

CHAPTER FIVE

OTHER SUPPORT SYSTEMS

1. INTRODUCTION

Within organisations certain systems can be identified as possible support systems for supervisors or managers. These systems could provide supervisors with the necessary support in the sense of giving them strength, encouragement and motivation to continue with their effective functioning within difficult management circumstances.

The systems discussed in this chapter are indicated as procedures, interventions or individuals available to employees within the organisation. These systems should be effective for employees to identify the value thereof and to be motivated to utilise the systems to their own benefit. Although these systems might be available within the organisation, employees might not have the knowledge to utilise of them effectively.

The systems identified as possible support systems and discussed in this chapter are employee benefits, employee incentives, job descriptions, knowledge of the budget and financial controls, employee assistance programs, the supervisors' peer support group, career planning, organisational culture, organisational climate and the immediate superior. In the discussion efforts are made to identify the elements and the procedures of operation of the systems.

2. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

2.1 Introduction

Employee benefits are available to all employees according to their position levels within a specific organisation. These benefits are not related to performance but are part of the employment package when an employee accepts a job offer from an organisation. Benefits can have an indirect influence on work performance as it contributes to the upliftment of the morale of employees.

Haimann (1994:338) identifies morale within the workplace as *"...a composite of feelings, sentiments, attitudes, satisfaction, well-being and happiness that every employee experiences throughout his employment..."* at an organisation. Factors that have an influence on the morale of employees are factors that originate mainly within the scope of the activities the social work supervisor or manager performs, such as benefits, incentives, working conditions and the quality of supervision.

Since many employee benefits are part of a hidden payroll, their value must be regularly and clearly communicated to all employees through all available media to ensure awareness amongst

employees of the available benefits. McCaffery (1992:234) indicates that communication within an organisation is the keystone to the management of employee benefits. Researcher supports the reasons for his statement:

- Employees must be made aware of the benefits provided by their organisation. Simply handing out summary descriptions of the available employee benefits is not sufficient. Employees have to be reminded of their coverage periodically and must know how to apply for the benefits.
- The information on the benefits provided to employees must be understandable for them to gain full advantage.
- Employees must get immediate answers to their questions and be able to trust the information they receive.

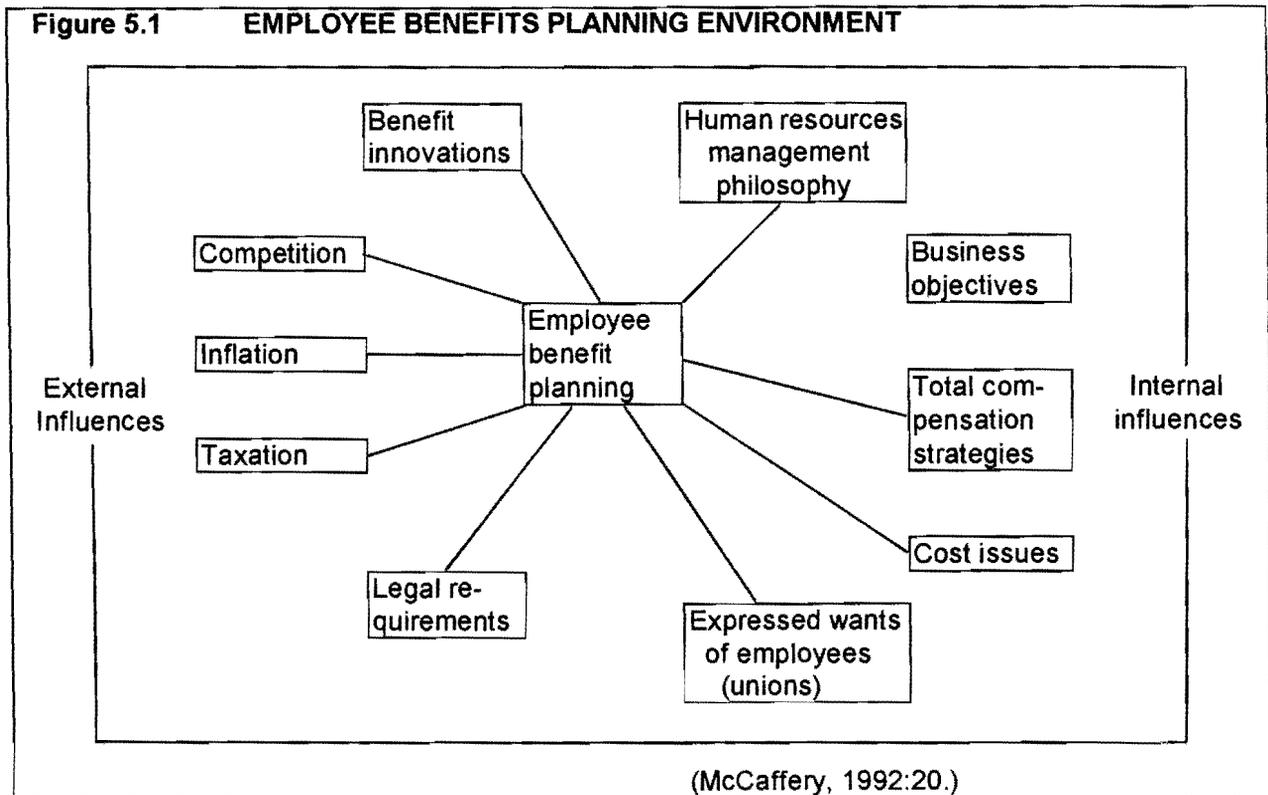
2.2 Planning environment for employee benefits

Policy indicating the fundamental purpose and guiding principles of employee benefits available in the organisation is essential. Operational planning should make provision for improvements of employee benefits and annual goals must be set for the implementation of changes. McCaffery's (1992:20) illustration of the planning environment for employee benefits is indicated in Figure 5.1.

It is evident from Figure 5.1 that a policy on employee benefits can never be stagnant. Continuous attention should be given to employee benefits as internal and external circumstances have an influence on its effectiveness. There is a close link between the planning environment as identified by McCaffery (1992:20) and the issues that should receive attention in the revision and improvement of an organisation's employee benefits policy as identified and addressed by Hume (1995:152-154).

The planning environment of employee benefits is discussed according to the information gained from the above mentioned authors.

- 2.2.1 Which employee benefits should be provided? The actual or perceived needs of employees as well as their expectations are considered when deciding upon the content of employee benefits. Organisations must ensure the provision of any benefits is cost-effective by assisting in the achievement of organisational objectives and therefore justify expenditure.
- 2.2.2 On what scale should employee benefits be provided? When designing employee benefits, the cost of the benefits in relation to the cash element of remuneration in the form of salary or wage should be considered. The employer must decide what proportion of the total remuneration package he is willing to devote to benefits. Whatever scale of employee benefits the organisation decides upon, it must support their objectives and mission statement.



2.2.3 Should employees be given an element of choice regarding their benefits package? Since every individual has a unique set of physiological, cognitive and social needs, it is inevitable that each employee's opinion regarding the ideal benefits package will be different. In an attempt to overcome this problem, it may be desirable to allow employees a certain amount of choice regarding the content of their benefits package.

2.2.4 How should the employee benefits be allocated? There are three possibilities:

- The content of the benefits package to be identical for all employees, any differentiation regarding aspects such as responsibility and contribution should be reflected only in pay.
- A hierarchy of employee benefits, the type and range of benefits dependent primarily on grades of employee and seniority within the organisation.
- One range of benefits for all employees with an additional range of benefits dependent on the individual's position within the organisational hierarchy.

2.2.5 Should there be a relationship between the employee benefits package and the financial position of the organisation? It may be beneficial and socially acceptable to provide employees with comprehensive and competitive benefits, but the present and future financial position of the organisation must be able to support such an initiative.

2.2.6 Should representatives of employees be consulted regarding the employee benefits policy? It is probably sensible to involve the representatives in negotiations regarding the formulation of an employee benefits policy. As in most decision making processes, if the individuals who are affected by the benefits package are involved in the design stage, they are more likely to be committed to the end product.

2.2.7 What should be the approach to devising a benefits package for key employees? There are always likely to be skills and qualifications that are short in supply within of an organisation. In order to attract and retain employees, who possess such skills and qualifications, it is often necessary to offer a total remuneration package, which not only equals that of competing employers but also is considered to be more attractive. In relation to the remuneration package, it may be appropriate to offer to key employees a competitive selection of benefits, such as an executive company car and improved pension arrangements.

By asking these questions and objectively answering them, an organisation can develop a policy on employee benefits acceptable to all employees. Unfortunately, organisations do not actively plan to revise or improve their policies on employee benefits. Considering the planning environment, it is evident that it is a huge and responsible task and organisations seldom have the personnel with the time and necessary skills to attend to it. However, it is recommended that organisations must make provision for revision and improvement of these policies in their strategic planning - at least attend to it within a five year planning framework.

2.3 Motivation for providing benefits to employees

The development of a policy on employee benefits and the responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented correctly and employees do receive benefits can be avoided by just remunerating employees on a higher scale. However, Snape, Redman & Bamber (1994:147-148) and Hume (1995:155-156) have identified reasons for organisations to offer benefits packages to employees rather than simply providing them with the whole amount in cash:

- The provision of employee benefits is an effective method of rewarding employees without the limitation of the taxation implications applied to cash payments. Employers are concerned to provide benefits that minimise the tax liability for themselves and the employees.
- Some positions necessitate the provision of certain remuneration benefits - the work requires that employees be provided with particular benefits to allow them to fulfil their duties e.g. mobile telephone, company car and specific clothing.
- A competitive employee benefits package is a method of attracting and retaining employees. This is specifically applicable in the competition for managerial talent.
- Provision of particular remuneration benefits motivates employees to increase their commitment to the organisation.
- The provision of employee benefits can encourage specific forms of desired behaviour.
- The provision of employee benefits promotes a paternalistic and caring attitude towards employment conditions for employees.
- Benefits must hold a value for the employee. The employee has a variety of needs and expectations, including current income, longer term security, recognition and status. Providing

cash may not necessarily be the most effective way of satisfying each of these needs and expectations. Through an outstanding benefit such as a company car, the need for status can be satisfied.

2.4 Operational conditions for employee benefits

It is to the advantage of the employee to receive a benefits package. It is argued that the individual employee may have input in the development of this benefits package. However, certain conditions are applicable for the operation of the package (Tyson & York, 1996:188). The conclusion is made that these conditions are applied unconditionally with the exclusion of the last condition as listed below as the human resource personnel of organisations are not trained or skilled to provide the statements or the counselling.

- Certain important elements in the package cannot be traded or changed, such as a significant proportion of base pay, pension, life insurance and medical insurance.
- There are rules concerning how the benefits can be changed, e.g. the extent to which the model of a company car can be traded up or down.
- There is a limited list of benefits in the package.
- Employees are only allowed to make changes and to exercise their flexible options at specific times, e.g. when the car is due for change.
- Employees should periodically receive a detailed statement and sometimes free financial counselling on the employee benefits package.

2.5 Identified employee benefits

The following employee benefits are identified and divided according to the following categories:

2.5.1 Time-off employee benefits

- Paid rest periods or on-the-job breaks e.g. lunch, coffee/tea breaks, travel time. These benefits are beneficial to the health and attitudes of employees. It is subjected to specified time limits, but the adherence to these limits depends on a combination of employee respect and supervisory observation. The total costs of paid rest periods are rarely included in statements on employee benefits and employees are not inclined to recognise such costs as meaningful. The costs can be considerable either in terms of work not completed or in terms of extra personnel required to absorb the loss of productive time.
- Sick days. Certain cycles of sick leave are available to employees.
- Annual leave. Reasons for granting annual leave are:
 - Employees need time away from the physical demands and mental stresses of their work.
 - Employees are rewarded with vacations in exchange for their commitment of service to the organisation.
- Holidays - e.g. Christmas Day.
- Maternity leave and maternity pay.

- Career breaks - also referred to as long leave.
- Study leave.
- Paid personal absences for events beyond the control of the employee that causes absence e.g. military service, death of a close relative and graduation ceremonies.

(Weiner, 1982:482; McCaffery, 1992:168; Werther & Davis, 1993:478-479 and Hume, 1995:164-165.)

2.5.2 Work scheduling benefits

- Shorter work weeks.
- Flexible work schedules. Employees are given autonomy to adjust their work schedule to fit their life styles and to choose the hours they prefer to work.
- Job sharing e.g. two persons doing the same job but working different hours and/or days.
- Working shifts.
- Compressed work week.
- Part time employment.

(Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987:148; Werther & Davis, 1993:480-481; Haimann, 1994:120.)

2.5.3 Employee benefits related to financial security and assistance:

- Pension schemes represent postponed pay and are critical in providing employees with long-term security. For junior staff the pension scheme may appear remote and be of little immediate interest, whilst for more senior employees, the pension scheme may be the key benefit when it comes to considering a job move.
- Company cars are of major significance as highly visible status symbols. In addition to the value of the use of the car, there is the benefit of the relief from concerns of car purchase, depreciation and maintenance. There are conditions, linked with the job content, controlling the award of a company car.
- Health insurance. Corporate health insurance schemes attract a discount on services available to the individual. It provides a degree of security for the employee, with the advantage to the employer that key staff receives immediate, high quality treatment, contributing to effective performance.
- Medical schemes. The employee has the choice of available medical schemes and the organisation contributes towards the monthly premium according to a specific formula e.g. the employee pays two thirds and the organisation one third of the premium.
- Group disability and survivor benefits. The employer provides disability benefits for different classifications of employees. Survivor benefits are provided to survivors of deceased employees based on salary levels and the cause of death rather than the status or needs of the survivors.
- Personal accident insurance.
- Business travels insurance and travel allowances.

- Sabbaticals.
- Long service awards.
- Child care such as an employer-sponsored child care centre.
- Elder care. The attendance and productivity of employees having care giving responsibilities for an older adult (parent, grandparent, spouse) are affected by this kind of responsibility. Many organisations offer their employees assistance through flexible work schedules and programs.
- Adoption benefits. This is a sponsored program financially assisting or reimbursing employees for expenses related to the adoption of a child and making provision for paid or unpaid leave for the adoptive parent employee.
- Sports and social facilities within the physical work environment.
- Subsidised catering / luncheon vouchers.
- Mobile phone / telephone costs.
- Free or discounted parking.
- Working condition fringe benefits such as the use of a company car for business purposes.
- Clothing allowance / company uniform.
- Funding for training or studies.

