements.

- Motivation is a major factor for an IT employee to stay in an organization when there are plenty of opportunities openly available outside and the leaders/managers plays a crucial role with motivation.
- Good compensation is a good motivator and the IT organizations by paying their employees as per the industry standard can achieve this target without much quandary.
- New opportunities can be offered to the high performing employees that would motivate those employees and other employees to grab such opportunities. Onsite opportunities are a key factor for team members and the leaders/managers can rotate their onsite coordinators at a regular stipulated time frame that way every qualified team member does get the opportunity which would motivate every individual in the team.
- Employee engagements activities like regular team outings, off site trainings, Fun games at office, Involving employees in cultural and organizational activities outside work will help in motivate the employees.
- Leader/Manager can regularly give constructive feedback to their team members and guide them to achieve greater heights, give them opportunity to establish themselves.
- Appreciation for good work, having award programs like performer of the year, performer of the quarter, performer of the engagement will motivate the employees.
- Options like work from home when needs arise, Transportation facilities, free lunch, good cafeteria, facility like in-house gymnasium, medical allowance, stock options, etc. helps in motivating the employees.

CONCLUSION

From this research, it is evident that the employees of IT industry in south India expects to see their ideal leader having the characteristics, Motivate, Being Trustworthy, Help them grow and provide valuable feedback, Being a good listener, Being friendly & Approachable, non-biased, Being flexible, Recognize for good work, link their performance to Rewards, promotions, etc., Support them to be innovative, Respect and trust them, Taking ownership of the team, Having concern on my welfare & Having empathy, Encouraging teamwork and Collaboration, Involving the team member in decision making, Help in balance work and life. Motivation is the highest ranked characteristic.

It is also evident that the factors like Job Enrichment, Recognition and Growth, Work environment, Work status, and Sense of achievement motivates the IT employees.

By having efficient and effective leader coupled with motivated employees increases productivity and quality of the deliverables, retaining the talent and knowledge and thus the added business to the organization with increased reputation and respect.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- This study is restricted to Information Technology (IT) employees in South India alone.
- The Inferences are based on the inputs provided by the respondents.
- Employees having less than 2 years of experience are not considered for this research since the industry exposure would be limited for them.

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