

Conflict Resolution Strategies For A Productive Workplace

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Introduction

A good relationship between workers and their employees is a great tool for companies or businesses to meet their goals. In all places of work, disputes have always risen either amongst the heads, among the workers, or even between the heads and the employees. Therefore, every company needs to come up with proper dispute resolution mechanisms to solve wrangles that may arise and enable prosperity. On most occasions, problems of biases and favouritism have come up, whereby individuals who've been mandated with the task of solving disputes within a company give out rulings in favour of people with whom they are on good terms. A company like Tesla Motors has a total of about 99,000 employees (Carlier, 2022), and to maintain better relationships among all these workers, there is a need for efficient dispute resolution mechanisms as disputes will always arise. Environments that are full of hatred are a great recipe for failure, and it is because of this that the Human Resource Management team and the head managers need to put in the work to ensure that disputes are solved amicably.

Workplace conflict can be expressed in different ways: lack of cooperation, hurling of insults, bullying of staff, and anger. Coming up with the right methods of solving disputes in workplaces would generally lead to harmonious working environments, which, in the long run, would result in better results and maximum profits (Adebayo & Okoloba, 2018). If conflicts and disputes are not solved well, then problems like "work disruptions, decreased productivity, project failure, absenteeism, turnover and termination" (SHRM, n.d., para 4) will always exist. The team involved in solving disputes at workplaces must be able to identify the root causes of problems to come up with reasonable conflict-solving methods. Some of the known causes of disputes at workplaces include differences in personality, irritating behaviours from other staff members, employee roles not made clear, problems of mismanagement, lack of proper communication, issues of overworking employees, and the problem of unmet needs (SHRM, n.d.). A good problem solver analyses these problems and comes up with proper remedies.

Implementing the right methods of solving disputes at Tesla Motors would play a big role in ensuring the growth and effectiveness of the company in carrying out its role. A lot of negative matters have been associated with the company over the years. Examples of such cases are sexual assault being rampant, a woman by the name of Barazza crying about getting sexually assaulted by male workers who called her names that were not appropriate (Siddiqui, 2021). Other issues associated with discrimination that have come up are unfair promotion, unfair decisions, being fired from work

without any proper reason, and a lot more issues. One case that stood out occurred during the Covid-19 period when some employees were granted the opportunity of working from home, what followed next is the letter of termination relieving them of their duties. Whenever employees try to talk about their predicaments, they get fired, and no one is ready to listen to their problems (Levin, 2017). Cases of racism have also not been left out, black employees have on several occasions complained of being discriminated against, DFEH director, when asked about this, said there are tangible pieces of evidence that speak for themselves (Garza, 2022). It is for these serious reasons that proper methods of solving disputes be looked into and the right solutions to such problems be considered.

Internal Change Management Plan

It is clear that the Tesla Motors Company has no proper strategies that have been put into place to help solve conflicts, leaving the employees with only two options: either to run to a court of law or to social media, where they post the problems they are going through in the company and angry citizens would call out the chief executives and the managers until the issue is solved. One time a fan on Twitter asked the chief executive officer of Tesla Motors Elon Musk about workers who think going to work is some kind of an old-fashioned idea. Elon Musk said, "They should pretend to work somewhere else." (Nicholas and Hull, 2022, par 9). This reply was intentionally addressed to the employees of Tesla in reference to a letter that had been sent to them by the Chief Executive asking them to be at their places of work 40 hours a week. Generally, this is not a bad idea, but the problem is the type of language used and the mode of communication. People would automatically tell there is a problem, and this would paint the company a bad picture. Some people from the word go would dissociate themselves from a company that does not value human life and does not in any way care for people's well-being.

Tesla Motors must adopt new techniques of conflict and dispute-solving methods, which include mediation, arbitration, assertiveness, a fair grievance process, effective management, documented rules, policies and agreements, fair termination processes, and effective communication (SHRM, n.d.). Bringing all these factors on board would lead to the minimization of disputes, and even if conflicts occur, there is a proper way of solving them without necessarily running to a court of law or social media. Strategies like mediation and arbitration make it so easy to solve disputes. Having written guidelines and rules of the company that conform to the laws of the country provides a point of reference to what kind of punishment one would be subjected to whenever they break laws: termination and relieving people of their duty when they break the rules of the company is easy with such written rules.

To adopt these new techniques stated above for solving disputes and conflicts, the eight steps of Kotter's model will play a major role in ensuring that the implementation of the strategies becomes a success. The very first step of Kotter's model states that there is a need for the creation of urgency; in our case, Tesla motors have been associated with cases of sexual assault, discrimination, racism,

poor methods of communication from the heads, termination of people from their work without valid reasons and a lot more issues. Including these methods of solving disputes like mediation, arbitration, and fairly terminating people of their duties would go a long way in ensuring that the bad vices of discrimination end and people will not resort to social media or even courts to help them solve disputes. In the case of mediation, the parties involved can get a mediator who is well-versed in solving disputes to help them come up with proper solutions to the existing problem (Hagiu, 2021). The mediator can be either outside of the company or from within and must have been trained on matters of conflict management and resolutions. Mediation is a voluntary process, and each party must agree on the person they want (Rebach, 2001). Arbitration and Consensus-building would also be better ways of solving problems that would lead to mutual agreements from the disagreeing sides. Lastly, the stakeholders would be brought on board so that the issue can be discussed amicably, and their support would be greatly needed for change to occur.

The second step involves the formation of powerful guiding solutions, and in achieving this, the human resource team and other stakeholders, including other managers of different departments and workers, are requested to come on board as their involvement and commitment are crucial in ensuring that the change is achieved. The team that needs to be involved in ensuring that the change is met must be influential individuals across different active departments whose main goal is to steer the change initiative (Hass, 2019). These can be heads of different departments and the HRM team.

