

Abstract

The history of managing people has reflected prevailing beliefs and attitudes held in society about employees, the response of employers to public policy (for example, health and safety and employment legislation) and reactions to trade union growth. In the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, the extraordinary codes of discipline and fines imposed by factory owners were, in part, a response to the serious problem of imposing standards of discipline and regularity on an untrained workforce. In the 1840s common humanity and political pressure began to combine with enlightened self-interest among a few of the larger employers to make them aware of alternative ways of managing their workforce, other than coercion, sanctions, or monetary reward. Theorists also suggest that the ways in which organisations choose to manage their employees are in a state of transition. Labour management practices have assumed new prominence in the 1990s as concerns persisted about global competition, the internationalisation of technology and the productivity of workers. It is argued that these market input push work organisations to adjust their system of managerial control strengthen effective utilisation of human resources.

The assignment consist in studying the need for new approach to the management of people in order to reflect the way in which organisations are evolving at the start of the 21st century.

To proceed I will first introduce the debate concerning organization evolution and the need for new approaches to manage people. Then I will carry out an review of new methods to managing people in the organisation context, as well as people management philosophy and practices which concentrate on the way in which organisation overall approach of people contribute to the effectiveness.

I will conclude with the controversy between the Modernist and Post-Modernist paradigms in regard to management science and empirical research. A fundamental belief in Modernism is that all problems can be solved rationally by the application of scientific and social theory, and thus justify management theories that aim to explain human behaviour. Post-Modernists argue that it is impossible to derive a universal truth, and therefore empirical studies do not reflect the reality within organisations.

Artist and poet create their works in response to the time in which they live, wars emerge out of economic and political pressure. Companies change their structures in response to the need to follow their customers overseas, for instance. Therefore, to better understand the Human Resource's role in organisation today, it's necessary to understand first how companies themselves are changing and the trend that are causing these change to occur. Perhaps the most important, organisations today are under intense pressure to be better, faster, and more competitive. The combined effects of the globalisation, the dematerialisation of economic activity, the acceleration of technological and social change, and the emergence of new trends toward a service society and the information age. The trends that have dramatically increased the degree of competition are virtually all industries, while forcing firms to cope with unprecedented product innovation and technological change. Companies in such environment either become competitive high-performers or die. Indeed these trends have changed the nature of work. For example, telecommunications already makes it relatively easy to work at home, and the use of Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAD/CAM) systems is booming. Manufacturing progresses like these will eliminate many blue-collar jobs, replacing them with more highly skilled jobs, and these new workers will require a degree of training and commitment that their parents probably have never imagined of. In the same way being better, faster, and more competitive is also more important because for many industries the comfortable protection provided by government regulations has been swept away. For example in the United States (and in many other industrialized countries such as England, France, and Japan), industries from airlines to banks must now compete nationally and internationally without the protection of government to regulate prices. One major consequence has been the sudden and dramatic opening of various markets to competition. MCI/Worldcom and other long distance phone companies have entered the previously protected monopoly of AT&T, and start-ups from Kiwi Air to Morris Air compete head-to-head with industry giants like Delta airline, for instance. Prices for hundreds of services from airline tickets to long-distance calls have dropped dramatically, often far below what they were 10 years ago, it means also that companies must get their costs down.

As a result, to remain competitive, jobs and organization charts will have to be redesigned, new incentive and compensation plans put in place, new job descriptions written,

and new employee selection, evaluation, and training programs defined all with the help of Human Resource Management.

In the earlier type of organisations, before the 1950's much effort was placed on getting the workforce motivated. Administrators in management positions gave minimal consideration to the internalisation of how the human beings in the organisation interpreted their organisation. Managers and leaders were responsible for designing motivational factors such as hierarchical staff structure and long term employment to maintain a productive workforce. After the Industrial Revolution, some theorists have argued in favour of a new type of organisation theory, even a Post-modern one, from the point of view that we are entering a post-Fordist era (Gergen,1992), and the new emergent revolution appears to be the Organisation Revolution or the Cultural Revolution: The Post Modernist theories. Epistemology is the foundation for studying Post-Modernism. Theorists who study that part of philosophy, which deals with the origin, nature, and limits of knowledge play an important role in analysing this era of organisational development style. In the functionalist approach to organisational management the manager is the controlling element. The manager organises the Human Resources and prescribes how productivity, motivation, moral, work effectiveness and efficiency should be managed for optimum product performance. This method works efficiently and effectively in economically and educationally developing countries, however faces challenging situations in the Post-modern organisation. Cultural and social developments are seen to be the driving force in shaping the currently emerging organisation. This then proves the theoretical perspective for theorists to adopt. The Post-Modernist perspective grew out of a reaction to the Modernist perspective of organisations. Modernists saw organisations very much the same way functionalists' theorists saw them. Bureaucratic control was one of the main features in this school of thought. Indeed the Post-modern organisations are thus different from the traditional modern bureaucracy where people were subject to rationally set rules of regulation and hierarchical control. The Post-modern organisation is one in which highly qualified employees find themselves within culturally complex, but flexible, production structures which are held together by information technology networks (Hassard, 1993).

