

Essentials of Management

Chapter 7

Job Design and Work Schedules

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Job Design: Task Characteristics

- Focus on how work is accomplished and range and nature of job tasks.
- Autonomy is freedom and independence incumbent has for work assignment.
- Task variety (amount given to incumbent)
- Task significance is influence on others
- Task identity (whole piece of work)
- Feedback from others about performance

Job Design: Knowledge Characteristics

- Job complexity includes difficulty level.
- Information processing (as well as data).
- Problem solving includes unique ideas, diagnosing problems, and fixing errors.
- Skill variety refers to using different skills.
- Specialization refers to performing specialized tasks or possessing specialized skills and knowledge.

Job Design: Social Characteristics

- Amount of interaction with others in job
- Social support—opportunity for advice and assistance from others
- Interdependence is how much job depends on others and vice versa
- Interaction outside the organization
- Feedback from others—how much they provide information about performance

Job Design: Contextual Characteristics

- Refers to setting or environment of job.
- Ergonomics—how much job allows correct posture or movement.
- Physical demands—level of physical activity required in job.
- Work conditions—environmental factors such as health hazards, and temperature.
- Equipment use—complexity of equipment.

Professional versus Nonprofessional Job Differences

- Nonprofessional jobs require more physical demands.
- Professional jobs scored significantly higher on most other job dimensions including complexity, problem solving, and skill variety.
- Human-life focused jobs scored higher on dimension of significance (impact).

Job Specialization and Job Design

- Job specialization is extent to which job holder performs limited number of tasks.
- Specialization allows for development of expertise, requires less training than for job generalists.
- Specialization can lead to monotony.
- Automation used to perform highly specialized tasks formerly performed by workers.

Characteristics of an Enriched Job

1. Direct feedback
2. Client relationships
3. New learning
4. Control over method
5. Control over scheduling
6. Unique experience
7. Control over resources
8. Direct communication authority
9. Personal accountability

Job Characteristics Model of Job Enrichment

- Focus on job dimensions that enhance motivation, satisfaction, and performance.
 1. Skill variety
 2. Task identity
 3. Task significance
 4. Autonomy
 5. Feedback

Job Characteristics Model, continued

- Five core job characteristics relate to three psychological states:
 1. Variety
 2. Task identity
 3. Task significance
- Redesigned job should lead to these three psychological states for workers to achieve positive job outcomes.

Job Involvement, Enlargement, and Rotation

- Motivational aspects of jobs can also be improved through the following:
 - a. Job involvement (identification with work, importance to self-image)
 - b. Job enlargement (increasing number and variety of tasks within job)
 - c. Job rotation (temporary switching of job assignments)

Job Crafting and Job Design

- Competent worker not confined by constraints of job description.
- Worker takes on many constructive activities not mentioned in job description.
- Three common types of job crafting are changing (1) number and types of job tasks, (2) interactions with other workers, and (3) one's view of the job.

Job Design and Job Embeddedness

- Job embeddedness refers to array of forces attaching people to their jobs.
 - a. Links, or connections to people and the community
 - b. Sacrifices that would be made if job were left behind
 - c. Fit, or compatibility with the organization and outside environment

Ergonomics and Job Design

- Workers should be able to adopt several safe and comfortable postures.
- Musculoskeletal disorders result from mismatch between physical job requirements and capacity of body.
- Cumulative trauma disorders caused by repetitive motions over time.
- Carpal tunnel syndrome is most frequent CDT; swelling causes pinched nerve.

Ergonomics and Job Design, continued

- *Back pain* often stems from ergonomics problems, including computer hunching.
- Employers who provide ergonomic support and try to engineer hazards away, will get good cooperation.
- Good posture helps prevents back problems, as will proper lifting.
- *Uncomfortable noise levels* need fixing.

Modified Work Schedules and Job Design (Outline)

- A modified work schedule is any formal departure from traditional working hours.
- Flexible Working Hours
- Compressed Work Week
- Telecommuting and Remote Workforce
- Job Sharing
- Part-Time and Temporary Work
- Shift Work

Flexible Working Hours

- Have to work core hours, but some flexibility about starting and stopping.
- Flextime more likely for non-exempts.
- Flexible hours enhance productivity because of less absenteeism and stress.
- Many employees fear that using flexible working hours shows low commitment.
- Not effective for interdependent jobs.

Compressed Work Week

- Full-time schedule that allows employees to work 40 hours in less than five days.
- Typical arrangement is 40 hours in four days.
- Compressed work week well liked by employees whose lifestyle fits schedule.
- Many employees lack enough energy to work long hours of compressed week.

Telecommuting and the Remote Workforce

- Perhaps 8 percent of U.S. workforce conducts most of its work away from company office. Percent is on the rise.
- Work can be done at home, Internet cafés, satellite office, boats, and so forth.
- Telecommuters visit company office and also use telephone and teleconferences.
- Many small businesses operate with informal telecommuting programs.

Telecommuting and Remote Workforce, continued

- Advantages of Telecommuting
 - a. Productivity increases of about 25%
 - b. Decrease in overhead costs
 - c. Reach wider range of employee talent
 - d. Contributes to green initiative for reasons such as less fuel used for commuting, less pollution on highways

Telecommuting and the Remote Workforce, continued

- Disadvantages of Telecommuting
 - a. Career retardation (out of contact)
 - b. Workaholic tendencies or procrastination might be reinforced.
 - c. Telecommuters in café can lose focus.
 - d. Idea exchange for creativity is lacking.
- Right workers must be chosen for telecommuting.

Modified Work Schedules and Job Sharing

- Job sharing means that two part-time workers share one job.
- The two job sharers divide the job according to their needs, such as dividing up workweek.
- Job sharing mostly for people whose lifestyle does not allow for full-time job.
- Not recommended for executives!

Part-Time and Temporary Work, Shift Work

- Part-time work popular, including some managers and corporate professionals.
- Temporary employment at all-time high, including some managers, engineers, lawyers, other high-level workers.
- Contingent workers make up about one-third workforce.
- Shift work requires adjustments because it disrupts natural rhythm of body.

Job Design and High Performance Work Systems in Manufacturing

- a. Enables front-line workers to participate in decisions with high impact.
- b. Requires autonomy, access to helpers, self-managing work teams.
- c. Problem-solving and quality-improvement teams removed from regular work.
- d. Overall human resource management approach must support a, b, and c.

High-Performance Jobs through Adjusting Worker Resources

- Employee's supply of resources should equal his or her need for the resources.
- Same supply-demand balance applies for functions, business units, entire firm.
- Spans in this approach are control, accountability, influence, and support.
- Spans are adjusted from narrow to wide to enable talented workers to execute company strategy with success.