The Use of a “Rewarding System” for Healthcare Personnel

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Abstract: This work aims to identify a method by the coordinator of the OU (operational unit) for the training of gratified personnel through the use of a rewarding system. The continuous transformations that concern the Italian healthcare scene lead the operators to face always new needs and problems. Professionals can not only be considered as workers but bearers of qualified intellectual, professional and cultural skills. Individual coordinators are required to be real leaders within their operational units and to use their managerial skills in achieving company objectives and in evaluating the personnel they manage. The main factor to which difficulties in the management of staff are related concerns the motivation, defined as a state of mind together with aspirations, needs, orientations, that pushes people to act and to use a behavior characterized by commitment, perseverance and determination. The need to better rationalize the resources available, to promote high quality health care, improving safety, efficiency and appropriateness has led the general management and coordinator of the OU to use the reward systems. With the introduction of this procedure aimed at enhancing the merit and encouraging virtuous behavior during the provision of health services, the public employment reform participates in the evolution of the regulatory framework and it turns on the change that is taking place in the world of work.

Key words: Motivation, gratification, rewarding system.

1. Introduction

The project finds its fulcrum in the multiple characteristics that belong to an obstetric-nursing coordinator of the OU (operational unit) in order to create guiding and support a group of operators able to fulfill all the care needs of the patients present. In fact, only through clinical and assistance skills of management and relational or leadership can the expected results be guaranteed. The continuous changes that occur within the complex and varied health system leads the coordinator to face problems that require new and different solutions, first and foremost having to deal with operators with needs and expectations sometimes inconsistent with the objectives and the potential of the organization and consequently of having to face group relationships with a high emotional tension. Only if the professional has opportunities to develop motivation factors such as:

- a stimulating situation
- a professional growth
- recognition
- training
- participation in group work
- participation in decision-making
- information and sharing of company objectives to be achieved

then his performance will be affected positively [1].

1.1 Problem Analysis

The high complexity of the health organizations environment, the availability of more efficient and
numerous channels of communication with consequent increase in the number of available information, the greater life expectancy of the population and the resulting growing demand for more qualified nursing and health care have influenced the cultural development of the nursing profession in Italy and in particular on the need for managerial skills. Each coordinator of the OU is, on the one hand, having to respond to the ever-increasing demand for quality of services and services due to the global raising of the quality of life and the greater awareness of citizens and their rights, and on the other hand to manage the problems that emerge daily in the management of a complex organization as an OU:

- the lack of personnel;
- the intensity of interpersonal relationships;
- the rapid evolution of organizational procedures;
- the red tape;
- the delays in procurement;
- the conflict of components of the team.

To embody the role of leadership and management within a health care company, the coordinator must possess authority and power. The authority is that specific characteristic sanctioned by the organization to issue directives and to influence the behavior of other people in a recognized manner, while the power consists in the ability to really influence the behavior of others to produce certain effects. In fact, the characteristics of the people in the working group are as important as those of the coordinator in determining the success or failure of leadership [2].

1.2 Objectives

Identify a method for training rewarded personnel through the use of a rewarding system by an operational unit coordinator. This must be able to highlight which are the real factors that motivate staff to achieve company goals and priorities to determine which qualifying and quantitative incentives are most suitable to reward people or entire groups with specific needs.

2. Material and Methods

Through the use of electronic databases such as PubMed, Cochrane library and Scopus, a review of the literature was conducted with the search string “Research System in Health” and “personnel gratification”. Using the PPICO-M method it was possible to schematize the research question highlighting firstly the population targeted (health personnel), with the aim of identifying an intervention to be carried out (evaluation of the performance of the operators) to have better outcomes in terms of human capital enhancement (reward system).

3. Description of the Project

The reward system of a healthcare company can be defined as the set of non-rewards prizes and sanctions that is designed and provided by the organization to guide the behavior of its employees towards the pursuit of the objectives of the organization itself. In the company system, reward systems must be designed from the strategic top from the various management levels to the nursing manager, and the coordinator (top-down), and compared with the operators for a validation (bottom-up). The management and development of human resources represent the critical point of any system and the determining point of the results of change [3].

