Job Satisfaction, Disgruntlement, and Insider Risk

Gerhard R. Eisele, PhD
Oak Ridge Associated Universities
Oak Ridge Tennessee, USA
eiseleg@comcast.net

Cameron W. Coates, PhD
Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Oak Ridge Tennessee, USA
coatescw@ornl.gov

International Conference on Human Resource Development for Introducing and Expanding Nuclear Power Programmes
18 March 2010, Abu Dhabi, UAE
Introduction

• With our diverse and changing workforce, job satisfaction (or how individuals see themselves within the work environment) becomes a critical element for management.

• A positive work environment usually translates to an individual’s loyalty to the organization.

• Institutions measure employee satisfaction in many ways;
  – Face-to-face interaction,
  – employee surveys,
  – focus groups,
  – exit interviews.

Such information can help identify potential problem areas, employee attitudes, and self worth.
Work Dynamics

• During downsizing
  – Fewer workers, and those who are employed will find that the remaining jobs require greater technical skills.
  – Workers displaced will find they need new or additional skills to compete for the jobs that are, or will be available.
  – The only way to increase productivity during a reduction in force is to improve the productivity of the remaining workers through improved technology and the skills of the worker.
  – Organizations are often challenged with motivating workers to learn new skill sets while staying in the same jobs and pay scales.

• With our diverse and changing workforce, individuals evaluate their work environment in multiple ways;
  – career development and rewards (compensation),
  – work environment,
  – relationship with management,
  – perception of employee worth,
  – employment longevity.
Critical Factors

Some of the critical forces that are reshaping our work and workforce are:

1. Increased diversity of the workforce;
2. Globalization (facing the realities of competing in a world economy);
3. Restructuring roles and practices to improve business operations;
4. Greater automation; and
5. Rising employee expectations (the issue that directly affects job satisfaction and contributes to disgruntlement)

Add political and ideological motivations and one has many of the ingredients for disgruntlement and the potential for (insider) criminal acts committed on the job.

(These acts include violence between employees, and the employees versus the organization, with revenge being the prime motivator.)
Insider Risk

• In all industries, the insider represents the greatest threat to security.
• In the nuclear industry, this threat is unique as we are dealing with personnel who have already passed an intensive screening process.
• We know from experience that personal problems such as divorce, substance abuse, death of someone close to them, and a change in ideology may have a significant effect on an individual’s outlook.

The most reported insider motivations are:

1. Greed;
2. Financial need,
3. Substance abuse,
4. Disgruntlement,
5. Revenge,
6. Ego, and
7. Peer pressure (associations)
Case Study

1. A 46-year-old subject employed with the company for 12 years
2. Applied for an upper management position but was not selected
3. Made a comment to co-workers and management that the process was unfair
4. Displayed inappropriate behavior by storming around the office, telling co-workers the company/managers are inconsiderate
5. Given time off (one month with pay) to get control of emotions
6. Returned to work and was noticeably withdrawn and performance declined
7. Complained of stress on the job and asked for transfer
8. Continued to complain regarding work assignment and management/co-workers conspiring against him/her
9. Only recourse is to strike or retaliate against organization/management so they can feel the pain suffered by the employee
10. Employee acts
Conclusions

- These dynamic times have resulted in social, political, technological, and environmental changes that are reflected in our societies, ideologies, and motivations.

- The technology and demographics of the world are changing at an ever increasing pace.

- Ways to help negate this problem include:
  1. Training to supervisors and managers to recognize potential problems,
  2. Periodic job satisfaction surveys,
  3. Employee assistance programs,
  4. Allow employees to grade their bosses,
  5. Open communications so that information can flow from employees to management without the fear of reprisal.