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SJA Abstract

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Literature Review/Rationale:

Companies are always seeking out ways to improve productivity while also minimizing the cost to do so. The author of this company, who remained anonymous, naturally sought out to increase productivity utilizing training programs that help develop interpersonal communication skills in the workplace. The author of the article followed this company to study the results of interpersonal communication training and how it correlates with worker well-being and worker productivity. The author was guided by a fixation on worker performance and how it is shaped by their environment. The author reflected on previous studies and how a worker's motivation to do their best was not tied to pay but was instead paralleled to whether the worker was given challenging work that gives off feelings of achievement and being recognized as a result. The premise of this article appeared to study the correlation between worker production, as well as motivation to do excellent work, and well-being through interpersonal communication programs that encouraged cooperation (Hynes, 2012).

Method:

The author explains that 20 employees (out of 1,300 eligible participants) from the IT department were chosen to participate in training sessions designed to encourage discussion and communication to solve realistic examples. At the end of each training session, each of which lasted half a workday, the participants took a survey based on what they learned. However, the article was not allowed to specify certain things such as what exactly went on in these training sessions, and any details were only briefly summarized. Another thing briefly summarized was how often the training sessions occurred, as the article states these half-day training sessions happened as frequently as the company allowed - which implies training sessions happened more than once. Though when these sessions finished, the study had the participants take a survey based on the satisfaction of their activities, topics, and the instructor. Participants were then asked which program was found most helpful and what they would do to change it. The questions in the survey specifically involved participants' behaviors and how they did or did not attempt the task and whether they did it well or with difficulty. This is a qualitative study as it measures the feelings of employees to better their learning development, as the article studied and recorded the responses employees had through qualitative surveys (Hynes, 2012).

Results/Discussion:

The results of the surveys that were sent to the employees and supervisors showed that being provided with a communication program for employees had improved employee interpersonal communication competencies. The surveys allowed for open-ended responses and allowed for participants to provide comments and feedback on what the training programs could

improve on for the future. Very few participants who participated in the evaluation surveys claimed they don't remember or haven't applied the strategies learned in the training program. Supervisors had tracked employees who attempted to change their behavior following the training and those employees were recognized and rewarded in ways such as a salary adjustment and considered for promotions (Hynes, 2012).

There are three apparent implications of this research study. With this, a major practical implication is that colleges should provide courses or aspects in their college courses that allow development in interpersonal communication skills. The first implication is that examining real business examples, like the one in this study, is a valuable classroom activity. By exploring real life examples allows students to understand the value of interpersonal communication in the workplace. It also invites students to understand the correlation of a successful business and interpersonal communication. The second implication of this research study is, students need to be able to identify and understand interactions within the workplace in terms of productivity and satisfaction. When students are able to pick out these distinctions and recognize these types of interactions, they are able to apply what they observed in their own interpersonal communication and can be well prepared for future jobs. The third implication of this research study is that companies benefit from participating in services and programs that experts in business communication provide. Programs and services that experts provide are to benefit companies in struggling areas and allow growth and development within those struggling areas (Hynes, 2012).

Evaluation:

The reason I was intrigued by this article is because I am a college student nearing the end of their college career about to go into the workforce. Throughout my experience in college, I have learned that it is not only important to know the material for the field you're pursuing, but you also need good communication skills no matter what field you're going into. Hynes (2012) clearly articulated their hypothesis that the correlation of business success and employees' emotional well-being and engagement stems from interpersonal communication skills. The ideas that were presented in this study to support the hypothesis were clear, however, this study didn't go into depth on what the training programs looked like. If the study explained more about what the program entailed instead of simply stating that the employees were provided with a training program, it would have given the reader a better understanding of the training program and what the training program all entailed. It was also unclear of the demographics of the participants. It would have been beneficial for the reader to learn about the demographics of the participants as it gives the reader a better understanding of participant background, and the positive and negative implications they could be facing everyday (Hynes, 2012).

I fully understand Hynes' (2012) conclusion as it is important to continue to develop ways of training employees in interpersonal communication skills. However, the questions provided in the post survey were questions that didn't allow for much thought of the participants. This could lead to inaccurate results as some participants could have just clicked through the survey not caring about what was the truth. However, I found it important that the learning team provided surveys for supervisors as they are able to oversee if the training provided actually worked and allowed feedback on the surveys in order to improve their training programs. I appreciated how the learning team had recognized the training program could use some development. However, what the learning team doesn't mention is that it is also important to expand and provide training to multiple companies and even expand to companies outside of the

United States to get more accurate results to know if their training program is accurate and can provide better employee engagement and well-being (Hynes, 2012).