In the design and implementation phase of a rewarding system, coherent with the evolution of the organizational context, two points emerge on which attention must be paid:

- to adopt a performance evaluation system suitable for the context;
- to precisely identify the variables to be controlled.

A project must be created starting from the principle that the resources of an organization are a critical element from which it is necessary to derive added value that does not end in the knowledge and skills of the people who compose it; it is important to study the “intellectual capital” analyzing each of the three areas
that compose it:

- people with their knowledge and skills (human capital);
- organizational organization (organizational capital);
- external environment and external relations (external relational capital) [4,5].

It is possible to hypothesize that in a static system there is no need to measure the performances of the operators and therefore we will only pay people according to the role for which they have been included in the company workforce. In a dynamic system, on the other hand, the wage incentives elaborated with results assessment systems that allow, at least from the theoretial point of view, both an increase in individual productivity and a mechanism to divide the risk between business and workers: this type of instrument is however not suitable and is difficult to apply within healthcare organizations.

Therefore the evaluation of the staff is necessary to enhance the skills of the professionals and the increase of personal motivation. The increase in the dynamism of the reference system in which the organization produces a good like health operate, induces a further transformation of the evaluation systems towards the mechanisms of flexibility: the importance and the interactions between group and organization, management but above all the development of skills that are incorporated into human resources, by virtue of the fact that by monitoring the quality levels of the person’s capacities, the possibility to influencing the expected results is documented.

In addition to playing a role in the role of primary importance for the definition and the combination of the tasks/functions of the company, it is an important source of communication between the company and the worker. In fact, the worker who is recognized and assigned skills corresponding to the work and skills really expressed will probably show a greater degree of satisfaction of involvement in the company’s activities. An evolutionary path of performance evaluation system is identified, which goes from emphasizing the role to that of enhancing skills, also through the application of systems aimed at monitoring the results achieved. This is a special interest in the public sector where the relationship with the results is interesting, but can be effectively integrated with evaluation mechanisms.

### 4. Analysis of Available Resources

The resources that can be used within a company organization to enhance the operators, thus providing services and performances of high efficiency-effectiveness, with the maximum result at the lowest price, are in participation in:

- meetings;
- work groups.

Meeting means an activity aimed at achieving a specific result (“meeting product”) that arises from the comparison and processing of information, ideas and professional models of several people constituting a small group (no more than 10-12 people). Meetings are essential for making decisions, examining ideas, evaluating the proposals that may arise and developing a sense of belonging and harmony within a group.

The working groups (teams) are made up of several people (no more than 10-12 people) with an elevated level of interdependence who work together to achieve a common goal or the execution of a task. It is thanks to the sharing and combination of information, knowledge and skills that the group tends to generate innovative solutions to complex problems: the group’s work tends to achieve better results than the work of individuals and participate in decision-making within the group is a motivating factor in the activation of the decision, reducing the uncertainties and the risks associated with the decision.

Belonging to a group means recognizing the importance of one’s own contributions and at the same time being able to obtain results that go beyond one’s own capabilities. The motivation factors of a person at work are related to the task that it performs and for this
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reason it is necessary to intervene so that the organizational conditions lead to an enhancement of nursing activity.

It is difficult to think that the nurse does his job at best if he is not satisfied with his job, or if the quality of his working life is not adequate. Providing assistance and establishing help relationships means entering them as a person: if the professional is stressed, frustrated or burnout, it is unlikely that he can meet the needs of the people he or she is assisting [6].

However, this should not be an alibi, or make one think of a consequentiality between job satisfaction and greater effectiveness and efficiency: although many researches show some correlations between greater satisfaction and stress reduction, also putting emphasis on the positive relationship between job satisfaction and productivity.

In health-care organizations all operators play a predominant role in providing the service as they are the interface of the company with customers/users, perceiving their behavioral needs and expectations with respect to the service offered. For the operators, the work is an experience that is of great importance in life, so it is not possible to separate the organization and the objectives it aims to achieve without considering the needs and needs of the operators themselves, on the one hand the organization is interested in the skills of individuals to carry out the activities assigned to them in the best way, on the other hand the individuals, members of the same organization, have the possibility to satisfy their needs.