(McCaffery, 1992:75-107,171-177, 187 and Hume, 1995:166-167.)

2.6 Conclusion

It is difficult to comprehend that so many employee benefits are available for implementation in different organisations. It is obviously impossible to apply all the identified benefits in one organisation. The fact that so many employee benefits are available is an important motivation for organisations to revise and improve their policy on employee benefits regularly.

It is recommended that, depending on the type of organisation, as many as possible of the identified employee benefits should be available. Benefits with a financial impact, however, should be linked to the financial position of the organisation. Individual employees should have the opportunity to choose from a range of benefits and thus have a direct input in their benefits package.

3. EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES

3.1 Introduction

An incentive is described as an incitement, encouragement, a stimulus and an inducement applied particularly to increase output within the work situation. Holt (1987:389) describes employee incentives as compensation methods rewarding employees in an equitable manner for effective performance. Incentives are 'allowances' (additional pay) an employee is entitled to according to performance on the expected standard.

Employee incentives are related and directly linked to the performance of employees. As with employee benefits, organisations must have policies in terms of employee incentives. Employee incentives or the lack thereof, have a significant influence on the effective and efficient functioning of employees. Managers must ensure that they are well informed on the available employee incentives in their organisation as well as the application procedures thereof.

Awarding incentives to employees should be handled with caution and care. It should be based on specific practical guidelines to prevent some employees from benefiting to the detriment of other employees. Performance appraisal is the instrument that can ensure equality in awarding incentives. Managers should continually be aware of the needs and expectations of employees related to incentives.

3.2 Employee expectations related to incentives

Employee incentives should have a significant influence on the attitudes, the motivation and the work satisfaction of employees. According to the Harvard Business Review Book (1990:15-17), Baron (1993:257-258) and Snape, et al (1994:157), if incentive systems are to have this influence on employees, their needs and expectations related to incentives should be considered:

- An employee's satisfaction with incentives is related to what he expects and what he receives. Feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction arise when employees compare their input (skills, education, effort, and performance) to output.
- Employee satisfaction is also affected by comparisons they make with employees in similar positions and organisations. Employees tend to overestimate the pay of fellow employees in similar positions and underestimate their performance. This misperception can cause employees to become dissatisfied.
- An employee may believe that his salary level compares favourably to those salary levels of others inside and outside the organisation and therefore he may be satisfied with the salary. However, the same employee may be dissatisfied with the pay system if it is designed to reward performance, but employees who perform well are not rewarded because they will not participate in organisational politics. There is evidence within the changed work environment that political connections and dependence on the expertise of subordinates do sometimes play a role in decisions of managers concerning pay raises or incentives awarded.
- Overall satisfaction with incentives results from a mix of rewards rather than from single rewards.
- To motivate employees through incentives, certain conditions must be met:
 - employees must believe that effective performance leads to certain rewards;
 - employees must feel that rewards offered are attractive; and
 - employees must believe that a certain level of individual effort will lead to achieving the standards of performance as set by the organisation.

- Extrinsic rewards are expected to come from the organisation as money or promotion and from the supervisor or co-workers as recognition.
- Intrinsic rewards are related to the performance of the task itself. It may include satisfaction in terms of accomplishment or the sense of having influence. The work process and the individual response to it provide the intrinsic reward.
- The organisation seeking to increase intrinsic rewards must provide a work environment that allows these satisfactions to occur.
- Employee incentives should be related to objectives over which the employee has significant influence.
- Incentives should be visible to all concerned.
- Employee incentives should be given immediately. Rewards have to follow performance without undue delay.

3.3 Types of employee incentives

3.3.1 Short-term employee incentives

Employee incentives are based on the achievement of the short-term objectives of the organisation. It rewards the performance of employees on a once-off basis. The following employee incentives are short-term:

- Profit-sharing plans: All employees can participate in this plan. The management sets aside a predetermined percentage of pre-tax profits to share with employees if the organisation achieves its financial targets. If the targets are successfully achieved, employees receive lump sum awards. The aim is to provide employees the sense of participating in the future growth of the organisation. Researcher makes the conclusion that profit sharing plans have limited advantages as only strong for-profit organisations can apply this incentive.
- Profit related pay: Profit related pay is defined as being an element of an employee's pay but formally linked to the profits of the organisation. When the profits of the organisation increase, the profit related pay element of pay also increases. When profits fall, so does the profit related pay element of the pay. The problem with this incentive is that employees can become dependent on the additional pay they receive. They will not be able to cope with their pay if the profit and thus their pay decrease.
- Cash bonuses / Production bonuses: The aim of bonus schemes is to provide an incentive for high levels of effort and performance. Bonus payments are related to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of group or individual performance and are effective remuneration approaches in the motivation of employees. This type of employee incentive is flexible as it is based on obtained financial or non-financial group performance goals. The flexibility is important, since it allows for qualitative criteria e.g. completing a project ahead of schedule.

Employees are rewarded for saving time. Cash bonuses are made in lump sum amounts and on a once-off basis. Researcher supports the fact that this incentive can contribute to motivating employees toward high levels of performance.

- Individual bonus schemes: This employee incentive is directed at individual employees and has certain advantages:
 - Rewards employees for high levels of performance.
 - The schemes are simple enough to allow for easy administration.
 - It is simple enough for employees to understand.
 - Lump sum cash payments appeal to some people.
 - Time differences between performance and payment are usually minimal.
 - Bonuses are linked to achievements and targets from which a reward and an incentive are created.

Disadvantages of the system:

- It is sometimes difficult to create a consistent relationship between the performance and the reward.
 - It is difficult to apply to employees who do not have an easily quantifiable output.
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- Performance related cash bonuses: This type of bonuses are directed at senior executives and the aim is to make pay an incentive and to link it to the achievement of organisational objectives. Since such bonuses are usually not accumulated into basic salary, managers are effectively being asked to accept a greater risk element in their remuneration package. Such bonuses are related to target levels of performance, although it is also common to incorporate personal performance in the calculation of the bonus. A typical scheme for senior executives would involve an annual lump sum bonus related to the achievement of profit targets. It is recommended that this incentive should be applied with caution. An organisation using performance related bonuses must be certain that the senior executives, who qualify for the incentive, are persons of high quality and skill who are able to handle the risk effectively.
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- Incentives for piecework: This refers to compensating the employee for each unit of output. It involves designed standards of hourly or daily production. Employees receive a basic wage for production meeting the prescribed standard and incentive payments for production above the standard. Incentives can only be paid for piecework that are quantifiable measurable. Types of piecework are:
 - Straight piecework where employees are paid a flat rate (piece rate) for each item / operation completed.
 - Differential piecework refers to the adjustment of the piece rate as production rate increases. Whilst the employee's earnings continue to increase as production increases, the rate at which earnings increase declines after a specified production level.

- Measured day work relies on work measurement to ascertain the appropriate daily production level for each individual.
- Group incentive schemes are applicable if the production output of the work group reaches a predetermined and agreed level, the employees within that work group receive a cash payment which can either be paid equally to the individuals or proportionally according to each individual's input.
- Overtime payments: This is an incentive of a 'non-contractual' nature wherein payment is only made if the employee was required to work the excess hours. The payment of overtime pay is generally held to be reasonable as long as the nature and amount of overtime working is strictly controlled. Employees do not work well and consistently if excessive overtime is worked and they should never be allowed to take on too much to supplement what they may perceive to be an inadequate basic salary. Managers and professionals rarely receive overtime pay. If a professional works 8 hours overtime, he can take off 8 hours with pay at some time that is mutually convenient for the professional and the organisation. The conclusion is made that the payment of overtime to professionals is a disputable aspect handled differently within different organisations. Taking time off as compensation is not a convenient way out.
- Sales incentives: These incentives are applicable to only sales staff. Employees are given a choice on the work they do, where they concentrate their efforts and how they plan their time. Pay increases are linked to specific individual contributions, such as the satisfactory completion of a major project or meeting a quantitative sales target. The basis for all sales incentive schemes is a relationship between the levels of sales value (performance) and the pay of the employee - as the sales levels increase, so should the level of pay. Types of sales incentives: commission only; salary and bonus; salary and commission; salary and bonus and commission. Commission refers to the payment of a percentage of the selling price.
- Pay-for-knowledge: Compensation is provided to employees through higher pay and/or an once-off amount calculated as a percentage of the employee's base salary scale for each new skill they learned or additional diploma or certificate they obtained.
- Merit pay: It is based on a systematic salary structure, a formal appraisal system and a more or less systematic link between appraised performance and individual rewards. Also referred to as pay for performance or performance related pay. It includes incentives where increases are discretionary and not automatic and based on individual assessment. The central feature of merit pay is the reward of remuneration in the return for the achievement of a predetermined level of performance. Crucial to the success of any merit payment system is an effective method of assessing the performance of employees. The assessment is used to determine

whether or not the employee has satisfied the necessary 'merit criteria' and is eligible for a remuneration reward.

(Weiner, 1982:481; Von Glinow, 1988:59-60; National Research Council, 1991:23,78-79; Harrison, 1993:281-282,287; Werther & Davis, 1993:446; Snape, et al., 1994:132,138-139; Hume, 1995:186-187,189-190,194-196,200,201-203 and Tyson & York, 1996:186-187.)

3.3.2 Long-term employee incentives

These incentives are grant awards based on performance over a period of time longer than one year. It is designed to reward sustained performance consistent with the goals of the organisation. The following employee incentives are indicated (Von Glinow, 1988:60; Harvard Business Review Book, 1990:44; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1990:19; Werther & Davis, 1993:446-448 and Snape, et al., 1994:140) to be long-term in nature:

- Stock options: This incentive involves the granting of company stock to initially attract and then reward managers. It is only available to a selected few within the executive management of an organisation.
- Stock purchase plans: These are long-term incentive plans for firms trading stock on the public market. Employees are able to purchase company stock at a discount from market price and the firm makes up the difference.
- Maturity curves: This incentive makes adjustments to the top of the rate range for selected positions where employees are rated on productivity and on experience.
- Share option schemes: This involves granting the employee the option to purchase shares in the company at some future date at a specified price, based on the share price ruling at the date the option was granted. The employee will only be able to exercise the option to buy the shares after, say, three years have past and the option is withdrawn if in the meantime the employee leaves the organisation. The benefit to the recipient comes partly from any discount offered on the original share price, but mainly from any increase in the market price of the shares following the granting of the option. The main advantage is the fact that managers are discouraged from leaving the organisation. As in the case of stock options, this incentive is only available to a selected few within the executive management of an organisation.

3.4 Coordinated approach

Many employee incentives are available and a coordinated approach in applying incentives can be effective. Such approach can result in motivating desired behaviour; attracting and keeping achievement orientated employees; and retaining good performers and discouraging poor performers. A coordinated approach indicates the provision of a range of incentives to employees but aimed at different time scales. Snape, et al (1994:143) gives the following example: a remuneration package consisting of performance related pay increments, annual cash bonuses

linked to the achievement of specific job targets, profit sharing and a share option scheme for executives and senior managers.

3.5 Conclusion

Effectively implementing employee incentives is a necessity as it has an important influence on the motivation of employees and their work performance. All of the above mentioned incentives cannot be implemented in all organisations, as the type of organisation determines which incentives will be most effective within the specific work environment and the type of service rendered. Whichever employee incentive is applied, the management must ensure that it is utilised continually and correctly.

4. JOB DESCRIPTION

4.1 Introduction

The assumption is made that every position in any organisation has a job description. Every employee thus knows what his position entails and what the organisation expects him to do. When a new employee accepts employment at a specific organisation, he has to know what will be expected of him. The availability of a correct job description ensures effective workflow within the organisation resulting in the achievement of organisational objectives.

Employees have to know when they are performing well. They will know they are performing well when their actions are guided by detailed job descriptions written in terms of what is expected of an employee in the specific position. The implication is that specific standards are set according to which it will be easy to determine if an employee is performing well. Since the employee knows what is expected of him, he will know according to which standards he will be evaluated and he will be able to identify his training needs. This contributes to employees being motivated to be effective in their work performance.

4.2 Contents of a job description

For the purposes of this study, the contents of a job description as identified by Tyson & York (1996:74) are accepted. A job description contains the following details:

- Basic details - exact title and grade, location of office, area of operation.
- Purpose - objectives and relationship to the aim of the organisation.
- Main tasks and key areas. Occasional tasks. Secondary duties, hours of work.
- Standards for effective performance of tasks. Criteria indicating that tasks have been effectively performed.
- Responsibilities linked to the level of the position in organisational structure. Manager/supervisor to whom employee is accountable. Subordinate staff for whom employee is responsible. Responsibilities for finance, materials, equipment, and classified information.
- Physical and social environment - particular features of work environment, contacts with others.

- Training/education - on-the-job training and educational courses normally associated with the position.
- Advancement opportunities - for promotion and career development.
- Conditions of employment - salary and benefits, possible overtime requirements, medical and pension schemes, welfare, social and other facilities, leave entitlement, special employment conditions applicable to the position.
- Job circumstances referring to aspects of the position commonly accepted as being pleasant or unpleasant and easy or demanding.

4.3 Fundamental concepts influencing the job description

The compilation of a job description is a complicated task. Researcher has identified (Koontz, et al., 1984:398-399; Miner & Luchsinger, 1985:419; Holt, 1987:338-339; Broadwell, 1987:74; Burack & Mathys, 1988:72,79; Broadwell, 1990:101-102; Jeanneret, 1991:143-144; Werther & Davis, 1993:135, 140, 146-152; Harris & DeSimone, 1994:41-42; Watling, 1995:21 and Tyson & York, 1996:74) the following fundamental concepts necessary to understand the complete concept of a job description. The concepts are mostly interlinked and can be confusing. However, it is important that they be addressed within the job description to ensure the job description is comprehensive and fulfils its purpose: the employee understands his responsibilities, the expectations he has to meet as well as the standards for evaluation.

