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RESEARCH ARTICLE

HR POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION AT COSCO, INDIA

Vidit Jain

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Abstract

Human Resource or HR Policies are a set of functions regulated by a managing body within a particular firm. These policies govern the behaviour of all the personnel who are employed by the firm and get affected by the actions of their managers. HR Policy is necessary in every firm as it protects the interests of employees working in a firm. The goal of this study is to make businesses aware about the importance of HR Policy and exposing the feelings of employees towards it. For this project, I investigated the HR Policy of 'Cosco India Limited', an Indian sports equipment manufacturing company. I conducted a critical analysis of the HR Policy of the company and formulated a questionnaire to be answered by the employees, hoping to get the reviews of the employees working in the company.

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Introduction:-

HR policy also known as Human Resource policy is a set of guidelines that define an organisation's behaviour towards its employees. Every firm has its own set of rules and regulations formulated by itself which makes it distinctive from other firms in terms of managing employee behaviour and maintaining the code of conduct. Formation and maintenance of HR policy is important however employees nowadays are facing problems at the workplace with respect to dominance by those holding positions at the top, sexual harassment faced by women employees and apathetic feelings towards human emotions. Sometimes businesses fail to recognise other factors that come under the scope of HR Policy like minimum wages, paid holidays, training and development of employees, workshops for performance management, and so on.

It is an important aspect of any business as the employees are the ones who contribute their effort and transform inputs into outputs. I decided to undertake this project because in today's world HR policy has become an important constituent of every business venture and it ensures employee satisfaction. Without employee satisfaction the organisation will not be able to reach its expected output. All organisations profit on the basis of its human capital, hence, they should aim to provide the best provisions to its employees as it is the key to organisational development. Through their efforts, the quality of output is maintained.

Cosco is a popular local brand which delivers products and services related to sports and fitness. Established in 1980, the company has been around for a long time during which it has dominated its market niche and become a household name. The private sector company has been included in several prestigious national and international confederations such as The World Federation Of The Sporting Good Industry, The Sport Goods Export Promotion Council and The Sports Goods Foundation Of India. It also has an employee-strength of 1000-2500 which makes HR a central unit in its machinery.

My aim is to help the employees realise their potential by asking them to fill out a draft of questions related to HR policy. This would in turn increase their efficiency in the company and would act according to their potential in the future. This would also increase the quality of the product and help them deliver services to society in a better way. This would also benefit all those who use their products.

Significance of HR Policy at Cosco India Limited:

HR policy is necessary to be maintained in a big company like Cosco where there is conflict of interest between a vast number of managers and employees regarding various decisions. It is also necessary for maintaining proper work ethics and a controlled and healthy work environment for employees. It covers various aspects of employment.

Legal analysis of HR Policy at Cosco India Limited:

Corresponding Author:- Vidit Jain

- employees which
- per Appendix A. He shall not hold any information required in Appendix A and if in case the information contained herein is found false then his services shall be discontinued as soon as it is detected.
2. Every workman shall be provided with an attendance card showing his name, father's/husband's name, pass number, department, shift and designation or a token which immediately on attendance each day, he delivers at the place provided or the person authorised to collect the same.
 3. The period and hours of all classes of workmen shall be regulated as provided in the Factories Act, 1948.
 4. Shift working will be regulated in accordance with the provisions of the Factories Act, 1948 and any settlement, agreement and award in force.
 5. All workmen shall be at work in the establishment at the time fixed and notified. Employees attending late by more than five minutes of the standing time, at the discretion of the Manager, be shut out or allowed to resume work and shall be liable to the deductions provided for in the payment of Wages Act, 1936 and the rules made thereunder.

All these incentives protect the personal interest of employees and provide a sense of security. In case there is a possible case filed against a particular employee working in the firm, who thinks that the case is baseless, then he can get financial support from the company in order to afford an attorney. The employee working in a safe environment can thus focus on other important factors such as growth of the company and self development as well.

Classification of staff and work allocation:

The company is divided into various managing bodies that function at different levels. The various levels are:

1. Top level management- consisting of Directors.
2. Middle level management- consisting of managers of different departments like sales department, production department, etc.
3. Lower level management- consisting of workers.

