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OSH Webinar Series 2020

Organisational and psychosocial work environment factors in OSH management

Oshpro 13.07.2020

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Content:

- A work place
- The Act
- The action
- The way forward
- The results and the benefits

If you want to walk fast,
walk alone.

If you want to walk far,
walk with others.



Similarities and common factors

Truck drivers

- Alone at work
- Long hours on the seat
- Minimum contact with customers
- Back up is far from incident
- Follow up is delayed

Shop clerks

- Works alone
- Long hours seated
- Continuous contact with customers
- Back up is close, should an incident arise
- Follow up can take place at once or a few hours after

The Kenyan OSH Act 2007 states the following:

Part III;

Research and related activities

24.(1) The Director shall conduct directly or in collaboration with other persons or bodies, research, experiments and demonstrations relating to occupational safety and health, including studies of psychological factors involved, and relating to innovative methods, techniques and approaches of dealing with occupational safety and health problems.

Cont. The Kenyan OSH Act 2007

Application of Act.

3. (1) This Act shall apply to all workplaces where any person is at work, whether temporarily or permanently.

(2) The purpose of this Act is to—

(a) **secure the safety, health and welfare of persons** at work; and

(b) protect persons other than persons at work against risks to safety and health arising out of, or in connection with, the activities of persons at work.

The part on the welfare is where you want to bring in psychosocial factors in the workplace. In 76(2), it is given:

76 (2) Every employer shall take necessary steps to ensure that workstations, equipment and work tasks are adapted to fit the employee and the employee's ability **including protection against mental strain**.

What can be causes of psychosocial risks and stress in the work place:

- Excessive workloads
- Conflicting demands and lack of role clarity
- Lack of involvement in making decisions that affect the worker and lack of influence over the way the job is done
- Poorly managed organizational change, job insecurity
- Ineffective communication, lack of support from management or colleagues
- Psychological and sexual harassment, third party violence

Source:
European Agency for safety and health at work.

Mental health

Some signs of prolonged stress can include:

- Feelings of anxiety, irritability, or depression
- Apathy, loss of interest in work
- Problems sleeping
- Fatigue
- Trouble concentrating
- Muscle tension or headaches

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What can i do as an employer?

- Make sure to conduct a risk assesment of the psychosocial working enviroment, use the experiences that workers/employees have talked about
- Which job positions in your workplace are at most risk? Is gender a factor? Is age a factor? Is beliefs a factor?
- Create guidelines (sometimes called SOP) to ensure minimum exposure to risks and stress,
- Have yearly follow ups with staff/employees on the year's annual risk assesment and evaluation
- Workers invovlement in decision making? this is something foreign in many companies and maybe a key to success...

What can I do as an employee?

- Does regulation provide for Psychosocial Working Environment requirements?
- What situations can I report, and how should I report them, and to whom?
- What should employees, and even employers do?


What does this mean for my workplace?

- Have clear guidelines – step by step routines in a language that the staff understand.
- Put time aside to train staff and those in leadership positions (i.e. Once every 6 months or once a year)
- Once in a while use roleplay to demonstrate situations that might arise – images and acting out the routines help in ensuring a message gets through.. Storytelling has a way of ensuring that *a point gets across*.
- Ensure the role of the safety delegate or a health and safety person, one that the employees can get in touch with to discuss their working environment, or issues that are related to the workplace



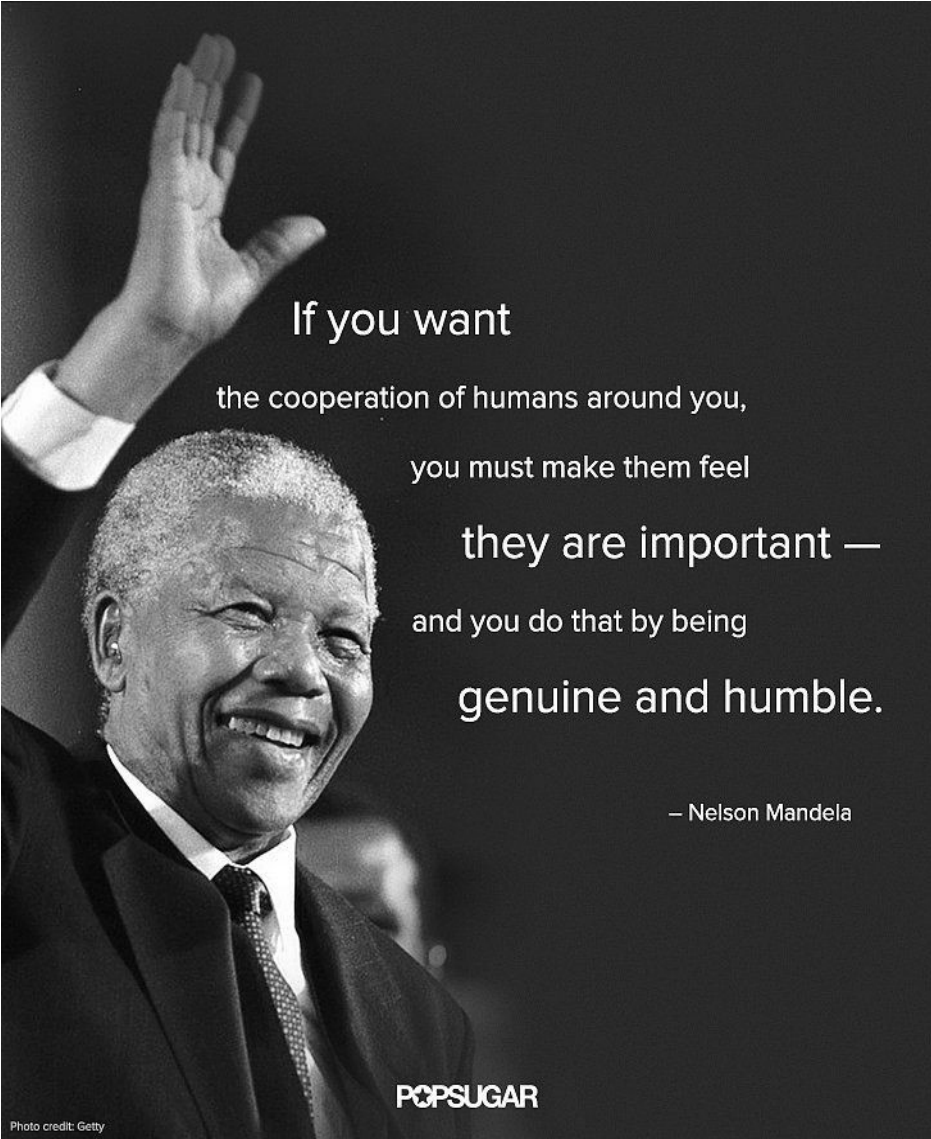
What are the benefits for the company?

- Stable workforce – less time used in training new recruits
- Reduction in sick leave – less time used in training a replacement
- Productive workforce – more revenue for company
- Good reputation – more customers, repeat business and an increase in business
- Satisfied employees



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If you want

the cooperation of humans around you,

you must make them feel

they are important —

and you do that by being

genuine and humble.

— Nelson Mandela

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