4.3.1 Job description

The job description provides a clear idea of the performance requirements of an employee in a particular position. It may allow some flexibility to take advantage of individual characteristics and abilities. It is a written statement of the tasks, duties and behaviours required in a given position. It provides an explanation of the duties, working conditions and other aspects of a specified position; in other words, it provides a profile of the position. The reporting relationships, overall job responsibilities, detailed job responsibilities and cooperative working relationships are outlined.

4.3.2 Person specification

This concept refers to the description of the requirements for effective performance in personal terms. Job responsibilities are interpreted in terms of desired skills, experience, education and training. A profile of the human characteristics of the employee in the specific position e.g. experience, education, training, physical and mental characteristics is compiled. The formal degree of preparation, skills and demonstrated competency and the informal physical and mental capabilities expected from employees for given positions are spelt out. Responsibility is indicated according to the perceived degree of accountability including appropriate attitudes, values and beliefs implicit in positions. General and specific health requirements are indicated. Special conditions linked to the position such as travel and after hour responsibilities are listed.

4.3.3 Job analysis

The job analysis is a systematic process of collecting, organising, analysing and documenting the content, requirements and context of a collective set of work activities performed by one or more employees. The job analysis makes it possible to accurately establish the work related requirements of targeted positions. An abilities assessment is done that helps to determine the relative importance of the abilities necessary for job success. At the same time the assessment permits the comparison of an employee's scope and degree of abilities against what is needed.

Specifications that have an influence on the position and employee have to be specifically attended to during the job analysis. These specifications are aspects such as physical physique and appearance, academic attainments, mental alertness, special aptitudes, personal interests and motivation. The job analysis does a comprehensive investigation on the job duties of each employee.

According to Raelin (1984:130-138) the rationale for undertaking a job analysis is three-fold:

- There are many skills and abilities an employee performs in his work. Without careful analysis, only a few of the key activities might come to mind, overlooking a number of secondary but critical tasks and skills.
- Career mobility inside an organisation can be opposed if management does not know the critical activities associated with certain positions. Employees cannot be prepared to take anyone's place since information on job behaviours is largely unavailable.
- Performance in a position is more appropriately evaluated against the key behaviours of the position as opposed to some gross measures of performance.

Researcher supports the recommendation made by Schein (1993:4) namely that every manager and employee should conduct an annual job and role analysis of his own position. They should participate with others in analysing the positions of all subordinates, key peers and superiors with whom organisational relationships exist. An organisation cannot achieve its strategic objectives until they have been translated into concrete goals. Goals cannot be met until they have been clearly understood by employees. Understanding requires not only self-insight but also clear communication of expectations on the part of managers, peers and subordinates. Joint job and role analysis is the means of achieving such understanding and insight.

Schein (1993:11-41) proposes a job analysis process consisting of five steps:

Step 1 - Employee analyses his present job and role

Step 2 - Analyse changes in the environment

Step 3 - Analyse the impact of the identified environmental changes on stakeholders and the job

Step 4 - Redefine the job and role

Step 5 - Redefine the requirements for doing the job and fulfilling the role

Researcher adds a sixth step:

Step 6 – Compile job description

The result of the job analysis is that employees are clear on their expectations and performance standards. The achievement of individual goals as well as organisational goals provide job satisfaction and motivation and employees experience themselves as being performing according to expected standards.

4.3.4 Job design

Employee productivity and satisfaction provide feedback on how well a job is designed. Job design and job analysis are closely linked - a job cannot be designed without first conducting a job analysis. Job design implies the grouping of tasks into natural work units, putting tasks that are related into one category and assigning an employee to perform the tasks. Vertical job loading is also a means of designing a job as it results in increasing the individual employee's responsibility for planning, controlling and performing his work. Factors that influence job designing in an organisation are job requirements of the organisation; the nature of the task and the technology related to the job; the organisational structure; and the costs of changing to new job designs. Researcher recommends that job design should be addressed as a specific element of the job description to ensure clarity on specific tasks.

4.3.5 Position

A position refers to a specific set of tasks and duties performed by a specific employee in an organisation at a particular time. It entails an organised and related group of duties and tasks to be performed by an employee.

4.3.6 Position analysis

A position analysis is a study of the tasks and duties that are performed by one person.

4.3.7 Job family

A job family is a collection of two or more positions that require similar employee characteristics or contain parallel tasks.

4.3.8 Job

Jobs are described as very similar positions within an organisation; the number depends on the scope of the organisation and can be as small as one. It can also be seen as a group of positions that are nearly identical with respect to primary duties and tasks and are sufficiently similar to be included under one title.

4.3.9 Job title

The job title refers to what the job is called within the organisation and outside it, including alternative and slang titles.

4.3.10 Occupation

Occupations refer to similar jobs existing in different organisations and at different points in time.

4.3.11 Work activities

Work activities indicate what needs doing, including the tasks and duties, materials used, machinery operated, required interaction with others, supervision given and received and reporting relationships. Variety in work activities ensures a number of different tasks or actions as prescribed with respect to defined roles and job expectations. The degree to which employees have discretion to make decisions about activities associated with their positions is related to the delegated authority linked to the performance of the work activities.

4.3.12 Task

A task refers to a distinct work activity performed with a specific purpose. Can also be described as a specific or discrete unit of work activity that typically has a beginning and end point.

4.3.13 Duty

Duty refers to a collection of related tasks that comprise a large segment of work activities.

4.3.14 Physical environment

The physical environment refers to the physical working conditions, including heat, lighting, noise, ventilation, geographical location and safety hazards.

4.3.15 Social environment

The social environment of an organisation consists of the nature and number of employees in the work environment as well as nearby facilities and recreational opportunities.

4.3.16 Employment conditions

These conditions are determined by the level of the position in the organisation in such terms as wage structure, working hours, payment method, position permanency, seasonal or part-time nature, benefits, relation to other positions and job families and opportunities for transfer and promotion.

4.3.17 Interactions

Distinction is made between:

- Required interaction referring to the necessary or prescribed interdependence between employees who must cooperate to ensure tasks are accomplished.
- Optional interaction with the purpose of voluntary cooperation, communication or joint efforts to be incorporated into tasks.

4.3.18 Abilities

Abilities are general capabilities related to the performance of a set of tasks, developed over time through the interaction and experience. Abilities are long-lasting.

4.3.19 Skills

Skills are a combination of abilities and capabilities developed as a result of training and experience. Skills are often categorised as psychomotor activities (while abilities tend to be more cognitive) and are typically measured in terms of the ease and precision evident in the performance of some task.

4.4 Benefits of job description for the individual employee and the organisation

- The employee has a concise picture of why he is employed.
- Employees can see what results are expected (at least in a general sense).
- The employee can easily identify how he will be assessed.
- The parameters for authority and accountability are clear.
- Given the 'big picture' i.e. the mission statement, the value of this specific position for the organisation can be identified.
- The job description assists in placing the right person in the right position.
- Enthusiasm and morale are enhanced to a higher level when job descriptions are available to individual employees.
- As the expectations of specific positions are clear and accessible through job descriptions, career development planning is made easier.
- The job description provides the opportunity for personal development being more precise.
- There is more efficiency and effectiveness throughout the organisation as tasks and responsibilities are clear.

4.5 Conclusion

The importance of a job description for each employee cannot be overestimated. Certain actions and activities will not be performed if employees are not provided with job descriptions. It contributes towards planning for future human resource requirements, as clarity is available on what the tasks and responsibilities of all positions in an organisation entail. It is thus evident that a job description is important for the individual employee as well as for the organisation.

5. KNOWLEDGE OF BUDGET AND FINANCIAL CONTROLS

5.1 Introduction

The budget is identified as a support system. Not all managers or supervisors are mathematically focused but they have to be equipped to assume responsibility for national funding policies and to better manage the finances of their sections. Within the social welfare field, managers are often not seen to be able to handle the finances of their sections. This attitude results in them not being involved in the budgeting process. Mostly they are just informed when they are overspending. If these managers are involved during the total budgeting process, they will be enabled to have control over the finances of their sections.

Koontz, et al. (1984:571) define budgeting as *“the formulation of plans for a given future period in numerical terms. By stating plans in terms of numbers and breaking them into components consistent with the organisational structure, budgets correlate planning and allow authority to be delegated without loss of control.”* The budget is thus the annual estimation of income and expenditure of an organisation.

Every organisation has a specific financial year and the estimation covers the financial year. Managers responsible for a section of the organisation should provide direct input during the process of budgeting for their section. However, they should also be equipped with knowledge on the total budget to understand where their section fits into the total budget of the organisation. This will enable managers to assume responsibility for national funding policies and to manage their section's finances better.

5.2 Budget format

Financial budgets can be in the format of:

- Income and expenditure indicating individual items of income and of expense.
- Time, space, material and product such as machine hours.
- Capital expenditure such as equipment or buildings.
- Cash refers to the forecast of cash receipts and cash payments.
- Balance sheet that covers the forecast status of assets.
- Expenditure sheet indicating individual items of expense.

The budget in the format of an expenditure sheet is the budget applicable to managers in the social services organisations. This budget covers the expenditures needed to implement the programs and achieve the planned objectives of the organisation. The advantage of this budget format is that the budget is compiled according to the different sections and that it is possible for each section to manage their own budget.

5.3 Dangers in budgeting

There are certain dangers that can be encountered in budgeting:

- Over-budgeting which could mean an inflated estimation of income and expenditure.
- Budgetary goals can be made more important than the goals and objectives of the organisation.
- The budget can be hiding inefficiencies unless budgeting is accomplished by constant re-examination of standards and transformation factors and the planning then be translated into numerical terms.
- Inflexibility of the budget - if events prove that a larger amount should be spent for a kind of material, the budget must be flexible to accommodate the need.

5.4 Budgeting process

Budgeting is done according to a specific process. Ivancevich, et al. (1989:503-504) divide the budgeting process into three stages:

Stage 1: Pre-control of financial resources

A primary means for pre-controlling financial resources are the various plans prepared during the planning phase. These plans are supported by budgets allocating funds to each major expense category and organisational unit. A primary responsibility of accounting personnel is to develop the procedures and processes that enable management to keep track of how financial resources are allocated and who is accountable for expending and safeguarding them.

Stage 2: Concurrent control of financial resources

Concurrent control is implemented primarily through internal control with the following characteristics:

- No one person should have complete control over all phases of an important transaction. E.g. the same individual should not be responsible for preparing purchase orders and for making out the cheques in payment for those purchases.
- The flow of work from employee to employee should not be duplicative - the work of the second employee should provide a check on the work of the first.
- Employees who handle assets should not also be responsible for the record keeping of those assets. This provision is implemented when employees who receive and store materials do not also verify the receipt of those materials.
- Definitions of job responsibilities must be clearly established, so that accountability can be fixed for each aspect of a financial transaction. In other words, the organising function of management must be the primary source for this important aspect of internal control.

Stage 3: Post control of financial resources

Periodically, the manager receives a set of financial statements, which usually includes a balance sheet, an income statement and a sources-and-uses-of-funds statement. These statements summarise and classify the effects of transactions in terms of assets, liabilities, equity, incomes

and expenses - the major components of the organisation's financial structure. A detailed analysis of the information contained in the financial statements enables management to determine the adequacy of the organisation's income power and its ability to meet current and long term obligations.

5.5 Conclusion

It is important for the middle manager to be involved in all three stages of the budgeting process. It provides him with knowledge in terms of all activities within the organisation and ensures that his section keeps within the budget. Involvement in the budgeting process gives the manager the "big picture" of the financial state of the organisation with a clear indication of where his section fits in the picture. Knowledge of the budget provides the manager with control over the management of the finances of his section. Being able to participate in budgeting for his section motivates the manager to accept responsibility for the finances of his section and to ensure that they keep within the budget.

6. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

6.1 Introduction

The Employee Assistance Program grew out of a quasi-volunteer, alcoholism intervention effort. The primary purpose of these "industrial alcoholism programs" was to offer alcoholic employees an opportunity to get sober and to retain their positions in the organisation. According to Walsh (1991:113), McCaffery (1992:104) and Harris & DeSimone (1994:292-293), the EAP can be defined as a job-based program operating within a work organisation with the purpose of identifying troubled employees, motivating them to resolve their troubles and providing access to counselling or treatment for those employees who need these services. It is also designed to help employees suffering from physical, mental or emotional problems that adversely affect their work performance and to provide assistance in reducing or resolving these problems.

Walsh (1991:114) indicates that in certain instances, EAP engages in longer term counselling with clients and becomes involved in a variety of client concerns other than drug and alcohol-related problems. This is especially true in light of rising costs associated with employee health care. The EAP is increasingly placed in a position to address such employee concerns as marital and family related problems, employee feelings of incompetence or obsolescence, relocation difficulties, workplace burnout, co-dependency issues, stress and anxiety difficulties, retraining requirements.

As EAP is an organisational sponsored assistance program, employees are not charged for using the service although there may be limitations on the number of visits related to a specific matter. Employees are assured that all contacts and information will be treated as completely confidential. This is essential to ensure program success. If employees do not trust the program they will not use it.

Employers confronting employees with serious job problems will insist that individual employees seek assistance through the company sponsored EAP or an alternative source without direct subsidisation. The superior to the manager must be able to identify when a manager has to be referred for intensive and specific counselling and the manager has this responsibility toward his subordinates. The Employee Assistance Program is a support system that could be utilised for this counselling.

6.2 Contents of an EAP

According to Harris & DeSimone (1994:290-291 and 297-299) the typical Employee Assistance Program consists of:

- A policy and procedure statement that makes clear the responsibilities of both organisation and employee concerning health and personal problems influencing performance.
- Employee education campaign on the services of EAP, which may include letters, poster campaigns or extensive training programs.
- A supervisory training program that teaches problem recognition and performance documentation to managers. Training includes providing information about the nature, prevalence, likely causes and consequences of the problem and perhaps ways the problem can be avoided.
- Clinical services include the actual interventions to solve problems and may be provided by professional in-house staff or community agencies.
- Follow-up monitoring is done to ensure the employee is making use of the treatment and to obtain information on progress made and to ensure real problem resolution has occurred.