As per industrial standards sanction by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, workmen are be classified as:

1. Permanent- workman who has engaged on a permanent basis and includes any workman who has successfully completed the period of probation.
2. Badli or Substitute- one who has given a 'Badli'/ substitute card requiring him to come to the gate of the factory everyday and entitling him to work in the place of any workman who is absent for the time being.
3. Temporary- one who is engaged for work of essentially a temporary nature or to fill in temporary nature or to fill in temporary need of an extra job.
4. Apprentice- one who is being trained in any specific trade or job and who may or may not be paid any allowance during the period of his training subject to the provisions of Apprentice Act, 1961.
5. Probationer- one who is provisionally employed initially for a period of six months and later extended for another six months. The services of a probationer shall be liable to termination at any time without notice and without any reason.
6. Casual- one who is employed for work of a casual nature of a short duration.

Having various levels of management in the company helps in maintaining an environment where individuals working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims under the supervision and guidance of the higher authorities. Forming various levels creates a sense of responsibility and initiates coordination among employees.

Classification of workmen into various types provides the employees with a number of options to choose from. The company also opens itself to Apprentices, who are looking forward to learning with them and also want self development in the process.

Wages and leaves to employees:

Wages to employees is one of the most important factors that attracts the interests of employees.

There are various provisions provided to employees with respect to wages. These are:

1. Unclaimed wages: Any wages due to a workman but not paid on the usual pay day on account of their being unclaimed, shall be paid on an unclaimed wages pay day which shall be on the 20th of every month and in case, it is a holiday, on the succeeding working day.
2. Pay for overtime: The overtime and payment thereof shall be regulated as per the Act and Rules made thereunder.
3. Annual leave with wages: Any workman who would desire to get leave with wages shall apply on the prescribed form Appendix B clearly stating the period and reason for the leave.
4. Sick leave: In case of sickness for more than two days the workman shall be required to submit a medical certificate.
5. Maternity leave benefit: Maternity leave benefit, where applicable shall be allowed as provided in any Law, for the time being and as applicable to a female workman.

All these incentives provide job satisfaction to employees. Payment of wages on a regular basis provides a sense of satisfaction to employees, as they finally reap the benefit after long hours of work. Regular wages helps them support their families and gives them financial stability. The bonuses provided each year motivates them to put in extra effort in the business.

Methodology:-

My research work is completely authentic and all the rules and established practices were obeyed during the entire process of developing the project. The aim of this research is to help the employees recognize their various rights. This may help them to realize their true potential and boost their morale which might help them to push themselves to work to their maximum ability and deliver the society the best possible goods and services.

Human Resources is a modern and upcoming industry that is new in the market. It is a diverse area and thus I decided to conduct an online survey through email to reach out to the employees working at Cosco India Ltd. for asking a series of questions about their professional life and experience and development at the company so far.

This is the best possible way to conduct this type of survey as it can be asked online easily as the questions are easy to understand and the answers are direct. There are minimum or no indeterminate questions through-out the survey. A personal contact for conducting the survey is not required. This method is the best since respondents receive the email within a few seconds and there is no need for mailing the questionnaire as sometimes it may even take weeks to reach out to everyone. Moreover, personal information is not required in the email. This survey is also better than a telephonic survey as it is cost-effective and requires lesser time.

The company has its factory set up in Gurugram (Haryana) and the head office in Delhi and various small offices in other states. I decided to select the sample population on the basis where there are diversified activities. So, I thought of selecting the sample population as the employees working at the head office in Delhi. This sample population would help represent the larger population as a whole. This makes the online questionnaire method attractive as it saves time, is cost effective and a larger population can be reached out to at once. Moreover, anonymity of the respondent is maintained which helps them to answer questions freely and with comfort.

Although this method has various advantages, there were some drawbacks that were faced during the making of the project. The drawbacks are as follows:

1. The open-ended questions are difficult to understand in a questionnaire as I (Investigator) wasn't there to explain the questions.
2. There is a difficulty in selecting the truly representative sample of the entire population.

3. Respondents are sometimes demotivated to complete the survey.
4. As the survey is conducted online, therefore the true intentions and reactions of employees while answering the questions cannot be recorded.