The cultural issues are key management concerns in the era of Post-Modern organisations. The cultural perspective of Post-Modernism is about “flexibility and flexible strategies” (Toffler 1990). They allow wide access to information and the transfer of information across boundaries. Flexibility accommodates change in the structure of power

relationships (workers do own the means of production) they are specialised in their field of task, which task employees work on tasks and problems that originate from within the team rather than on problems and tasks given to them by the formal hierarchy. To enhance flexibility, organisational management tends to be horizontal rather than vertical, in the sense that it is a flat hierarchy. Basically, we can say that relationships across levels are broadly concerned with control/resistance axis of the structure, and those across functions with coordination/fragmentation axis, there is a great variation in the extent and form of boundary crossing between levels and functions. Organisations where the vertical boundaries between levels are clearly marked and assume great significance for participants are said to have a strong hierarchy; while the horizontal boundaries between function and departments, are predominant in the term of relationship, product group and product organisation.

Interpretivists found that managers in contemporary organisations actually were shapers of the organisation. They negotiate and renegotiate issues, form and reform working operations, internalise socially constructed meanings of the human beings and always work towards building an organisation, which has a strong cultural base. These Leaders drives their staff within the boundaries of the organisation and gathers meaning from the social context of these people. They are above all strategic managers. They employ different strategies to make sense of the group's systems. One of these strategies is to motivate the workforce. It was discovered that the human beings could motive themselves when given a degree of control over their own position within the organisation. Teamwork is a key feature also in the new type of organisation where there is less emphasis on predictability and control and more importance on ideology.

Post-Modernists have helped us to see that reality is more complex and is a part of human creation. We redraw reality in accordance with our needs, interests, prejudices, and cultural traditions. Post-Modernism is synonymous with the Post-industrial view of organisations. It was first popularised as an architectural term, which referred to a reaction against the modernist structure.

Organisations are systems of independent human beings. From some point of view the members of an organisation may be considered as a resource, but they are a special kind of resource in the fact that they are directly involved in all the processes of the organisation and can affect its aims as well as the methods used to accomplish them. Motivation refers to the mainspring of behaviour; it explains why individuals, choose to

expend a degree of effort towards achieving particular goals. Understanding more about attitudes at work provides a partial context to understand motivation. But this context needs to be expanded beyond individual attitudes and group pressures to include non-attitudinal factors like present life style, material commitments and assumed capabilities. These affect a person's choice of goals as well as rational processes that underlie their decisions to expend effort in particular ways. Motivation theory has developed in two ways, one focusing on the content and the other on the process of motivation. The earliest modern attempts to develop a theory of motivation have concentrated attention on the individual's choice of goals; what they are and why they are important. Briefly this question has been answered in terms of the selection of goals associated with the reduction of physiological drives (for satisfaction of hunger, thirst, shelter) or socially acquired needs (for love and friendship, self-esteem, status).

