



Mains Practice Question

Q. An ethical workplace culture ensures the success of the firm and improves employee job satisfaction. Elucidate. How can ethical culture be introduced into a company? (150 words)

29 Dec, 2022 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Start your answer by briefly introducing ethical work culture.
- Discuss significance of ethical work culture in enhancing productivity of levels of a company as well as employees.
- Discuss how ethical culture could be introduced in a company.

Introduction

- Ethical work culture refers to a **specific set of moral and legal guidelines that organizations may abide by**. These guidelines typically influence the way employees and customers alike interact with an organization, further, workplace ethics guide how organizations serve their clients and how they treat their employees.
- Here are a few examples of common ethics organizations may establish in the workplace:
 - Accountability, Responsibility, Equality, Transparency, Trust, Fulfilling promises, Loyalty, Fairness, Cooperation, Dedication, Discipline etc.

Body

- Workplace ethics is an incredibly important part of forming a successful organization with satisfied and loyal team members. High ethical standards can help stakeholders, like employees, investors, customers and other individuals involved with workplace operations feel that the organization is safeguarding their interests.
- **Significance of Ethical Work Culture:**
 - **Employee Satisfaction:**
 - When organizations and stakeholders follow through in upholding ethical standards, they can create a workplace environment where individuals feel respected, heard and satisfied in their roles. With this higher rate of satisfaction, organizations could attract easily new, talented candidates to work for them.
 - For example, if an employee is treated fairly and understands an organization's commitment to accountability and environmental sustainability, they are typically less likely to commit environmentally harmful behavior that may contribute negatively to an organization's public image.
 - **Improved Workplace Culture:**
 - When organizations act responsibly and ethically, leaders and employers typically follow suit. This can help significantly improve workplace culture overall.
 - For instance, if an organization expresses their ethical commitment to diversity, inclusion and equality, stakeholders may feel responsible for upholding the same ethical standard. They may begin to hold organizational leaders accountable for ethically discrepant actions or start to examine their own behaviors more closely.

- **Improve Public Reputation:**
 - As in recent years, there is rising concerns with how organizations treat their employees and act their accountably toward the public.
 - Therefore, when organizations set out clear ethical standards for their workplace, they can typically enjoy an improved public image.
 - Hence, acting ethically can significantly improve an organization's public image and avoid potential criticisms that would arise through unethical behavior.
- **Streamlined Decision Making Process:**
 - When organizations establish ethical codes of conduct in the workplace, they foster a culture designed to uphold such standards. These guidelines can help organizational leaders make streamlined decisions and solve problems efficiently when challenges arise.
 - When leaders have specific ethical expectations set out for them, they can use these expectations to direct their choices and manage conflicts with simplicity. Such streamlined decision-making processes can lead to a high level of organizational consistency in the long term.
- **Methods to Introduced Ethical Work Culture in a Company:**
 - There is no single strategy for building a corporate culture because companies, industries, and people can be so different. However, the basic steps below may help a corporate culture
 - By defining a company vision, values, and behaviors.
 - By gathering feedback from employees about company's values, ideas, and working on methods to improve the workplace environment and performance.
 - Use small discussion groups, surveys, or town hall-type meetings to engage your employees and give them a voice.
 - By employing high-quality internal communications to maintain consistent contact with employees about company goals, the working environment, and employees' roles in the company's success.
 - Establishing guidelines that reinforce company values, e.g., a rule that employees should not be disturbed by work phone calls, emails, or texts during vacations or other types of time off.
 - Recognizing employees in a positive and public manner as a reward for their contributions to corporate success.
 - Practice what you preach, ensure that management maintains a consistent behavioral approach to operations rather than cutting corners when convenient.
 - Be approachable so that all employees may address their concerns and feel connected/of value.
 - Foster teamwork rather than silos and isolation.
 - Set goals for diversity and inclusion; celebrate the differences among people as you encourage consistent behavior from all.

Conclusion

An ethical workplace culture keeps the workplace culture growing, changing and adjusting and not being permitted to get old, stale or abused.