The questionnaire was designed with a total of 21 questions, among which 20 were close-ended multiple-choice and 1 question was open-ended. No long survey was incorporated as it might appear cumbersome to the respondents, demotivating them from answering any further. Moreover, simple language was used so that there is no difficulty in attempting the questions.

A sample survey has been displayed as follows:

Q1. Which class of workmen do you belong to?

Q2. How long have you been working in this organisation?

Q3. How has your experience as an employee been here?

Q4. What are your number of hours of work on a regular basis?

Q5. How many paid casual leaves and sick leaves do you get?

Q6. How satisfied are you with the system of paid and unpaid holidays? How satisfied are you with the system of statutory leaves in place?

Q7. Are you eligible to get maternity leave?

Q8. In case of your eligibility for maternity leave, would you be satisfied with the benefits and leaves that the company provides?

Q9. Rate the maternity structure of the company on the ground of gender neutrality on the given scale.

Q10. Do you get your wage/ salary regularly? Do you get your dues on an unclaimed wages day?

Q11. How satisfied are you with the shift- working?

Q12. Do you think you are fairly compensated in case of any late-comings or urgent leaves?

Q13. How often do you communicate with your HR Manager?

Q14. How satisfied do you feel with regard to the communication with your HR?

Q15. Is there any higher authority in case of absence of HR?

Q16. If yes, then please rate your experience on the basis of the given scale as far as grievance redressals are concerned?

Q17. Do you see yourself working in the same organisation after two years? Rate the possibility on the basis of the given scale.

Q18. Rate your level of satisfaction with regard to aspects of team- work and positivity in the work environment.

Q19. Rate your satisfaction with regard to gender neutrality, addressing workplace sexual harassment and equal pay for equal work at the office.

Q20. Are there any initiatives for employee development and skill development initiatives?

Q21. List the policies within the ambit of the HR Policy of the firm that you like. Also suggest changes that can be improved.

Result:-

The total number of responses received were 42. The results of the 42 respondents were as follows:

Q1. Which class of workmen do you belong to?

Q2. How long have you been working in this organisation?

Q3. How has your experience as an employee been here?

Q4. What are your number of hours of work on a regular basis?

Q5. How many paid casual leaves and sick leaves do you get?

Q6. How satisfied are you with the system paid and unpaid holidays? How satisfied are you with the system of statutory leaves in place?

Q7. Are you eligible to get maternity leave?

Q8. In case of your eligibility for the maternity leave, would you be satisfied with the benefits and leaves that the company provides?

Q9. Rate the maternity structure of the company on the ground of gender neutrality on the given scale.

Q10. Do you get your wage/ salary regularly? Do you get your dues on an unclaimed wages day?

Q11. How satisfied are you with the shift- working?

Q12. Do you think you are fairly compensated in case of any late-comings or urgent leaves?

Q13. How often do you communicate with your HR Manager?

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Q18. Rate your level of satisfaction with regard to aspects of team- work and positivity in the work environment.

Q19. Rate your satisfaction with regard to gender neutrality, addressing workplace sexual harassment and equal pay for equal work at the office.

Q20. Are there any initiatives for employee development and skill development initiatives?

Q21. List the policies within the ambit of the HR Policy of the firm that you like. Also suggest changes that can be improved.

The following responses were obtained for the likability of the HR Policies and the changes suggested:

1. Paid leaves, Legal protection. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
2. Time off benefits and health care facilities.
3. Paid leaves; Bonus; Healthy work environment. Changes suggested: A holistic approach would be appreciated.