Against this background of a search for single explanations of worker motivation, the work of Maslow (1943) was particular important. Rather than emphasising a single source of motivation, he suggested a “Hierarchy of Need” in which individuals sought outcomes, which satisfied needs in an ascending hierarchy. Maslow's ideas (1943) were important in opening up the motivation debate to include more than one goal, and to identify “self-esteem” and “self-actualisation” as potentially important goals. However, there has been little empirical support for his view of a universal hierarchy, as the evidence once again points to the fact that people's motivation profiles vary with individual characteristics and with social context. The kernel of Maslow's (1943) ideas was largely presented to the business world by McGregor (1960), who was also important for the stress he gave to the idea that, regardless the actual motivation profile of workers, their manager's assumptions about their motivation had a profound effect upon the behaviour and attitudes of both managers and workers. McGregor (1960) suggested two polar examples of managerial thought: “Theory X and Y”. Theory X managers, rather in the manner of F. W. Taylor, believed workers were lazy, resistant to change and lacking in ambition. Managers therefore needed to control them tightly, to limit their discretion and to manipulate them with incentive schemes. Theory Y managers, on the other hand, followed Maslow (1943). Their view was that employees could be motivated by the goals of achievement, “self-esteem” and “self-actualisation”, and hence it was the manager's job to lead them to these rich pastures and help them to develop, to the mutual benefit of themselves and their employers.

In a similar vein, Herzberg's (1966) “Two factor theory” states that people will be motivated by things they value, and these, he affirms, are likely to be achievement, responsibility and recognition; in other words, self-actualisation. Such factors he called “motivators”, and he distinguished them from “Hygienic Factors” which, as aspects of physical working conditions like pay, security, and other conditions, only served as sources of dissatisfaction. Once satisfied to a certain level, they did not motivate people to a “higher performance in their work” (Herzberg, 1966). Herzberg's work, like that of McGregor, captured the imagination of many managers and influenced their approach to work.

In modern studies of organisation and management there is acknowledgement that whilst power alone can secure compliance, unless it has resonance with shared values, it is unlikely to blossom into sustained leadership. In some ways the capacity to articulate a vision and set of values and thereby to facilitate culture change, is the most valuable part of leadership. In this context, inspiration is as important as perspiration. But to sustain change, one has to balance the vision with a realistic analysis of present strengths and weaknesses and a determination to make things happen. You can be a leader without being a manager. However you cannot be a good manager without developing leadership in respect of some aspects of organisational activity. This is mainly due to the fact that managers are accountable for the results of the performance of other people. Hence influencing people to perform appropriately tasks to the highest standard is a base of the managerial activity. The definition given above places the role of followers alongside that of leaders if one is to understand the nature of leadership. As Hollander (1995) says, “leadership involves an interdependent relationship with follower, aimed at co-operative team achievements”. The role of “follower” in sustaining a leader's credibility, in interpreting and proselytising his values to other, and of course, in working with the leader to secure identified and desired achievement, means that leadership and follower ship have, to be considered always in relation to the other.

My managing people experience was done during a technical training course in a news agency in province (Nice, France) for the french Television channel ‘TF1’. The aim of this agency is to produce reports on the South Est area for its head office. This agency has the same goal than international agencies: to be able to be immediately operational for major events, because in the news world news time is a priority. The organisational is established,

directed and supported by a small central executive core which, in the horizontal hierarchy; determine strategy, allocate resource, and monitor performance.

These central tasks can only be successfully achieved if there are good communications in all directions between the agencies and the executive centre, and a great deal of devolution, and within limited timescale and budget. It is essential to have clear scope of work and objectives, as well as timescales. Such an organisational form is seen by Peters (1992), and Drucker (1991) to be particularly appropriate for the completion of tasks which fall within a fast changing environment and which require a high degree of professional or specialist expertise, creativity and problem solving as well as a need to conform to tight criteria of cost, quality, and delivery.

Here the horizontal organisation creates flexibility, adaptability, and reduces the delays by allowing people to talk to and communicate directly with those who can help to get a job done. We can compare it to bureaucratic process of going up the management tree involving several levels of hierarchy between those who need to talk to each other.

In this news environment the leadership is crucial. Indeed it describes dynamic relationship through which people influence and motivate others in their aspirations, for example TF1 has succeeded in implementing a corporate culture so that reports are made with a 'TF1' style. We can see the effectiveness of such organisation in live show. Everything must be done within a short notice: installation of the equipment, creation of telecommunications links, organisation of the journalist team. Indeed no analysis of leadership can be static and we see that here; the situation requirements change with time. This implies a further characteristic of leaders: that is that they need to understand when and how to adapt their style to the context, and to have the practical ability to follow their analysis by appropriate actions.