The third step is the creation and development of visions and a strategy. It is vital for the key leaders who steer this process to be able to properly explain the vision in a way that the other individuals can easily learn and follow. In this case, branding can be replaced with boring lectures. Coming up with more engaging acts that are appealing is a proper way of ensuring that the change is spread faster (ACCIPIO, n.d.). The vision needs to be one that is simple and easy to understand and, at the same time, inspirational so that maximum effect can be achieved.

In step four, there is the communication of the vision, whereby communication of the visions should be done convincingly, and “the issues and concerns of the people need to be handled honestly and with involvement” (Juneja, n. d., par 6). Coming up with a vision is not enough, and therefore, communication needs to be happening throughout the company. This is the right time to utilize the team that had been formed earlier to help move the gospel around. Continuous communication of the message needs to be happening since contradictory messages will be spreading at the same time.

At stage five, obstacles are removed; at this point, any kind of barriers that may prevent the vision from going through must be identified and removed appropriately. There is a need to check on the obstacles continuously, and this can even be true for people who are not for the change (people resisting the change). Proactive solutions need to be implemented to do away with the barriers. It is also important to reward people who have accepted and supported the change.

Step six is the creation of short-term wins; in order to identify these wins, one can compare both the old model and the new model and identify changes that have happened over time. The short-term

wins need to be achievable, less expensive and should have no possibility of failure (Juneja, n. d.). In our case for Tesla company, short wins can be like this: within the first month of implementation of the change, how many disputes have occurred, is there a reduction in the number of disputes, what methods have been used to solve the disputes, and have those methods been appropriate.

In step seven, there is the building on the change; there must be continuous improvement. Continuous setting up of goals is crucial in ensuring that there is continued improvement (Accipio, n. d.). Many changes do fail during the last stages as people feel self-satisfied with what they have achieved.

The last step, which is the eighth, is anchoring the changes in corporate culture. A lot needs to be done to ensure that the change is effectively implemented (Simion, 2021). It is not just a matter of changing of habits of the workers, when new workers are hired, they need to conform to the changes generally the newly adopted changes should form a core part of the company.

Outcomes and Evaluative Assessment

This plan generally focuses on coming up with and implementing new techniques that can be used to solve disputes at Tesla Motors. Over the years, a lot of bad vices have been associated with this company, from discrimination, sexual assaults, racism, people being fired from work, and a lot more things, and there is a need to properly address these matters because such issues paint the company bad pictures. Companies associated with such matters often do fail, and if Tesla Motors decides not to take care of these matters appropriately, then a great downfall would be experienced.

The plan advocates for mediation as a basic tool for solving disputes. This method is cheap and very effective. It takes the shortest time possible as compared to the courts and grants the parties involved an opportunity to come together and find proper solutions to their disputes through a mediator. Apart from mediation, there is arbitration, which involves “the settling of disputes between two parties by an impartial party” (Symington, 2021, par 3). Though it might be an expensive process, it is free and fair, and no party can influence the outcome. Other dispute-solving techniques that this plan advocates include having documented laws and rules that the workers should never go against, fair treatment of workers without discrimination, fair termination from work, effective communication, and effective management.

In ensuring that this plan is achieved, it is vital to first identify the outcomes that result from the problems that the Tesla Company has been associated with. After identifying these results arising from the problems, the stakeholders then need to be brought to understand the outcomes that the bad vices have been causing them because sincere discrimination against human beings at workplaces has always led to low levels of productivity from the assaulted individuals and can lead to customers abandoning the company and buying from others who have respect for human life. After the stakeholders have been able to understand the problem that needs to be dealt with and one that

would lead the company to get great losses, then the eight steps of Kotter's change model come in to help implement the change effectively. Getting to set up a team that has a great influence throughout the company and has knowledge about the said plan would go a long way in ensuring that other workers are able to grasp the information about the change and see its worth.

To evaluate the plan, the short-term wins in step six would help in knowing whether the change is solving the problems or not. The short wins can be on since the implementation of the change, how many conflicts have occurred, whether they reduced or not, and if there is a reduction, then the plan is working. Another one can be on what new techniques have been used to solve the disputes and are the parties that were involved are satisfied, if they're then the plan is effective. Long-term results can also be used during the evaluation of the plan.

Recommendations and Conclusion

In solving disputes that have always occurred at Tesla Motors company. Proper techniques that are unbiased and that seek to see the company grow must be implemented going forward. The suggested techniques include mediation, arbitration, assertiveness, fair termination of work, effective management from the managers, effective communication methods, fair grievance process, and having recorded rules, policies, and agreements that must be followed to the latter. It is important to note that vices such as sexual assaults, racial discrimination, unfair termination of people from their jobs, and poor communication methods that have been associated with Tesla Motors can never end until such issues are addressed properly using the rightful techniques. No company has ever prospered when hatred and unresolved conflicts are part of them, and therefore, addressing disputes is one of the ways to help companies do better and keep flourishing. In ensuring that these changes become successful, the 8-step Kotter's model can be used, and both short-term and long-term goals can be set to see if the change is properly solving the problems that have been facing Tesla Motors Company. Company disputes can never be solved on social media platforms like Twitter, and before employees move to court, they need to utilize the proposed methods of solving conflicts as they are cheap, very effective, and no form of biases or favoritisms would arise. These mechanisms of solving disputes have proved to be effective and do not take long periods of time, like the courts. The parties involved also have the opportunity to choose someone they have both agreed on to be their mediator.

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