4. Regular payment of salaries. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
5. Paid leaves. Changes suggested: Meeting with employees more often.
6. No sexual harassment.
7. Compliance with rules and regulations, Paid leaves. Changes suggested: Meeting with employees on a daily basis.
8. Legal protection, Healthy work environment. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
9. Policies like Gender equality, legal protection and health care facilities. Changes suggested: Flexible deadlines.
10. At will employment; Gratuity; Paid leaves. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
11. Paid leaves, Full transparency. Changes suggested: Increase in employee involvement in various activities.
12. Maternity leave and time off benefits. Changes suggested: Better remuneration policies.
13. Gender equality and healthy work environment.
14. Fresh drinking water and clean surroundings. Changes suggested: A superior canteen would be appreciated.
15. Remuneration, Leave policy and health care facilities. Changes suggested: Change in working hours.
16. Paid leaves; Grant of holidays; Safe environment. Changes suggested: Upgradation of office equipment.
17. No discriminatory activities; Compliance with rules and regulations; Health care facilities. Changes suggested: More skill development programmes.
18. Legal protection, Regular wages, Healthy work environment. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
19. Paid leaves. Changes suggested: Creating a platform for employees where issues related to workplace can be discussed.
20. Paid leaves, Pension, Grant of holidays, Safe environment. Changes suggested: Superior canteen.
21. Equal pay for equal work, Legal protection, Regular wages.
22. Maternity leave. Changes suggested: Change in working hours.
23. Positive work environment. Changes suggested: Meeting more frequently with employees.
24. Legal protection, Healthy work environment.
25. HR Policies like leaves and time off benefits, at will employment and anti-discriminatory policies. Changes suggested: Access to mental health counselling.
26. Full transparency, Health care facilities, Gratuity.
27. Various policies like Pension, Paid leaves, Grant of holidays.
28. Regular salary, Paid leaves, Gratuity, Pension. Change suggested: Flexible working hours.
29. Equal pay for equal work. Changes suggested: Constructive feedback.
30. Compliance with rules and regulations, gender equality and zero tolerance with respect to sexual harassment. Changes suggested: Initiation of more programmes for skill development.
31. No discrimination and gender equality.
32. Healthy work environment and opportunity to learn. Changes suggested: Career development.
33. Employees' consideration as a stakeholder. Changes suggested: Recognition of accomplishments and setting various goals for employees.
34. Gender equality, No discriminatory practices.
35. Remuneration and leave policy, Regular wages, Health care facilities and Time off benefits like maternity leave. Changes suggested: Meeting more often with employees.
36. Clean working environment and full transparency. Changes suggested: More involvement of employees.
37. Time off benefits and regular pay. Changes suggested: Better working hours.
38. Maternity leave and grant of holidays in emergency.
39. Regular wages. Changes suggested: Flexible working hours.
40. Policies like a healthy work environment, legal protection, Clean work environment. Changes suggested: Acknowledging and creating incentives for work to be done by employees.
41. Anti-discriminatory policies.
42. Gender equality. Changes suggested: Limited working hours.

Discussion:-

After receiving the results, following data was interpreted:

Number of people belonging to various class of workmen are:

1. Permanent – 29
2. Badli (substitute) – 2
3. Temporary – 3
4. Apprentice – 3
5. Probationer – 1

6. Casual – 4

Majority of the employees working in the company are of permanent status which depicts that the company prefers permanency of employees. There is also a small population engaged in all other classes of workmen which shows diversification.

Years of work of people in the organization are as follows:

1. Just started – 4
2. Less than a year – 3
3. More than a year – 6
4. More than 2 years – 17
5. More than 5 years – 12

Most of the people employed have worked in the company for more than 2 years, with employees who have been working for more than 5 years also being significant proportion. This shows that the company has been open to making long bonds with the employees.

The experience as an employee has been as follows:

1. Very good – 23
2. Good – 12
3. Satisfactory – 7
4. Average – 0
5. Below average – 0

Majority of the employees have had a very good or a good experience while working which shows that they are liking the environment in which they are working.

4. The hours of work of various employees has been as follows:

1. 4-6 hours – 6
2. 8 hours – 31
3. 10 hours – 3
4. More than 10 hours – 2
5. More than 12 hours – 0

Most of the employees have a standard number of working hours, that is, 8 hours. Hours of work is one of the major features that attracts people and it seems like the company has managed to limit it to their extent.

5. Number of paid casual leaves and sick leaves is as follows:

1. None – 1
2. Less than 5 – 11
3. More than 5 – 30
4. More than 10 – 0

35

Employees get more than 5 holidays, usually. However, none of them get a paid holiday for more than 10 days. After a 10 day leave allowance, the holiday of employees is liable to be deducted from their salary.