6.3 EAP as a change agent

Walsh (1991:116-117) identified the following characteristics supporting EAP as being a change agent for organisations:

- Employees' personal problems are based on job performance. The context within which EAP works with a client centres on this construct.
- EAP has a responsibility to advise supervisors, managers and union representatives of services provided by the EAP, as well as provide guidance and expertise regarding constructive confrontation.
- The EAP attempts to facilitate positive growth within individuals. This will frequently result from direct counselling functions performed by EAPs. It may also imply helping to identify a drinking problem, assisting in the resolution of employee/supervisor conflict, or any number of other issues.
- The EAP therapist is usually not a psychologist. It is usually not his role to conduct psychotherapy or to devise a complex program of behaviour modification. There are, however, certain strategies that the therapist can employ in the EAP to be more effective in the more

limited helping relationships. The effective therapist, when working with clients, should manifest empathy, active listening and positive attitudes.

A primary responsibility of the EAP therapist is to provide linkage with community resources when necessary. This has always been an important obligation for the EAP and with the numerous social service organisations now available in most communities, this has never been a more complicated task. It is helpful, but not necessary, for the EAP therapist to have knowledge of each of these organisations in an attempt to reduce the uncertainty that may arise during a time of emergency. The EAP therapist is often in an excellent position to refer clients to appropriate services or organisations. However, the EAP therapist should not refer clients to outside resources without sufficient cause. Accurate assessment and appropriate referral is critical for the effective EAP (Walsh, 1991:117-118).

6.4 Conclusion

Employee Assistance Programs can play a vital role in any organisation. Unfortunately this type of counselling is only available to employees employed by organisations that are part of the EAP system. To be able to receive counselling for assistance in the resolution of conflict with subordinates and superiors provides support to any manager.

7. SUPERVISORS' PEER SUPPORT GROUP

7.1 Introduction

Walsh (1990:87) emphasises that for training to be effective, peer resources are essential for supervisors and may need to be formally organised. He indicates that supervisors experienced the lack of a peer group as a major frustration as they needed to discuss the pressures they faced with their peers. However, researcher is of the opinion that a peer group providing support is not only essential during training but is necessary at all times for discussions of pressures that are faced by supervisors or managers.

Within a peer group situation supervisors and managers have opportunities to monitor their management practice on a regular basis for the purpose of improving specific management skills. According to Remley, Benschhoff & Mowbray (1987:59), the mutual support and confirmation of the importance of their work received within the peer group also help managers who experience job related stress to cope more effectively.

Borders (1991:248) identifies a peer group as a peer supervision group. Within the peer supervision group supervisors and managers are provided with opportunities for continued professional growth. In many organisations such groups may be the only available line of feedback on their management performance. As in other supervision experiences, the peer support group members identify learning goals during the initial meetings and the members contribute to

establishing a supportive atmosphere that is conducive to open and honest interactions. During subsequent meetings, managers take turns presenting videotapes of supervision sessions for peer review.

Within the structured peer group supervision situation peers observe specific skills or supervisory techniques, focus on the nonverbal behaviour of the person supervised or the supervisor, assume the role of the supervised person or client being discussed or take different theoretical perspectives of the session. It is stressed that one important goal of the structured peer group approach is to teach managers methods they can adapt for self-monitoring or self-supervision.

It should be noted that peer group meetings are not necessarily helpful or productive. Peers may be overly supportive and inclined to giving advice and the group may experience difficulty with staying on task. There should be some procedures followed as well as responsibilities divided between members of a peer group to ensure productivity within the group. The members should experience a feeling of commitment for the peer group to function successfully as a support group.

To identify how and where a supervisors' peer support group can fit into an organisation, the nature of committees and groups functioning within organisations is to be established. This will contribute to identifying other factors that can influence the effective functioning of a supervisors' peer support group.

7.2 Nature of committees

Haimann (1994:198) describes a committee as *"a formal group of people with defined purposes and reporting relationships within the organisation to whom certain matters have been committed. They meet for the purpose of discussing those matters that have been assigned to them."* This description gives a clear indication of what the purpose of a committee is within an organisation.

The method of discussions during committee meetings can be different. A committee passes information on or discusses certain aspects. A committee can thus have an informational meeting where the chairperson does most of the talking presenting certain information and facts. Committee members have the chance to ask questions and discuss the implications of the announcement. During a discussion meeting the chairperson encourages more participation from committee members to share reliable ideas and opinions and to give recommendations.

Some committees undertake managerial functions, others make decisions, while others merely discuss problems without having authority to make decisions. Some committees have authority to make recommendations to a manager, while others purely provide information without making recommendations or decisions. According to Koontz, et al. (1984:334) and Haimann (1994:200) committees are formal if established as part of the organisational structure, with specifically

delegated duties and authority. Committees organised without specific delegation of authority and by a person needing group thinking or group decision on a particular problem are informal. Committees can be temporary e.g. established for the sole purpose of studying the advisability of starting a new section within a specific department of the organisation and be disbanded immediately upon completion of its task. Committees can be relatively permanent e.g. to help coordinate services between the government and the private sector.

7.3 Benefits of committees

Committees are frequently used in organisations, which prove that there are specific benefits in utilising committees. The benefits of committees as identified by Koontz, et al. (1984:337-340) and Haimann (1994:200-201) are the following:

- Groups of individuals exchanging opinions and experiences often produce a better answer than any one person thinking through the same problem on his own. The advantage of group deliberation and judgment is stressed, as results obtained by group judgment are superior to those obtained by individual judgment.
- Committees are useful for coordinating activities among various organisational units, coordinating planning and operating programs.
- Continuity in the organisation is ensured as committees seldom replace all their members at the same time.
- Information can be transmitted and shared effectively through a committee. All group members affected by a mutual problem or project can learn of it simultaneously and decisions and instructions can be received uniformly with opportunities of clarification.
- Splintered authority can be consolidated through a committee. A special purpose committee can be established to study a problem and to use the combined authority of its members to make a decision.
- The committee provides a good environment for junior managers and executives to learn how decisions are made, to understand the philosophy of the organisation and to experience how it functions.

7.4 Disadvantages of committees

Unfortunately, committees also have specific disadvantages for the committee members as well as the organisation. These disadvantages of committees are the following (Koontz, et al., 1984:340-341 and Haimann, 1994:201-202):

- Committees require a high cost in terms of time and money. Meetings can be time consuming taking the members away from their work and responsibilities.
- The time required for thorough deliberation and the difficulty of reaching agreement often result in adjournment without decisions taken.

- There can be a tendency to be self-destructive when one person in the group emerges as the leader, other become yes-sayers.
- Individual committee members do not feel personally responsible for any action within the group. Responsibility for group action is thus not accepted individually.
- Committees can be formed to delay decisions and action. Managers sometimes appoint committees when they want avoidance of action and members are carefully selected with delay in mind.

7.5 Nature of groups or teams

A group can be described as two or more people acting interdependently by common agreement toward the achievement of common goals. The characteristics of groups or teams that differentiate them from committees are identified (Koontz, et al., 1984:350; Paradise, 1991:587 and Tyson & York, 1996:14):

- Group members share one or more common goals and they join voluntary.
- The agreement between and the interdependent efforts among the group members contribute to achieving the common purpose of the group.
- Members of the group have to reach a degree of cohesive understanding in order to perform effectively and fulfil their purpose.
- They require interaction and communication among themselves.
- Members within a group accept specific roles.
- In order to maintain collaboration and to keep the group moving towards its goal a coordinating leadership function is necessary.
- Groups are usually a part of a larger group.
- Groups interact with other groups.
- Groups develop norms that identify expected behaviour of group members. If members deviate from the norms, pressure is exercised to make them obey.
- Skills, knowledge and ability required to get the task done are held collectively by the group members.

7.6 Benefits of groups

Groups also have certain advantages or benefits for the group members as well as the organisation. The benefits are as follows:

- Groups are powerful mechanisms in changing behaviour, attitudes and values and in disciplining members.
- The group has clear direction. The members understand and mutually agree with the goals of the group and are contracted by the task.

- Groups can be used for decision making, negotiating and bargaining. Groups are thus a means of getting a task accomplished by interacting, communicating and cooperating.
- The structure of the group influences communication patterns. Transparency and mutual trust characterise these communication patterns.
- Effective group interaction results in motivated, committed and supportive members.
- A group provides a sense of satisfaction to individual members as they experience friendship and companionship within the group. Their need for belonging is fulfilled.
- The group acts as a source of security, support and collective power. It provides balance and protection to group members.
- The members experience themselves as being within a supportive group environment and a supportive organisational environment.
- The group provides achieved status to individual members because it enables them to belong to a particular little organisation that is exclusive.
- Within the group information is secured as uncertainties created through the grapevine are decreased.
- The group provides opportunities for promoting self-esteem through recognition from and acceptance by peers.

When comparing the nature and benefits of committees with that of groups, it is evident that the supervisors' peer support group is not a committee. Supervisors partake in a peer support group voluntary and due to their need for support. Committees are established groups prescribed by management with specific objectives. A peer support group provides supervisors with the opportunity to make their own decisions in conjunction with their own needs.

7.7 Factors within groups that may become dysfunctional

Even though groups have many advantages, there are factors within groups that may become dysfunctional and result in the dissolution of the group. Paradise (1991:589) identify four factors that can have this result:

- Communication between members and interpersonal relationships among members can become dysfunctional. Especially issues involving power, influence, cohesion and inclusion can lead to misunderstanding and conflict.
- A lack of clarity regarding the goals, objectives, mission or vision of the group can result in them not achieving any goals.
- A disagreement with roles and responsibilities of members can create misunderstanding and conflict.
- The ineffective use of resources can result in the group not functioning on its best level.

7.8 Formal and informal groups

To understand the functioning of groups within organisations, a distinction is made between formal groups and informal groups. The differences as indicated by Miner & Luchsinger (1985:161), Ivancevich, et al. (1989:408-410) and Haimann (1994:215) are accepted:

- Within formal groups the boundaries are defined by existing organisational charts, position descriptions and other indicators of organisational structure. Each member of the group is certain of what his position and responsibility is within the group.
- Informal groups do not include representatives of management and they are formed for various reasons. An informal group is a small group, consisting of a few people who are physically near to each other and who have regular contact. Employees have certain needs such as emotional support they want to have satisfied. The formal organisation cannot satisfy these needs and informal groups are formed in order to have these needs satisfied. The supervisors' peer support group is an informal group.

7.9 Types of groups

Five types of groups are identified and are described by Miner & Luchsinger (1985:162) and Siegel (1995:84-85) in the following manner:

- Apathetic group - This type of group has few grievances and uses few pressure tactics. It lacks clear leadership and has internal disharmony and conflict. It is an inactive and passive type of group. The members are from different units in the organisation with no concentration of workers doing identical tasks.
- Erratic group - This group is engaged in specific operations with members performing similar work. The group behaviour is unstable and demonstrative and members are easily excited. The group uses poorly controlled pressure tactics, exhibit quick changes to ensure good relations with management. The leadership of the group is highly centralised. The members of the group are active in union activities.
- Strategic group - This type of group performs individual operations and the jobs of the members are more desirable and more skilled. They show self-interest and exercise continuous pressure on management. Their grievance activities are well planned and consistent. The group is internally alike and the members participate in the union on a sustained basis. The group has relatively good production records.
- Conservative group - This group performs individual operations in different areas, but maintains pressure for the achievement of specific objectives. They show average internal unity and self-assurance, but vary from time to time in their degree of union and grievance activities. This group is stable.
- Employee support groups - These groups are divided into three categories:

- Groups that are formed to meet developmental needs. These groups are an ongoing part of the work process and are usually led by a supervisor or manager from within the organisation. It includes self-managing teams and interdisciplinary teams.
- Groups that are formed in response to work related needs. These groups are usually led by outside consultants that support the work process but are not an ongoing part of the work process itself. It is orientated towards addressing individual worker weaknesses and the need for skill and support mechanisms. It includes team building and training groups.
- Treatment groups. The central point of a problem is defined explicitly as being within an individual employee. These groups include short term crises treatment groups and support groups related to specific individual problems.

The supervisors' peer support group can be described as a strategic group as well as an employee support group formed in response to work related needs. Supervisors participate in the peer support group with intended self-interest and due to their need for skill development and support with their work related problems. However, this employee support group is led by the participants themselves on a rotating basis and not by outside consultants.

7.10 Factors that have an influence on the functioning of a group

From the literature (Ivancevich, et al., 1989:416-428; Harris & DeSimone, 1994:47-48 and Tyson & York, 1996:16-18) it was evident that certain factors within groups have an important influence on the successful functioning of the group. The following factors were identified:

- **Group leader:** The most important role in a group is that of the group leader. The effective performance of a group is determined by the skill of the leader in coordinating the efforts of the individual members, but also by the degree to which the style of leadership is appropriate to the task and the nature of the group.
- **Group status:** Status is the rank, respect or social position an individual has in a group.
- **Group norms and acting in agreement with the norms:** Group norms and informal rules for appropriate behaviour serve as guidelines for appropriate behaviour in the group. Norms provide a clear message on desired behaviour and represent an implicit or explicit agreement among the group members on their behaviour. The more a member acts in agreement with norms, the more he accepts the group's standards of behaviour.
- **Group cohesiveness:** Cohesiveness refers to the extent that group members are attracted to each other and to the group values. It is the pressure on the individual member to remain active in the group and to resist leaving it. There are certain conditions that can enhance or reduce group cohesiveness:

- Size of the work group: If a group is too large and members do not know one another, the group will not be cohesive.
 - Dependence of the members on the group: A group able to satisfy a meaningful portion of an individual's needs will be attractive to that individual. Group processes such as interaction with co-workers and overall friendship make the group a key factor in the individual's life.
 - Achievement of goals: Groups that have successfully achieved goals are likely to be more cohesive. The members tend to be more attracted toward one another because they have worked together in the past and their efforts have resulted in achieving goals.
 - Status of the group: The higher a group ranks in the intergroup status hierarchy, the greater its cohesiveness.
 - Management demands and pressure: The members of groups tend to stand together when they are pressured by superiors to conform to some organisational norm.
 - Task: The nature of the work and the way it is arranged can have an influence on either stimulating or hindering group cohesiveness.
- Intergroup conflict: Conflict occurs when one group member perceives that another group member has prevented or is about to delay the accomplishment of a goal. Reasons for conflict are:
 - Limited resources.
 - Communication problems.
 - Different interests and goals.
 - Different perceptions and attitudes.
 - Lack of clarity.
 - Managing conflict indirectly.
 - Managing conflict directly.
- Environment: Groups operate mainly within the setting of the organisation. The meaningfulness of the group's environment is determined by its relationship with the organisation as well as with the other groups existing in the organisation.
- Group dynamics: The dynamics within the group influence the behaviour of members when they interact in the group. Dynamics such as:
 - 'group think' occurs when group members are primarily concerned with general agreement amongst each other, with the result that they make poor decisions by failing to realistically assess alternatives and
 - social loafing which refers to the tendency for group members to reduce their participation as group size increases.

