

Factors Effecting the Employee Performance: Evidences from Call Centers

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Extensive Summary

Call centers, a new way for companies to establish relationships with their customers, have also brought the need to reorganize the traditional job descriptions, designs and output as well as to plan and manage them differently. This study focuses on the performance management of call center employees and examines the factors that affect the performance of call center employees.

One of the main objectives of call center management is to increase the quality of customer services provided while optimizing the cost the operations by increasing the efficiency. The need to reach to certain service standards and increase the profitability of operations and at the same time to manage the flexibility and the services provided according to expectations of customers and to continuously increase the quality are making it challenging for call center management. In call center management model, as in many service industry companies, the company's performance objectives are dependent on the performance of its employees, in other words on call center operators. Operators' performance in terms of both quality and quantity affects call center performance. At this point, planning and managing the performance of call center employees has become an important issue.

This paper examines the impact of factors such as workload, work intensity, and work experience on worker performance which call center managers need to consider in the performance planning process. The research was conducted in a Global Information Management company. Founded in 1999, this company serves with in total 18 call centers, 14 in Turkey and 4 in Ukraine, with more than 12 000 employees and 8 000 desk capacity. The sample of the study is composed of a 120 call operators and is selected from a specific project unit. We analyzed performance results of these operators, which are called customer representatives within this company. Customer representatives' performances were analyzed in terms of their work experience, workload and work intensity variables, and the effects of these variables on the individual performance results are measured.

When the effects of variables such as work experience, workload and work intensity on performance are examined, it is found that there is a negative relationship between performance and workload and work intensity, while there is a positive relationship between performance and work experience. In other words, we found that as the experience of the customer representatives increases, their performance results, namely their customer satisfaction survey results, their compliance with planned talk times and compliance with the planned shifts increases as well. On the other hand, it is found that increasing the monthly working hours of employees and the level of work intensity experienced over the period of time cause the performance of the customer representatives to decrease. Intensive working hours, as well as for all other work settings, affect negatively the call center employees. Increases in working hours and intensity increase the risk of error and absenteeism in customer representatives, which adversely affects their performance results.

In sum, the results of this research show that the performance of call centers' representatives and consequently the quality of services provided to customers are dependent to call centers' work conditions and employees' experience. Therefore, it is important that the correct planning of workloads and intensities for customer satisfaction, which is the main objective, is emerging. It is also necessary to emphasize once again the importance of HRM practices to ensure that employees stay in organizations as we found out that employee' experience level is very important for their performance. It is also very important to emphasize once again the importance of precise planning and measurement of workload and work intensity, as well as to provide opportunities for the employees to stay in the organization and to empower them with HRM practices in order to decrease labor turnover in this business area where labor turnover rates are very high.