6. Satisfaction with system of paid and unpaid holidays is as follows:

1. Very satisfied – 9
2. Satisfied – 27
3. Neutral – 6
4. Dissatisfied – 0
5. Very dissatisfied – 0

Employees are, more or less, satisfied with the remuneration system of the company. Salary is something which provides the most amount of satisfaction to an employee. This means that the company is able to provide a fair remuneration which gives them financial satisfaction.

7. Eligibility to get maternity leave is as follows:

1. Yes – 28
2. No – 4
3. Maybe – 10

Most of the employees are eligible to get maternity leave, while some of them are uncertain as to their ability to get maternity leave. This shows that even male employees are eligible to get maternity leave which depicts gender neutrality in the firm.

8. Satisfaction with maternity leave structure is as follows:

- Not Eligible – 4
Yes – 24
No – 2
Maybe – 12

Based on the responses, most of the employees are satisfied with the maternity leave structure, while some are uncertain with the structure.

9. Ratings of the maternity leave structure on the basis of gender neutrality is as follows:

36

1. 5 stars – 16
2. 4 stars – 21
3. 3 stars – 5
4. 2 stars – 0
5. 1 star – 0

Majority gave a 4 rating which shows there is no gender discrimination and the company gives maternity leaves, not only to woman but men as well. According to the survey employees usually feel that they get equal leaves with regard to maternity leaves.

10. Regularity of wages to employees is as follows:

1. Always – 39
2. Often – 3
3. Sometimes – 0
4. Never – 0

Most of the employees feel that they receive wages on time. However, sometimes due to inconveniences in the country due to political, social or health-related problems it gets delayed, however, they usually get it on time and there is no claim made by them with respect to unpaid wages.

11. Ratings of employees with respect to shift- working:

1. 5 stars – 8
2. 4 stars – 15
3. 3 stars – 12
4. 2 stars – 7
5. 1 star – 0

Most employees gave an average rating to the shift working. This shows that they are not completely satisfied with the shift working. They feel that there can be measures taken in order

to make it flexible as per the conveniences of the employees.

12. Fair compensation received in case of urgent leaves or late comings:

1. Always – 36
2. Often – 5
3. Sometimes – 1

37

Never – 0

Majority of the employees feel that they get fair compensation in case of urgent leaves and late comings. They feel that there is a fair remuneration system and fair policies being provided and followed by the company in case they get late or take an urgent holiday from work due to personal reasons.

13. Regularity with respect to communication with HR Manager:

1. Everyday – 22
2. Twice a week – 15
3. Few times a month – 5
4. Only in emergency – 0

Employees working at the office meet their HR often. This gives them personal satisfaction as they meet them on a daily basis and get them involved which instills in them a sense of responsibility.

14. Satisfaction of employees with regard to communication with HR:

1. 5 stars – 11
2. 4 stars – 26
3. 3 stars – 5
4. 2 stars – 0
5. 1 star – 0

Majority of the ratings is 4 which shows that they are satisfied with the HR authority of the company. They feel joyful after meeting their HR and this gives them job satisfaction.

15. Presence of a higher authority in case of absence of HR:

1. Yes – 36
2. No – 1
3. Maybe – 5

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Most of the employees are aware of the presence of a higher authority in case of absence of HR. They feel that they can go up to this authority at any time in case HR is absent at that particular time which provides them a sense of security.

16. Ratings on the grievance redressal according to employees is as follows:

1. Very satisfied – 23
2. Satisfied – 15
3. Neutral – 4
4. Dissatisfied – 0
5. Very dissatisfied – 0

Most of the employees are very satisfied or satisfied with the grievance redressal system. In case of any mis-management or problems that arise on a daily basis, they can always express their grievances which provides satisfaction to them.

17. Possibility of employees of working in the same firm after 2 years:

1. 5 stars – 14
2. 4 stars – 21
3. 3stars – 5
4. 2 stars – 2
5. 1 star – 0

The possibility of the employees working in the same organization after 2 years are high which shows that they are comfortable with the company and have well-adjusted to the environment. They feel that the company provides them with enough benefits which provides a sense of stability to their lives and thus they see themselves working in the same organisation.