7.11 Process of group development

Any group passes through a process of development before it performs well and is able to achieve predetermined goals and objectives. To be successful and effective in providing in the needs of the group members, the group must progress towards cohesive collaboration. Kruger, Cherniss, Maher & Leichtman (1988:610), Ivancevich, et al. (1989:413) and Tyson & York (1996:15) identified different stages in the group development process. The following stages in the progressive process are representative of those identified:

Stage 1: Forming/Mutual acceptance

This is the initial stage, when members are uncertain about the task, about each other and the group leadership. Group members are concerned with becoming socially comfortable with each other. Extremes of view are kept under control during this stage of forming. Members test each other and draw up rules of conduct. In a leaderless group, leaders may be chosen. The leaders can be changed in later stages.

Stage 2: Storming/Decision making

The members become acquainted with each other and are prepared to put forward their views. This can lead to conflict between individuals, leaders or sub-groups that may have been formed. Problem solving and decision making are undertaken and issues related to power are resolved. Members trust each other's viewpoints and beliefs; they develop strategies to make the job easier and to help one another perform more effectively.

Stage 3: Norming/Motivation

Conflicts begin to be controlled as the members realise the need to cooperate to perform the task. The group produces and sets norms for appropriate group behaviour.

Stage 4: Performing/Control

The group has developed the required degree of understanding to work as a team and to concentrate on the problems it has to overcome to achieve its goal. The group has organised itself successfully and its members are contributing according to their abilities and interests. The group has entered its most productive stage with regard to attending to work related tasks. The group exercises sanctions when control is needed to bring members into line with the group's norms.

Stage 5: Adjourning

The group experiences a decrease in performance during the last stage of their existence. The goals and objectives of the group have been achieved and it is counter productive to continue with the group.

7.12 Group maintenance processes

Groups utilise certain maintenance processes to ensure that equilibrium is maintained and the groups continue effectively. These maintenance processes are activities such as openness of communication, mutual trust, mutual support, tolerance of differences and tension relief that help to keep the group united. According to Paradise (1991:589), the group must have a commitment to work on team performance; a common language or frame of reference for discussing team performance issues; valid data on the present level of team performance; and time to work on team performance issues. This will contribute to the success of the maintenance processes. From time to time, groups experience difficulty to continue and to focus on the task at hand. During this period team building will be effective as a maintenance process. The purposes of team building are the following:

- To clarify the mission, vision, goals and priorities of the group.
- To facilitate the effective distribution of work among group members.
- To analyse and improve interpersonal relationships among group members.
- To analyse and improve the group process.

7.13 Stages within the team building process

To ensure the purposes of the team building process are achieved, the team building should be well planned and specific. The signs presenting themselves in the group, such as ineffective group meetings, lack of initiative, apathy and general lack of interest, will influence the team building process. Siegel (1995:89-97) suggest four methods for team building to ensure positive results: set goals or priorities; analyse the way work is performed according to the roles and responsibilities of the group members; examine relationships among group members; and examine the way the group works on its processes.

The four stages within the team building process identified by Paradise (1991:590) are connected with the above indicated methods. The stages ensure that team building is performed according to a specific procedure and that the achievement of results will be measurable. The stages are as follows:

- **Information gathering:** Management has questions about the reasons why team building is requested, the issues of concern of the group and how the group members view the issues. The brief history of the group, the stated goals and objectives of the group are important information.
- **Team building design:** A team building process is designed and based upon the nature of the group and the issues to be addressed.
- **Intervention:** Management intervenes by initiating the team building process. The intervention consists of introducing the team building effort to the group, identifying the key issues identified during the information gathering phase, setting objectives for the team building and implementing the team building design.

- Ending: The team building itself may have no formal ending to the extent that the group accepts and continues to use the new process skills and insights gained through implementation of the team building design.

7.14 Open systems model of support groups

To ensure a supervisors' peer support group is established within an organisation, awareness of the open systems model of support groups as suggested by Galinsky & Schopler (1995:5-6) is recommended. There is a direct link between this open systems model and the important factors that have an influence on the successful functioning of a group.

- Environmental conditions: Environmental resources and pressures affect the initial formation of support groups and their development over time. Resources are the pools of potential members, the meeting place and collaborative arrangements.
- Characteristics of participants: Although the importance of the specific characteristics varies with the purpose of the group, the way the group develops and what it will accomplish are shaped by the size of the group, the specific composition and the intervention technology. The size and composition vary widely from groups with constantly changing members and leaders to groups with a stable, predetermined membership and leadership.
- Group conditions: Successful support groups must organise their work to maintain common goals and develop a structure that is flexible enough to adapt to changing conditions over time. Typical goals include emotional release, validation of concerns, reduction of social isolation, information, improved coping, decreased stress, problem solving, and at times, advocacy. Structure can be described in terms of roles and limitations, norms and culture, group operating procedures and the meeting format.

7.15 Conclusion

Considering all the information on committees and groups, the supervisors' peer support group is not identified as a committee. However, the nature of groups is applicable to what is referred to as the supervisors' peer support group, such group does satisfy the conditions and characteristics of groups. Team building can counterbalance the situations resulting in groups becoming dysfunctional. The supervisors' peer support group can, to an inferior extent, be identified as a strategic group, but its main aim is to be a support group formed in response to work related needs and for meeting developmental needs. All the factors identified as being influential on the effectiveness of the group are present in a supervisors' peer support group. The stages in the development of groups should be followed to establish an effective supervisors' support group.

8. CAREER PLANNING

8.1 Introduction

“Social work morale seems to be low. Primarily the causes presented are the unstable social environment, lack of career paths and low salaries. Career advancement in social work is bottlenecked - advancement is through management only instead of by specialisation as well. It is clear that management posts in social work are very limited” (Smit, 1994:10).

The above statement gives an indication of the attitude and the discouraged feelings experienced within the social work profession. Career planning is an unknown factor within the profession resulting in many social workers leaving the profession, seeking for greener pastures. If career planning was done, social workers will experience the feeling of support and encouragement resulting in them being motivated to stay within the profession of social work.

By providing individual employees with information and skills helpful to the development of their careers, organisations assist both employees and themselves. Relationships are likely to be improved due to increased opportunities for linking skills and interest with organisational and individual employee needs. Matteson & Ivancevich (1987:131) highlight that *“by providing career planning activities the organisation is demonstrating its interest in and commitment to its human resources”*.

Career planning involves the joint consideration of four elements: the individual, the work, the organisation and expected future developments. An individual employee's career aspirations are matched with the opportunities available in the organisation. Employees are not motivated by pay when they have achieved what they interpret as a good basic standard. Then they are motivated by promotion possibilities offering developmental opportunities, more opportunities to experience the job's intrinsic satisfaction as well as more money. Career planning and career paths must fit the task requirements and the individual employee's expectations.

Harris & DeSimone (1994:327) describe career planning as *“an activity performed by the individual to understand and attempt to control his work life”*. They see career planning as a deliberate process of:

- becoming aware of self, opportunities, constraints, choices and consequences;
- identifying career related goals; and
- programming work, education and related development experiences to provide the direction, timing and sequence of steps to attain a specific career goal.

Central to career planning within an organisation is the managing of the managerial career. Organisations have to retain a core of flexible managers able to learn new skills and to adjust to continually changing jobs, yet content to remain with the organisation without it necessarily being

able to deliver a conventional promotional ladder. Conventional career ladder systems have traditionally been concerned with recruitment and selection, training and development, succession planning, promotions and exiting, including retirements, retrenchments and dismissals. Organisations have to provide career counselling and development programs to help their managers with career choices and encourage them toward career decisions that benefit the organisation.

There is often more than one route to senior positions and an individual employee's career path may involve a combination of horizontal and vertical moves. Lateral cross-functional moves in particular may result in multi-skilled managers with a broad view of the organisation. Such movement only works without resistance and stress if the managers concerned understand and are committed to the idea that not all moves need to be vertical to be successful.

The analysis of career structures in an organisation is important to ensure effective and successful career planning. Snape, et al. (1994:104) indicate that the box-flow model is a simple but powerful way to analyse career structures in an organisation. All groups of employees that are linked by possible career moves are regarded as part of a personnel system. The process of drawing such a chart can have beneficial effects. Managers' perceptions of career paths and processes can be verified against the data held by the organisation on actual recruitment, promotions and departures. This can assist in establishing a more realistic view of possible career paths.

The risk in career planning and development is that there may be a tendency to concentrate on younger employees and high-fliers, to the exclusion of both older managers and solid performers. When attention is focused on those with great potential, it is easy for organisations to overlook the competent manager who would prefer new challenges irrespective of promotion. Ignored, such employees are no longer given challenging assignments and can become demoralised. It could be predicted that the demoralised employees and managers would become stagnated. Such managers need recognition and challenge within a steadfast career, offering expansion rather than a ladder to climb. Snape, et al. (1994:117) make the suggestion that a flatter matrix-style organisation with only a few levels between junior and senior employees is more conducive for career growth. In such an organisation career growth can be gained from expansion of the work rather than from promotion.

8.2 Concepts applicable to career planning

Important concepts applicable to career planning in an organisation are identified and discussed to understand the complexity of career planning. Awareness of these concepts is essential for successful career planning and to avoid stating that career planning is done but that it is not effective. It is noticeable that most of the concepts surpass each other but can be clearly distinguished.

8.2.1 Career

The concept of career is work related, but it must be understood that a person's non-work life and roles also play a significant part in it. Different authors defined the career concept. Four of these definitions are quoted below and the definition of Harris & DeSimone (1994:325) is accepted as the most comprehensive and clear definition of the career concept.

Burack & Mathys (1988:40) describe a career as:

- Purposeful work patterns that occur over time.
- Improving the human experience e.g. through job related satisfaction.
- The framework of a particular job, job sequences within an occupation or movements between occupations.
- Patterns of successful individual development over time e.g. in terms of skills and knowledge, as they apply to various professional groups.

"The career is the individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours associated with work-related experiences and activities over the span of the person's life" (Ivancevich, et al., 1989:672). This definition emphasises that career does not imply success or failure, except in the judgment of the individual. It also emphasises that a career consists of both attitudes and behaviours and it is an ongoing sequence of work related activities.

"Career is best described as the pattern of work related experiences that span the course of one's life. Includes objective events such as jobs and subjective views of work, such as the person's attitudes, values and expectations. Both a person's work related activities and his reactions to those activities are part of the career. Careers develop over time, all persons have careers, regardless of profession, level of advancement or stability of work pattern" (Harris & DeSimone, 1994:325).

Snape, et al. (1994:96) describe a career as *"a sequence of work activities and positions and associated attitudes and reactions experienced over an individual's life."*

Both the individual and the organisation have an influence on the individual employee's work life. The employee is driven by his skills, knowledge, abilities, attitudes, values and life situation. Organisations provide the jobs and information about jobs as well as the opportunities and constraints within which one may pursue other jobs in the future. These actions refer to the career planning responsibility of the organisation towards the individual employee.

8.2.2 Career management

Career management is an ongoing process of preparing, implementing and monitoring career plans undertaken by the individual employee alone or in conjunction with the organisation's career

systems. Career management is a management activity performed by all managers in an organisation. The organisational responsibility in career management requires forecasts and analysis of manpower planning. This assists in establishing the overall, feasible plan for future staffing needs in terms of both numbers and composition.

Individual employees also have a responsibility in their career planning. The individual cannot be separated from active participation in his own career planning. It is expected of organisations to set up systems, programs and policies supporting individual career activities, but individuals should assume a more active personal role if they wish to make progress beyond their present position in the organisation. The Guidelines for manpower, training and development planning (1990:34-35) has identified a short, clear and direct career planning process to be followed by individual employees. This process can be successful if implemented consciously and consistent and if clear record is kept of each step in the process. The steps are as follows:

- Self-appraisal - for individual employees to know themselves.
- Identify opportunities - based on the self-appraisal, employees examine opportunities (internal and external) available.
- Prepare plans - based on self-appraisal and opportunities.
- Implementation of plans.

Individual employees are to be informed and involved in the career planning process implemented by the organisation. This can ensure that employee needs are addressed in career planning. Management must be aware of the fact that employees want equity in the promotion system with respect to career advancement opportunities. This is linked with their need for awareness and knowledge of career advancement opportunities. However, it should be considered that employee interest differ in terms of employees needing different quantities of information and having different degrees of interest in career advancement. Employees want their supervisors to play an active role in career development and to be provided with timely feedback.

Managers have an important role in career planning. They are the central figures in employee counselling and discussions regarding careers. A factor to consider is that the manager usually is the most knowledgeable regarding a particular individual. Harris & DeSimone (1994:340) suggests that managers play the following different roles in the management of subordinates' careers:

- Coach - one who listens, clarifies, probes and defines employee career concerns.
- Appraiser - one who gives feedback, clarifies performance standards and job responsibilities.
- Advisor - one who generates options, helps set goals, makes recommendations and gives advice.
- Referral agent - one who consults with the employee on action plans and links him with available organisational people and resources.