The motivating factors are:
• achievement of significant results on the job;
• recognition of the results achieved;
• work in itself;
• possibility of promotion and professional advancement;
• growth and innovation;
• gratification.

These must however be associated with maintenance factors such as:
• company policy and management;
• relations with bosses;
• working conditions;
• salary;
• relations with colleagues;
• personal life;
• relationships with employees;
• prestige;
• security [7].

5. Expected Results

The results expected from this project, which coincide with the creation, by the operators, of an efficient, organized and exhaustive work, in harmony with those that represent their ideals and sources of gratification, are always associated with an evaluation system intended as a “set of activities and actions useful to know, enhance and reward the contribution of people who work in different areas and workplaces” [8].

In particular, with the evaluation we tend to:
• involve people in the actions and strategies of the administration by making the contribution to everyone more explicit, motivating and empowering the staff about the activity carried out and the objectives to be pursued;
• improve the quality work by providing operators with the opportunity to discuss with their manager about the performance of their work;
• value the place and the contribution of the different heads of structure;
• bring out the training needs by allowing the identification of growth paths for people;
• improve the pay system in equalization terms (more widespread equity).
• the evaluation becomes, in a nutshell, a tool to support the individual and organizational development processes: more concretely, it allows stimulating and motivating the workers by highlighting their strengths and, in the case of negative evaluations, allows identifying the underlying reasons for the purpose of
determining actions aimed at resolving critical situations.

If all this is done correctly, there will be inevitable repercussions at all hierarchical levels: the establishment of reward systems for the group of nurses and coordinators will be aimed at assessing the organizational and management skills during their term, while establishing a system to evaluate all nursing staff should include quantitative and qualitative indicators of the activities they perform on the basis of their specific skills.

The indicators to which we refer can be included in some macro areas that are identified below:

- Quantitative indicators for the managerial nursing staff and coordinator:
  - indicators referred to personnel (turnover, illnesses);
  - indicators referred to the customer (waiting times, complaints);
- Quantitative indicators for nursing staff:
  - rate of infections and their trend;
  - rate of pressure sores and their trend;
  - errors in the administration of the therapy;
  - consumption of resources (such as drugs, principals);
- correct/incorrect use of the equipment;
- Qualitative indicators for the nursing staff manager and coordinator:
  - indicators on their work (willingness to change to the assumption of responsibility, versatility);
  - availability for their own training and that of their collaborators;
  - with respect to team work;
  - compliance with the assigned corporate organizational mandates;
  - constructive criticism capacity;
- Qualitative indicators for nursing staff:
  - use of company procedures;
  - correct implementation and correct use of the nursing record;
  - personalized assistance to the patient;
  - increase in specific services within the various operating units;
  - constant continuous training and updating [9].

6. Conclusions

The nursing staff today is called to carry out a professional activity that has relational, educational and technical components. One of the more primary objectives is to try to contribute to the improvement of the quality of the services in the different aspects and above all to the satisfaction of the patient-users that inevitably engages all the above mentioned skills. It is essential, in this sense, that all the operators have a sufficiently adequate quality of professional life.

This adequacy contributes to many factors such as the remuneration and workload but also the recognition of the autonomy of professional freedom, the desire to carry out a qualitatively appreciable job, training and information, the degree of participation, the involvement in the choices and the possibility of professional development [10].

The operators, as qualified professionals, must be aware of the complexity and the facets of the quality of their professional life so as to know well what to demand from the management. They must consider that the reduction of stress to an acceptable threshold, if not stimulating, is dependent on their commitment, the stimulus always renewed and their constant search for maturity.

The same coordinators of the operative unit have the dual task of finding their personal gratification and helping to satisfy that of the personnel they are managing. Everyone has the right to be valued as an essential human resource to be cared for by all means.

Note

The study in question was presented, with partial results, as Abstract at the 13th GIMBE National Conference, Bologna, 02 March 2018 and collected in the Abstract Book connected to it. The completed study was carried out in the absence of any financial...
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contribution. The authors do not present a conflict of interest.

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