18. Rating on the level of satisfaction with regard to aspects of teamwork and positivity in the working environment:

1. 5 stars – 27
2. 4 stars – 11
3. 3 stars – 4
4. 2 stars – 0
5. 1 star – 0

39

Majority of the employees feel satisfied with the aspects of teamwork and positivity in the working environment. Employees working in the firm are comfortable with fellow employees and feel that there is a positive competition present in the firm which helps them to grow and there is minimal negative influence present.

19. Rating on the basis of employees' satisfaction with respect to gender neutrality, addressing workplace sexual harassment and equal pay for equal work at the office:

1. 5 stars – 24
2. 4 stars – 14
3. 3 stars – 4
4. 2 stars – 0
5. 1 star – 0

Employees' satisfaction with regard to gender neutrality, addressing of workplace sexual harassment and equal pay for equal work is high with the majority opting for 4 stars and 5 stars rating. Employees mostly feel that gender neutrality is maintained and they trust the company to behold this gender neutrality title even in the future.

20. Presence of initiatives for employee development and skill development initiatives:

Yes:

1. Workshops – 14
2. Online courses – 3
3. Projects – 9
4. Exhibitions – 7
5. No – 4
6. Maybe – 5

Most employees feel that there is a presence of employee development and skill development initiatives in the form of workshops, online courses, projects, exhibitions. Various skill development programmes are provided by the company which helps the employee to grow and develop.

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21. Policies within the HR Policy of the firm and changes suggested:

From the open-ended responses, it can be surmised that employees were generally satisfied with the HR policies of the company. On the other hand, there were various changes suggested by the employees to improve the work environment. The issues were as follows:

1. Flexible working hours.
2. Holistic approach.
3. Increase in the number of meetings with employees. Increase in employees' contribution in decision making.
4. Better remuneration policies.
5. Superior canteen.
6. Platform for addressing issues. Access to mental health counselling.
7. Acknowledging employees' work. Creating Incentives.

The company should move holistically and consider fulfilling the needs of employees. It can begin by creating an employee forum or a platform where they can come and address their grievances. A part of the profits can be set aside to create a reserve for employees, and if it already exists then there can be an increase in the budget. Since, there are so many employees against the working hours, so the company should take it into consideration and take measures accordingly. This could be the beginning of the upliftment of employees' regards in these matters.

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Conclusions:-

In the beginning, my aim was to do research on the HR Policy of Cosco India Ltd., whether proper rules were being implemented; and were the employees aware of their rights? After completing the entire research work, I found out that most of the employees were familiar with their basic rights and could identify their most likeable policies.

A number of employees were identifying basic policies like regular wages, grants on holidays, etc. as their favourite policies, and flexible working hours was the main concern among the majority. Only a portion of them were explaining the importance and their likeability of modern policies like gender equality, equal pay for equal work at the firm, anti-discriminatory policies, explaining their concerns regarding more meetings with employees, career development initiatives, acknowledgement and recognition of accomplishments, etc.

As seen and proved by the survey, the foundation of an organisation is the people that it is comprised of. Thus, there should be adequate provisions for staffing or human resources as it is essential for an organisation's success. Human resources is a broad concept which also involves staffing. Staffing refers to the recruitment, selection and placement of the talented and hardworking people at the right jobs. Proper staffing methods have led to the following benefits at Cosco India Ltd.:

1. It has helped them to get suitable personnel for the job.
2. Performance of the company has increased due to the hard work of this personnel.
3. It ensures the continuity of growth, modernisation and diversification of the company. 42
4. It improves job satisfaction of employees as there is assessment and appreciation of work done by employees.

HR plays an important role in the corporate world and it also affects the ways in which various functions of the company are carried out. I have realised various factors related to employees in a firm:

1. There should be an increase in the employment of women from backward communities which would lead to their upliftment.
2. Companies should also think about the mental health and stress level of employees and provide relief to them.
3. Recruitment of employees in the firm should be based on true talent and not factors like gender, caste, economic background, etc..
4. Compatibility of the future employee with respect to convenience in reaching the workplace and in some cases agreement with transfers and promotions.
5. Employees should be fluent with working as a team and not just individually. This is necessary not only for internal processes but also when the company engages in outsourcing.

Companies should be profit driven to some extent, however it should not suppress other factors like employee satisfaction and benefit. Employee satisfaction should be equally valued as customer satisfaction as employees are also considered as stakeholders of the society.

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