Distinctions are made between organisational career management and individual career planning activities for a clearer description of the differences in the focus of the activities. Burack & Mathys (1988:36) indicate the differences in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Distinctions between organisational career management and individual career planning activities

Organisational career management	Individual career planning
* Assessment of potential	* Life planning
* Appraisal of performance	* Occupational information
* Manpower-career planning connections	* Occupational / job counselling
* Career ladders	* Occupational choice
* Succession planning	* Organisational choice
* Personnel information system	* Job preferences
* Career information	* Self-direction
* Counselling service	* Self (guided) development
* Personnel system functioning	

Harkness & Mulinski (1988:343) stresses that supervisors, in their teaching function, have the responsibility to guide subordinates in planning their development as professionals. This guidance should include not only in-service training related to organisational needs but also ongoing continuing education consistent with the employee's long term career goals. The supervisory role may be expanded to include helping employees develop a career plan, which must include the reality that, for many employees, career advancement eventually will necessitate a move to a different organisation. Managers have to be open-minded about their career management responsibilities.

8.2.3 Career pathing

The processes of career planning and career pathing are connected. According to Ivancevich, et al. (1989:688) planning a career involves identifying the means for achieving desired ends, and, in the context of career plans, career paths are the means for achieving aspirations. Career planning is a way to pro-act rather than react to the problems associated with early and mid-career crises.

Career pathing is a series of developmental activities involving formal and informal education, training and job experiences assisting in transforming the individual employee's skills to meet present job responsibilities as well as those in the work situation in the future. *"Career pathing is a deliberate process that designs the individual training and development experiences and job assignments to meet future work responsibilities and assignments"* (Burack & Mathys, 1988:39). Career pathing refers to the patterned sequence of jobs within an organisation. Raelin (1984:143)

indicates that *“depending upon the attitudes and practices of management, career paths can run the gamut from a subjective feeling about a series of jobs to an objective description, from a prescribed lockstep pattern of the way to get ahead to a sequence of flexible position moves which can lead in many different directions.”*

The three approaches to career paths described by Raelin (1984:143-145) are important information for managers. It contributes to expand the vision of managers in terms of how they can best approach career planning and career pathing. The three approaches are:

- **Historical career paths:** This approach is informal and based on the past patterns of the career movements of employees presently in senior positions. These paths represent the past practices of senior people who have followed their own footsteps, so to speak. Although these paths may have worked well in the past, there is no assurance that they will be effective in the future.
- **Organisational career paths:** This approach is reflected in the business plans and organisational structure of the organisation. It is defined by management as meeting the present organisational needs for staffing the organisation.
- **Behavioural career paths:** These career paths are based upon the logical and possible series of positions that could be held, based upon an analysis of what people actually do in an organisation. To accept the behavioural approach to career paths, the following preparation has to be done:
 - The positions in the organisation must first be analysed according to their specific content. The focus is on what people do rather than on the qualifications or experience they bring to the position.
 - The similarities among the positions in the organisation should be considered. It is important that similarities are not only taken from work-content or technical skills but are also linked to functional skills.

Once the common characteristics among a wide variety of positions have been identified, it is easy to develop behavioural career paths or promotion lines. It is evident that these lines do not have to be strictly vertical, but in fact can take many different shapes. The end result of behavioural career pathing is a wide range of career opportunities for individual employees in the organisation.

Researcher supports the implementation of the behavioural approach to career pathing, as a wide variety of positions can become potentially available to employees. The listing of these positions is an essential activity in developing a personal career development plan. It displays opportunities for growth within the organisation beyond the present position.

Once the career opportunities for the professional employee are identified, using the behavioural approach, he still has to make strategic decisions regarding the specific and accepted means to move forward in his profession and to maintain loyalty towards his organisation. In some cases it is possible to do both.

8.2.4 Career development

8.2.4.1 Career development processes

Career development is described as an ongoing process within individual employees' careers. Their careers progress through a series of stages, each stage being characterised by a relatively unique set of issues, responsibilities and tasks. Two processes are involved in career development:

- Career planning referring to activities performed by an individual employee with the assistance of counsellors, peers and superiors, to assess his skills and abilities to establish a realistic career plan.
- Career management meaning taking the necessary steps to achieve that plan.

8.2.4.2 Activities that influence career development

An individual employee's input can determine his career development. In other words, he accepts responsibility for his career development and performs certain activities to ensure advancement for himself. Werther & Davis (1993:391-394) identified these activities:

- Effective and efficient job performance as career progress depends largely upon performance.
- Exposure in the sense of ensuring he becomes known by those who decide on promotions or transfers. Exposure can be obtained through performance, written reports, oral presentations, committee work and even the hours he works.
- Resignations. For an employee to further his career with another employer, he has to take risks and resign from his present employer. If resignations are done effectively, the result is promotion, pay increase and new learning experiences.
- Organisational loyalty. Employees can use their dedication and loyalty to the organisation as a career tactic.
- Using mentors and sponsors. A mentor is someone who offers informal career advice and if the mentor can nominate the employee for career development activities (training programs), the mentor becomes a sponsor. A sponsor is someone in the organisation that can create career development opportunities.
- Using growth opportunities e.g. enrolling in a training program, obtaining an additional degree and seeking a new work assignment can contribute to employee growth.

8.2.4.3 Career development programs

The organisation has a responsibility towards career development of employees. The organisation contributes toward individual career development by implementing career development programs such as:

- Job rotation.
- In-house human resource development programs.
- External seminars / workshops.
- Tuition reimbursement / educational assistance.
- Supervisor training in career counselling.
- Dual-career programs.
- Mentoring programs.
- Career information systems.
- Human resource planning and forecasting.
- Career counselling.
- Career sequencing and monitoring.
- Skills assessment and training.
- Career development for disadvantaged groups.
- Career development for fast-track employees.
- Career development workshops for supervisors.

8.2.4.4 Effective planning of the career development program

Career development must be individually planned for each employee. Watling (1995:139) provides a list of rules to contribute to the effective planning of career development programs:

- Discuss career aspirations early with employees.
- Know the qualifications, both academic and personal needed to achieve the furthest target.
- Know the time frame for achieving what is wanted.
- Do not be afraid to divert ambitions.
- Do spell out the cost in terms of study and improvement.
- Do not make promises that cannot be kept.
- Be prepared to lose good employees who are impatient to achieve.
- Clearly set out a route for each employee to enable him to achieve his ambitions.
- Be prepared to change the plan if redirection is necessary.
- Quarterly and annual appraisals should be part of an overall career development plan and the appraised employees should be able to recognise that they are on route to achieving a long term goal.

8.2.4.5 Benefits of discussing career development during appraisal interview

Both the organisation and the individual employee will benefit if career development issues are discussed during appraisal interviews. Such discussions can have a positive impact on the motivation of the employee as well as his vision of the future within the organisation. Anderson (1993:129-130) identifies a few benefits related to discussing career development issues during appraisal interviews:

- The line manager as the appraiser is seen as taking an active interest in the careers of employees and is not focusing only on short term performance improvement. Employees are motivated and encouraged if their line managers show interest in their careers.
- Discussions of career development issues remind line managers that they have certain responsibilities in enhancing the career development of their subordinates.
- Information and advice about career paths provide a medium and long term context for employees in which to operate and shall assist in motivating them by clarifying career goals they can seek to attain.
- Because of the speed of change in organisations and in the environments in which they operate, all employees obtain benefits from a periodic update about their career opportunities.

8.2.5 Succession planning

Organisations have to plan for succession. There will always be a constant flow of managers out of the organisation caused by retirements, unexpected deaths and employees leaving to join other organisations. Other vacancies may occur when new management positions are created due of changes in policy and objectives or by increased activities. Succession planning is concerned with particular individuals and positions. According to Snape, et al. (1994:108), a traditional approach is to examine the organisational chart and to identify possible successors for particular positions and groups of positions from within the organisation. Some maintain that the ideal is to identify three or four suitable replacements for each position. Such an approach allows for the clear identification of succession problems and may provide notice of a need to develop staff or to recruit externally.

A replacement chart may also be useful in tracing the possible effects down the hierarchy of a particular vacancy. Such an approach may be less useful in a dynamic organisation where positions and structures are changing rapidly. Even where suitable successors have been identified through succession planning, this does not necessarily mean that the short list is restricted to these individuals. Succession planning is not necessarily inconsistent with an open promotion policy. In a sense the major benefit is not when succession planning identifies a particular candidate for a specific position, but rather when it gives forewarning of a possible succession problem and allows corrective action to be taken.

8.2.6 Career anchor

Challenges early in a career are important in producing good leaders. Exposure to the right type of challenge assists the individual employee to establish his career anchor. The career anchor is the dominant career concern the employee will consider whenever a choice has to be made in terms of job choices or job movements. The employee will not necessarily always be performing work consistent with his career anchor, but once formed, it serves as a reference point for career decisions. In the middle phase of the employee's career, once the basic career anchor has been established, the priority is to achieve logical career advancement.

Job moves younger employees eager to explore their career interests may welcome every two years, but employees in management positions are in the middle phase of their careers and may not rate such frequent moves as necessary. The manager may now face greater demands from family and domestic life, so that a change in jobs every four or five years might be more appropriate. Similarly, training needs change from basic skills to more strategic business issues.

8.2.6.1 Career anchor components

Anderson (1993:134) identifies three components to the career anchor concept which researcher suggests as being important for understanding the meaning of a career anchor:

- Self-perceived skills and abilities - based on perceived successes and failures in different work situations.
- Self-perceived motives and needs - based on self-diagnosis resulting from experience in different work settings and on feedback from others.
- Self-perceived attitudes and values - based on encounters between the individual and the values and norms of employing organisations.

8.2.6.2 Main career anchors

The main career anchors as identified by Raelin (1984:82) and Snape, et al. (1994:115) can also contribute to a clearer understanding of the concept. The career anchors are the following:

- Technical/functional - employees with this career anchor prefer to remain in their chosen functional area and reject general management opportunities.
- Managerial competence - employees with this career anchor are strongly motivated to become managers and believe that they have the analytical, interpersonal and emotional competence to rise to this level.
- Creativity - those with this anchor are often successful entrepreneurs, fulfilling an inner need to create something that reflects them alone.
- Autonomy and independence - those who hold such a career anchor, do not have any liking for large organisations. They often have technical or functional expertise which, combined with their desire for autonomy, leads them to act as consultants or professionals.

- Security - long term job security is the prime concern of this group, who will passively accept the careers meted out to them by the organisation as long as stability is maintained.
- Service - this group is interested in using interpersonal skills to help others.
- Identity - these employees are interested in the status and prestige gained from belonging to certain organisations.
- Variety - employees in this group desire a maximum variety of job assignments and work projects especially for the challenge involved.

8.2.7 Career ladders and dual career ladders

In many organisations, if professionals are to progress in their careers, they must leave behind their technical qualities and skills and move into a managerial role. This implies that attention has to be given to the present career structure for managers and professionals. Lawler & Hearn (1997:200) suggest if professionals see the only route to promotion, both personal and hierarchical, as being through management positions, the professional career structure has to be considered in another light. Dual career ladders systems are to be considered, aiming at providing professionals with career opportunities, without them necessarily moving into totally managerial jobs. The implication is that career paths should be lengthened in areas of specialisation but carry the same rewards as the management positions.

Von Glinow (1988:142) states that *"The dual career ladder is a set of positions for professionals that is designed to be parallel to the managerial ladder, but with evaluation, control, authority and advancement criteria appropriate for the professional."* He also identifies the objectives for using such a dual ladder as:

- to provide advancement opportunities for professionals who are unable or unwilling to move up the management ladder;
- to provide compensation, recognition and prestige equivalent to that of successful managers;
- to provide professionals with greater independence; and
- to create a set of positions with administrative duties light enough to not interfere with professional contributions.

Anderson (1993:137) stresses that a sound career ladder should consist of several progressive steps, each showing a requirement for the ability, skills and experience to perform work of growing complexity, responsibility and importance. Career ladders should be published and all relevant staff should be given access to this information. Clear criteria should be laid down for each rank on a career ladder. This type of information provides an objective base for the discussion of an individual employee's career at an appraisal interview. A creative manager can make use of career ladders very effectively by working out career ladders for all job families and working out processes (including training) that help move employees over onto the bottom rank of a new career ladder.

However, Snape, et al. (1994:119) identified specific problems with dual career ladder systems that have to be considered:

- Those occupying senior technical posts may experience a lack of role definition due to the unclear relationship between the technical and management ladder.
- There is also a danger that such posts are seen simply as a second-class reward for long service and organisational loyalty, rather than for technical excellence.
- Promotion within the technical ladder may even be seen as a sign of managerial inadequacy and thus stigmatised as a convenient 'shelf' to place problem professionals.
- There is a lack of power and authority of posts in the technical ladder compared with their management equivalents.

8.3 Career effectiveness

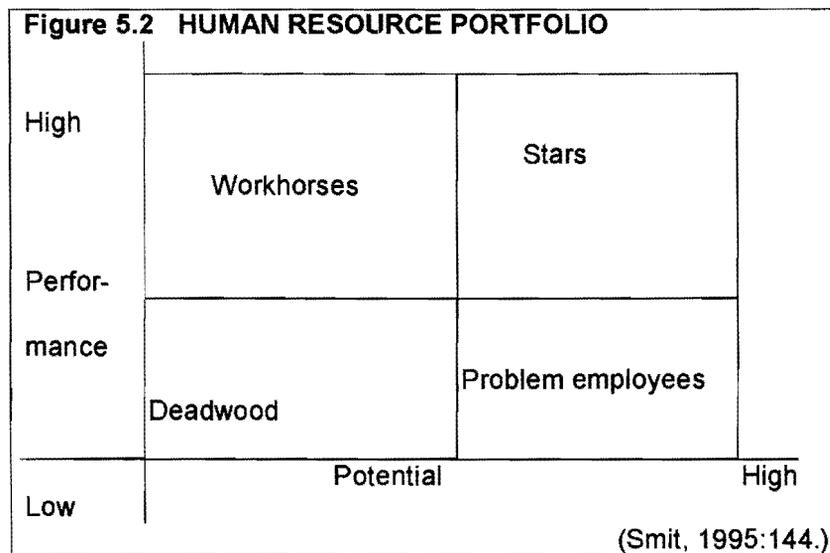
Consideration should be given to career effectiveness when career planning is done. An employee cannot expect to progress and to be promoted if his job performance is not effective and efficient. Ivancevich, et al. (1989:674-675) identify criteria to be used in the evaluation of career effectiveness and are as follows:

- **Career performance:** Salary and position are the usual indicators of career performance. Specifically, the faster an employee's salary increases and he advances up the hierarchy, the higher his level of career performance. As an employee is promoted, there is an increase in responsibility in terms of employees supervised and budget allocated. The rate of salary and position advancement reflects in most instances the extent to which the individual employee has contributed to the attainment of the organisation's objectives.
- **Career attitudes:** Refers to the way individual employees view and evaluate their careers. The more positive these perceptions and evaluations, the more effective are the careers. Positive attitudes have important implications for the organisation, as employees with positive attitudes are more likely to be committed to the organisation and to be involved in their jobs. It is evident that positive career attitudes are maintained to the extent that career demands and opportunities are consistent with individual employees' interests, values, needs and abilities.
- **Career adaptability:** Professions are seldom stagnant and dormant. Changes occur in the profession itself requiring new knowledge and skills. Employees unable to adapt to these changes and to adopt them in the practice of their careers run the risk of early obsolescence. Organisations benefit through the adaptability of their employees. Thus, career adaptability implies the application of the latest knowledge, skill and technology in the work of a career.
- **Career identity:** To use this as one of the criteria, employees are to answer the question: "What do I want to be and what do I have to do to become what I want to be?" Two important components would help with answering the question:

- The extent to which individual employees have clear and consistent awareness of their interests, values and expectations for the future.
- The extent to which individual employees view their lives as consistent through time, the extent to which they see themselves as extensions of their pasts.

8.4 Human resource portfolio

The human resource portfolio identified and discussed by Smit (1995:144-146) is useful in the practical implementation of the above mentioned criteria. According to Smit, employees can be “categorised” as workhorses, stars, and deadwood or problem employees. The career effectiveness of individual employees is interpreted as being related to their performance and potential. Figure 5.2 represents the human resource portfolio.



The different categories of employees are explained in the following manner:

- **Workhorses:** They are employees who have limited potential, who have reached high peak of performance. They require training or development to improve their present job performance or to prepare them for job changes. They should be trained to deal with stress, since these employees often find it difficult to deal with change, but have no choice.
- **Stars:** These are employees with high potential who are performing at the highest level of their potential. The best training method for them is to make use of mentors.
- **Problem employees:** They are employees who have great potential but are performing well below their capacity. It is important to first identify the cause of poor performance before an appropriate strategy can be implemented to improve performance. Managers can implement the following steps to correct poor performance:
 - Specify performance standards clearly in advance.
 - Remove obstacles to success.
 - Provide access to necessary training.
 - Ensure that the consequences are favourable if the employee has performed well.

- Provide feedback.
- Encourage self-control.
- Correct personal causes of poor performance.
- **Deadwood:** These are employees who have both low potential and low performance. The above steps can be implemented, but if unsuccessful, the employee must be encouraged to leave the organisation.

8.5 Career stages

Career stages are important and have to be considered in career planning. Just as a career anchor has an influence on which career moves will be acceptable to employees, can the career stage within which the employee finds himself at a specific time influence the career decisions that he makes. Different authors (Raelin, 1984:125-127; Raelin, 1986:96-100; Ivancevich, et al., 1989:675; Howard, 1991:454-461 and Snape, et al., 1994:113) have identified and discussed the different career stages.

Ivancevich, et al. (1989:675) gave the simplest version of the career stages. It includes four stages:

- pre-work stage - attending school;
- initial work stage - moving from job to job;
- stable work stage - maintaining one job; and
- retirement stage - leaving active employment.

For the purposes of career planning, this version is not complete. It does not provide a clear indication according to which it is possible to identify where an individual employee is placed. It covers the life span of an individual and not only his career life. The following discussion of four career stages is more comprehensive and useful for the purposes of career planning.

Stage 1: Exploration

This stage begins as soon as the employee joins an organisation. Employees are eager to prove themselves. However, employees are considerably vulnerable and disappointments can be intense. During this stage employees seek jobs that provide intrinsic satisfaction. With the result that they tend to be highly mobile, preferring to try different organisations if they do not find what they are looking for in the first.

During this early period, the young professional employee uses both formal and informal communication to distinguish which tasks are critical to the organisation and how he has to get them done. Although under rather close supervision and performing somewhat routine assignments, the employee is also expected to show some initiative and help the superior achieve his work goals. He has to show some patience, make the most of the experience shared with older

professionals and superiors and gradually take on more independent work as opportunity allows. The supervisor must play the role of a mentor in this stage.

Stage 2: Establishment

The employee has accepted his role in the organisation and he experiences acceptance. He still has an urge to make his mark on the organisation and to prove his merit. He shows an increasing interest in the content of his work and a will to master problems and challenges. The role of the supervisor is that of sponsor, as he has to ensure that the job has sufficient challenge to inspire the employee's growing achievement motivation. During this stage the professional employee gets the chance to achieve independent technical competence. Although still under supervision at this stage, direction becomes more general as he relies on his supervisor, colleagues and the profession as a whole for ideas and advice.

As this is the mid-career stage, employees have developed a fair degree of trustworthiness and they have adapted to the organisational culture. Employees still have the tendency to resist organisational rules and procedures, to resist supervisors and to maintain only conditional loyalty to the organisation. Important during this stage is that employees have to develop a working relationship with peers from other disciplines, supervisors and administrations. They have to develop trusting relationships with immediate colleagues to whom they might be able to turn for support and advice. They have to establish an organisational identity. This is the period when many professional employees choose to specialise and others begin a transition to management. It is also the time when employees are most vulnerable to burnout.

Stage 3: Maintenance

By this stage, the organisation and its management have awarded certain rights and privileges to the professional employee, such as steady salary increases, promotions, trust in his performance, the sharing of organisational secrets and other manifestations of membership. During this stage guidance and support are no longer needed. Employees require little emotional, technical or political support and freedom is a primary motivation for them.

The more experienced professional employees should begin to take responsibility for guiding and developing young professional employees who are in stage one. The professional employees broaden their area of expertise as a benefit to the organisation and develop contacts outside the organisation. To perform the more responsible work and to be of service to clients, they need the assistance of others who can help to do the detail work and develop their ideas.

Not only must professionals at this stage have the interpersonal and managerial skills to guide younger professionals, they must also know how to cooperate with their peers to get things done. At the same time, they must still understand and negotiate orders from the top. The key to being a

successful mentor is the ability to develop the confidence of younger professional employees, the self-control to let them move on and the judgment to pull away from his technical background in order to supervise, while not neglecting his own development.

Stage 4: Disengagement

The importance of work begins to decrease as thoughts turn to retirement and the enjoyment of other activities. The key responsibility for the supervisor is to show respect for the decision the employee has to take about his future. Employees may become less identified with the organisation, while not necessarily lowering their performance levels. The supervisor can support this natural process but should do so without making the employee feel rejected or unappreciated.

8.6 Conclusion

To experience career planning as support system for supervisors or managers, there should be a balance between the pursuit of a career and the quality of their life. Raelin (1986:163-165) made very important remarks when he compared career and career planning against quality of life. Within the work environment, quality of life requires being treated as a person, not a number and being accepted for your honourable behaviour rather than for your connections. Although quality of life has many sides, to the manager it means the opportunity to explore all aspects of his own qualities and qualifications within the work environment but with interconnections between the work environment and his personal environment.

The career is viewed as the means in which an employee can achieve the best possible quality of life. Independence and alternatives within the career are treasured, but so is the opportunity to make a contribution to an employee's loved ones as well as to the wider community. The establishment of a career anchor serving as a reference point for all career decisions is an important milestone in the decision between career and quality of life. Given the opportunity to maintain a balance between career planning and quality of life can contribute to career planning being a support for effective functioning as a manager.

9. ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

9.1 Introduction

Organisations consist of a number of systems that are combined in a specific manner to achieve certain functions and results. Culture is part of all organisations and is produced by system values and involves system norms. It is a feature of the total organisation and not the individual employee. Culture is what employees perceive and how this shared perception creates a pattern of beliefs, values and expectations. Smit (1995:32) describes organisational culture as *"The set of important assumptions (often unstated) that members of an organisation share in common. Organisational culture can be observed in the opinions and actions of employees."*

The description of culture provided by Alkhafaji (1995:59) is accepted for the purposes of this study. He describes culture as: *"Patterns of behaviour that are attributed to the members of any given society, learned and passed on from generation to generation. It includes the language, religion and customs of a group of people, along with their feelings and attitudes. Parents, the government, schools and society can pass it on in general. Culture is conservative in that it resists serious change and promotes continuity. Because culture is shared and passed on, it should be noted that each culture has a history and everything that happens becomes a part of the cumulative history of a culture."* It is clear that culture has a strong influence on the actions of individuals. Within an organisation this will be more enforced, as individual employees do not want to act against the general flow of the organisation.

9.2 Organisational culture and its effects

Managers can experience many difficulties related to the prevalent culture of the organisation. It is difficult to methodically deal with a phenomenon of such importance in real situations. Culture is intimately linked to personality and the way people think, act and react. It is important to understand that culture affects almost everything that a person does in his daily life. This is because culture is learned as opposed to being inherited. Culture influences personality development in terms of how people interact with each other, social patterns and morals and beliefs. It encompasses all of the influencing factors in a person's environment, passive (e.g. one's home) as well as active (e.g. mass media).

To successfully handle the difficulties, managers must develop a cultural sensitivity. This indicates that a manager must be creative, responsive and tolerant. Managers should understand and respect the organisation and be able to coordinate complicated issues, work with diverse behaviours and solve organisational problems. Through a commitment to teamwork, managers should try to find ways of integrating the various units of the organisation. By doing this, managers will convey a sensitivity and acceptance of the existing organisational culture.

Culture is the shared and relatively lasting pattern of basic values, beliefs and assumptions in an organisation. If an organisation's culture involves the basic values, assumptions and beliefs of its members, the conclusion is made that culture is influential in determining the types of rewards that are available in an organisation, the conditions under which the rewards are allocated to groups or individuals, the way in which the rewards and their criteria are selected and the manner in which the total reward system is administered.

An organisation's culture can influence its reward system indirectly through its human resource approach and practices. Culture is concerned with controlling the behaviours and attitudes of organisational members and the reward system is a primary method of achieving control. In

contrast, reward systems can shape culture because they influence motivation, satisfaction and membership. The behaviours caused by reward systems become the dominant patterns of behaviour in the organisation and lead to perceptions and beliefs about what an organisation stands for, beliefs in and values (Von Glinow, 1988:88-89).

Culture is the result and the cause of behavioural patterns supported and rewarded inside an organisation. The patterns become the style of performance and the culture becomes stronger. The impact of culture is that it provides and encourages a form of stability resulting in employees developing a sense of organisational identity. A strong culture is characterised by core values shared by employees. The more employees share and accept the core values, the stronger the culture is and the more influential it is on behaviour. This is a dynamic process that happens over time and the culture is maintained in a way that helps the organisation but may hinder it when change is required. How influential a culture is or how resistant to change it is, will depend to a large extent on how strong the culture is within the organisation.

Organisational culture is extended to accommodate the ideology of professionalism. Reeser & Epstein (1990:100) refer to this extension as a set of socio-psychological attitudes, beliefs and values linked to the aspiration to professional status. However, this extension of organisational culture is individualised, as professional employees are mostly concerned with their own progress and promotion rather than that of their colleagues.

The social work profession is value-driven occupation and it is predicted that culture within social work organisations will be relatively strong and resistant to change, especially where professional values and moral principles are concerned. According to Thompson, Stradling & O'Neill (1996:650) this is an advantage in times of stability but a potential weakness in times of rapid and major change.

A public service organisation not adapting to changes in public needs and expectations will have only limited effectiveness. Strong cultures are more resistant to change and, in the present climate of immense change for social work, they can easily become out of step with the external environment. The conflict and tension generated by a situation in which an organisation's culture (internal environment) is not compatible with its external environment can be a potential stressor. For a profession such as social work, with its inherent stresses and tensions, the development of negative, anxiety avoiding cultures can be a real danger. It is considered that the substantial changes social work has experienced and continues to experience, can create a need to avoid painful, anxiety provoking situations.

9.3 Elements of culture

The elements of culture are different in different types of organisations. However, the main elements present in all the descriptions, definitions and discussions of organisational culture is accumulated into the following:

- Tangible mechanisms and creations reflecting the physical evidence and products of cultural activity and might survive even after the employees and their social unit cease to exist. It includes mechanisms such as the annual report, an organisational newsletter, logos and badges.
- Structures reflecting the patterns of activity within the organisation. These structures can be observed by outsiders and contribute to solving basic organisational problems such as coordination and adaptation. It includes mechanisms for decision making, coordination and communication.
- Behavioural norms referring to employee beliefs or basic assumptions regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. These norms promote mutual anticipated behaviour and inform individual employees e.g. about the consequences associated with substandard performance, performance goals, human relationships and the performance of colleagues.
- Values referring to conscious, affective desires or needs or aspects that are important to employees. Every culture has its own set of attitudes and values, which influence employees. Values are shared beliefs that have been internalised by individual employees and attitudes are behaviours based on those values.
- Unconscious assumptions not even directly known to employees have an influence on their behaviour. An example is friendly competition amongst a specific manager's subordinates.
- Language capability referring to more than just vocabulary. It is the ability to communicate effectively, which includes cultural aspects. To overcome differences in language, employees must deal with both fact and interpretation of culture. Fact can be learned, whereas interpretation can be gained only through experience.

9.4 Typology of different cultures

Organisational culture can be negative or positive. When culture is negative, it is defensive, counterproductive and dysfunctional for the organisation as an entity. It is indicated that culture relates to shared values, meanings and symbols. A situation in which a negative culture has evolved could thus be very destructive for the employees concerned, the organisation and its service recipients. A negative culture results in low morale that undermines motivation, commitment, creativity and job satisfaction.

Von Glinow (1988:90-97) identifies a typology of different cultures having a direct relation to the organisational culture being positive or negative:

- The apathetic culture shows relatively little concern for the organisation's human assets and indifference to their performance.
- The caring culture shows high concern for employees as assets and has relatively undemanding performance expectations.
- The exacting culture exhibits little sensitivity to the employees of the firm, but has demanding and strict performance expectations.
- The integrative culture shows high concern for employees and has high performance expectations.

Management should be continually culturally sensitive in relation to the prevailing organisational culture. Managers must be aware of developments or changes that might have an influence on the assumptions employees have of their responsibilities. The informal communication channels in an organisation are thus very important information systems through which to establish the observations that employees have of the prevailing organisational culture.

9.5 Changing organisational culture

Imposing a culture on employees is difficult and is usually met with resistance. When disagreement exists between reality and the imposed set of values, employees become confused, irritated and sceptical. When a false image is portrayed, employees lack enthusiasm, cooperation and respect. Culture cannot be imposed but evolves over a period of time according to a specific process. The culture that eventually evolves in a particular organisation is a complex outcome of external pressures, internal potentials, responses to critical events, and probably, to some unknown degree, change factors that could not be predicted. The implication is that management cannot impose a "new" culture overnight, but can, through certain interventions, influence the culture to change over time.

Ivancevich & Matteson (1993:682-683) indicate intervention methods that can contribute to changing organisational culture:

- Change the behaviour of employees to change their beliefs and values and thus the culture. However, behaviour change does not necessarily produce culture change because of the process of justification.
- Managers must convince employees to accept the intrinsic worth in behaving in a new way.
- Managers must apply different methods of communication to motivate the new behaviours. These methods include announcements, memos, dress and rituals.
- Socialisation, orientation and incorporation of new employees are method to apply.
- It might be necessary to remove existing employees that deviate from the culture.

To ensure effective application of these intervention methods for influencing a change in the culture of the organisation, Anderson (1993:4) stresses that the following aspects be considered first as they have a direct impact on the employees' reaction to the above interventions.

- The manner in which employees relate to organisational objectives.
- The interaction between employees.
- How employees develop values and beliefs supportive to the achievement of strategic goals.
- The manner in which employees are rewarded.
- How the performance of employees is evaluated and developed - this point suggests that a system of performance appraisal can make an important contribution to cultural change and the development of appropriate cultures in organisations.

9.6 Conclusion

The above discussion stresses that organisational culture has a specific influence on the effective and efficient performance of employees. A positive and strong organisational culture will contribute towards supporting employees in their work responsibilities. The opposite is also true, namely that a negative organisational culture can be a stressor instead of a support. In an organisation with a culturally sensitive management, intervention methods can be implemented timeously to ensure the culture within the organisation is positive, strong and supportive.

10. ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

10.1 Introduction

Climate refers to the prevailing weather conditions, translated into organisational terms it is the prevailing atmosphere in an organisation. This is related to issues coming forth from practices, procedures and rewarded behaviours characteristic of a work setting. Schneider & Gunnarson (1991:543) indicate that these issues develop from activities employees are exposed to, especially those activities that are rewarded formally (pay and incentive systems) and informally (peer and supervisory rewards and recognition) within the organisation. Schneider (1990:14) refers to the fact that early studies of the concept of organisational climate considered climate as directly related to work motivation and productivity.

The concept of organisational climate refers to a set of measurable characteristics of the work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by the employees in the environment and assumed to influence their motivation and behaviour. Litwin & Stringer (1968:5) already indicated three decades ago that organisational climate refers to *"the perceived, subjective effects of the formal system, the informal 'style' of managers and other important environmental factors on the attitudes, beliefs, values and motivation of people who work in a particular organisation"*. The influence of organisational climate on work motivation and productivity has thus not changed since the early studies on the concept.

10.2 Dimensions of organisational climate

The characteristics and environmental factors indicated in the description of organisational climate can be differentiated in terms of dimensions of the concept. These dimensions are identified by Litwin & Stringer (1968:45-65), Raelin (1984:168), Schneider (1990:296) and Moos & Billings (1991:553). To change the motivation and productivity of employees, changes should be brought about in one or more of these dimensions. The dimensions of organisational climate are:

- Structure and tensions in the work environment referring to factors such as how many rules, regulations and procedures there are and the extent to which management makes the methods and procedures known that employees are expected to use in performing their work.
- Emphasis on individual responsibility reflecting the positive attitude of employees not having to verify their decisions and knowing their job responsibilities.
- Atmosphere of warmth and support with the emphasis on mutual support from below and above; the prevalence of friendly and informal social groups and the perceived helpfulness of the managers and other employees in the group. This dimension represents the socio-emotional support provided to employees by a kind, considerate and humane management.
- The manner in which reward and punishment, approval and disapproval are implemented. Aspects such as the opinion of being rewarded for a job well done; emphasising positive rewards rather than punishments and the perceived fairness of the pay and promotion policies are important.
- Effective conflict management implicating that employees are of the opinion that management is not afraid of different opinions or conflict and the emphasis is on resolving problems, rather than ignoring them.
- The extent to which management makes known the performance standards and outcomes employees are expected to accomplish.
- The importance placed on organisational identity and group loyalty providing employees with the awareness that they are part of the organisation and they are valuable members of the working team.
- The sense of accepting challenges in the work situation and the extent to which employees perceive that they are being supplied with the materials, equipment, services and resources necessary to perform their work.

10.3 Guidelines for a positive organisational climate

Management can change the climate of the organisation by changing any of the above indicated dimensions. Some changes can have an immediate impact such as a 10% increase for all employees or a 10% workforce reduction. These types of changes are extreme and will not result in the maintenance of a positive long term organisational climate. It is beneficial for any organisation to implement the guidelines for a positive organisational climate as suggested by Van Staden (1992:21). It can establish a continuation of motivating employees and not be the

implementation of sudden changes that might not have a permanent positive influence on the organisational climate.

- Management style must convey warmth, friendliness and security to employees.
- Tasks must be clear and not be changed continuously.
- Responsible employees have to be directly informed of any changes in responsibilities as well as the responsibilities not to be met anymore.
- Formal tasks must be communicated from top management through the correct channels to prevent confusion.
- An effective and efficient system for evaluation must be developed.
- A system for giving recognition is essential.
- Management must be genuine in their support and concern for employees resulting in employees experiencing job satisfaction and job security within the positive organisational climate.
- All employees must be treated the same. Recognition for effectiveness and efficiency is important.

10.4 Conclusion

Environmental events, processes and structures prevalent in an organisation have specific meaning and significance for individual employees. These issues or characteristics in the work environment represent the organisational climate to the individual employee. Every employee has specific personal values that influence the importance attributed to these different issues and characteristics. The implication is that the organisational climate has an impact on the employee in terms of the degree to which these issues are experienced as beneficial for the maintenance and protection of his personal well-being within the work environment. The more positive and supportive the organisational climate, the more personal value the individual employee will derive from it.

11. IMMEDIATE SUPERIOR

11.1 Introduction

It is taken for granted that the immediate superior of any employee will provide the employee with support. However, on the middle management level managers are not always sure who is their immediate superior. They do not have access to immediate superiors when needed. When accepting the position as middle manager the problem of identifying who the superior is should be resolved immediately.

11.2 Role of the psychological contract

The Harvard Business Review Book (1990:32) refers to the psychological contract existing between an organisation and an individual employee. The psychological contract refers to mutual

expectations between the individual employee and the organisation. It is unwritten and unspoken expectations. One of these mutual expectations is that an employee must be able to depend on his immediate superior for support.

The immediate superior has a specific responsibility in fulfilling the organisation's end of the contract and reminding individual employees of their contractual obligations. The superior has to take into consideration that each individual has a history of different developmental experiences and certain personality characteristics. The superior must be aware of the nature of the individual employee's needs and recognise that the employee may have a variety of needs with different intensities. To fulfil the psychological contract, the superior must have a diagnostic perspective and be sensitive to differences among employees. A certain relationship must exist between the immediate superior and the individual employee to ensure fulfilment of the psychological contract.

11.3 Relationship between superior and manager

The immediate superior should develop a climate of openness between himself and the individual employee (manager). The manager finds himself "trapped" between management and his subordinates and he has to know there is a person whom he can trust and where he can get support when necessary. Within the trusting relationship, the manager is supported to feel at ease with himself in his work and the expectations he has to meet.

Kadushin (1992:229) stresses that the relationship should provide the supervisor with opportunities for:

- reinforcement of ego defences;
- strengthening the capacity of the ego to deal with work stresses and tensions;
- reassurance, encouragement and recognition of achievement;
- realistically based expressions of confidence, approval and commendation;
- catharsis ventilation;
- desensitisation and generalisation; and
- attentive listening communicating interest and concern.

Although a trusting relationship can exist between the immediate superior and the manager, the policies and procedures of the organisation still need to be complied with. However, through the consistent and congruent implementation of the policies and procedures, the superior can act as support system to the manager. The superior is then believed to be reliable and trustworthy.

11.4 General principles for supporting managers

The immediate superior must assume a supportive role to his subordinate managers. In performing this role he can follow these principles:

- Create regular opportunities and encourage general discussions on the manager's workload. Job related issues should be discussed and managers given the opportunity to identify problem situations. Opportunity is thus provided for discussing problems in an objective manner and for managers to identify solutions in the effective handling of the problems in a supportive atmosphere.
- Attend to the needs of managers related to their work environment. Reasonable requests for additional office equipment and other resources necessary for effectively performing management responsibilities have to be attended to with respect.
- Do not underestimate the importance of education and training opportunities. Encourage managers to discuss their career goals as well as the education and training needed to achieve these goals. The superior has a direct responsibility to ensure the manager has the opportunities to attend to education and training needs.
- Accept responsibility and act as an effective role model. Through positive attitudes and behaviours and the demonstration of effective work habits, the superior can motivate managers toward effective and efficient managerial performance.
- Ensure that evaluation systems are compatible with task requirements and the individual manager's expectations and abilities.
- Ensure that reward systems are effective and that rewards are directly linked to work performance and outcomes.

11.5 Conclusion

A written agreement between an immediate superior and the manager is essential. This agreement should include aspects such as the availability of the immediate superior, planned regular contacts, communication opportunities, planned development opportunities, informal performance appraisal discussions and the formal performance appraisal. Such an agreement can contribute to a trusting relationship between the manager and the immediate superior. The result can be that the immediate superior is a support system to the manager in the execution of his duties.

12. SUMMARY

In this chapter the focus was on the identification and discussion of other systems available in organisations that can be possible support systems to supervisors or managers. Although employees and managers may know about the existence of these systems, they may not be well informed on their operating procedures.

Employee benefits were the first of the support systems identified and discussed. Communication was identified as a keystone in the management of employee benefits. Employees have to be made aware of the benefits available to them. This information has to be followed-up periodically. To ensure employee benefits meet the needs of the employees as well as the organisation,

regular revision and improvement of employee benefits are important. Organisations should plan for these actions. Certain conditions are applicable in the operation of employee benefits. This ensures for example that certain benefits cannot be traded or changed. Employee benefits were identified and listed according to categories such as time-off benefits, work scheduling benefits and benefits related to financial security and assistance.

Employee incentives were described as additional pay an employee is entitled to. Employees have certain needs and expectations related to incentives that should be considered if the incentives are to have an influence on motivation and work satisfaction. Short-term and long-term employee incentives were identified. The conclusion was made that the short-term incentives are available to all employees but the long-term incentives focus specifically on the executive management of organisations.

The job description was also identified as a possible support system to managers. Fundamental concepts were identified and discussed to clarify the job description concept. The most important concepts were the job description itself, the job analysis and the job design. The identified benefits of a job description testified that employees are not able to function effectively without a job description.

Knowledge of the budget and financial controls were found to be important, as supervisors need this knowledge to manage their sections effectively. This implies that managers should be involved in the total process of budgeting. The process was identified as being done in three stages.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) represents a counselling service for employees of organisations that are part of the EAP system. Employees are referred to the EAP when they encounter personal problems influencing their job performance. EAP also provides training to supervisors on the identification of problems to ensure employees are referred for counselling. Clinical services are rendered to employees without financial implications for employees. Follow-up monitoring is done to ensure that the employees follow the treatment and that the problems are solved.

The supervisors' peer support group was identified as an important support system for managers. A distinction was made between committees and groups to identify the role of each within an organisation. A committee is a formal group of employees existing for specific purposes as assigned to them. Groups can be formal or informal; the supervisors' peer support group is the latter type of group. Different factors such as group leader, group status and group cohesiveness were identified as being influential in the success of the group. The group develops through a process and team building is important for maintaining the group within its status and structure.

Career planning has proved to be a joint consideration of the individual employee, the work itself, the organisation and expected future developments. Different important concepts such as career, career pathing and succession planning were identified and discussed with the aim of providing a better understanding of the complexity of career planning. Career effectiveness is essential in effective career planning as the performance and potential of individual employees determine the future possibilities for them. It is also essential to identify the career stage in which an individual employee finds himself to ensure that career planning fits his vision of his career future.

The prevailing organisational culture has a noticeable influence on the motivation and production of employees. The culture was described as the shared and relatively lasting pattern of basic values, beliefs and assumptions in an organisation. Culture has specific effects in an organisation such as influencing the award system and opposing change. A "new" culture cannot be imposed on employees but certain intervention methods can be implemented to encourage change in culture over time.

The organisational climate refers to the influence of organisational characteristics and environmental factors on the attitude and motivation of employees. The atmosphere, the methods of handling conflict and implementation of the award system are some of the dimensions of the climate. Management can maintain a positive climate through implementing the guidelines for a positive organisational climate.

The immediate superior is identified as a support system for managers if he is promptly available and if there is mutual agreement on expectations. The psychological contract existing in all organisations should be the basis of these expectations. An immediate superior must accept the supportive role towards his subordinate supervisors and implement the general guidelines for providing the necessary support.