Another thing which seems significant is the employee involvement. For example the choice of a subject to broadcast, occurs during a cross-functional meeting with the journalist, the legal, and the technical. Indeed the process of employee involvement should provide employees with the opportunity to influence and, wherever possible, take part in decision making on matters which affect their working lives. Charlton (1983) has suggested that the most prevalent classification is that which differentiates direct from indirect

participation. The term “direct” is used to refer to those forms of participation where individual employees, are involved in the decision-making processes that affect their everyday work routines. Direct participation, such as briefing groups (self-managed teams or cross functional team) or the creation of new work organization arrangements, is viewed as a device to increase labour productivity and implicitly to improve job satisfaction. On the other hand, indirect participation is used to refer to those forms of participation where representatives or delegates of the main body of employees participate in a variety of ways in the decision-making processes within the organization. Indirect forms, such as joint consultation, widening the content of collective bargaining and “worker directors”, are associated with the broader notion of “industrial democracy”.

My working experience at ‘TF1’ gave me a reference in Managing People. Indeed to enlist workers full potential and to produce behaviour and attitudes considered necessary for competitive advantage requires three aspects of managerial control to change: organisational and job design, organisational culture, and personnel policies and techniques. Thus, the developing managerial orthodoxy now sets the need for re-engineering or organisations towards flat hierarchical structures, an enlargement of job tasks and job autonomy are involved in the decision-making processes that affect their everyday work routines , ideally centred around work teams (self-managed teams and cross functional team). Furthermore, I suggested that senior management could direct and inspire workers through the management of the more intangible aspects of the workplace, such as beliefs, norms of behaviour and values. In the jargon of the managerial theorists this is referred to as corporate culture. The purpose of leadership is also to create a vision and a working environment that generates worker commitment, innovation and self- renewal at all the level of the organisation.

It is important also to recognize Human Resource Management functions within the organization at two levels:

- At the first level, HRM activities are concerned with recruiting, motivating and developing competent employees. Hence, selection procedures are designed to supply the organization with employees with knowledge, abilities, and skills pertinent to their role within the organization in ways that create a sustainable commitment to organisational goals and to ensure a *high-performance* organisation.

- The second level, HRM activities then motivate the workforce by providing employees with satisfactory pay, benefits and working conditions. HRM professionals also develop individuals to ensure that they possess the knowledge and the necessary skills to be effective employees.

The Modernist paradigm has since the Enlightenment of providing organisations with scientific theories and methods, allowing managers to believe and put their trust in some universal truth of how to best manage their workforce. In recent times, however, the Modernist paradigm seems to have failed, and alternative paradigms such as the Post-modern paradigm, have been developed. The Post-modern paradigm is almost a complete rejection of Modernist assumptions, especially the assumption that empirical methods can be applied to find a universal truth. Does it mean the end of management science, and those theories about human behaviour and motivation, for example, should be withdraw? It shall be argued therefore that despite their differences, it is possible to find a synergy between the modernist and postmodernist paradigms, and that managers can benefit from both views.

Since the beginning of the Enlightenment, managers of industrial organisations have enjoyed a relatively healthy relationship with the social sciences, benefiting from a variety of Modernist assumptions that gave them methods to find the truths of how to better manage their workforce and become successful. Theories of motivation, needs, authority, control, and so on, were developed through empirical research, applied, and justified in the name of progress, reason, calculability and rationality. Modernism believed in the essential capacity of humanity to perfect itself through the power of rational thought, and its main purpose was double : to develop a reasonably true picture of the real world and to gain some measure of control over the course of events in that world (Burrell, 1993). For organisations, it means that science could provide the answers to casual relationships when the rise of the modern industrial society leads to the need for a better and a more efficient way of managing the workforce and the new technology. It is indeed all about the application of rational thought to an empirically accessible reality (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996).

Comte, saw the industrial organisation as the source of human unity and progress, but it is Weber that has received most credit for his philosophy of the modern organisation. Weber's bureaucratic organisation is basic to the modernist form of the effective industrial

organisation. It is characterised by a hierarchy of authority, specialisation and delimitation of work activities, rules and regulations, rational calculability of decision-making, concentration of the means of administration and separation of the individual or member from the institution (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). As noted earlier, a fundamental belief in modernism is that all social problems can be solved rationally by the application of scientific and social theory. Thus, the modern organisation was assumed to utilise scientific methods to reach its goals, these goals assumed to be the increase in efficiency and effectiveness of production and the enhancement of growth and adaptability (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996), This would ensure the reach of the modernist principle of progress and benefit both the individual and society in the end. Post-modern organisations are thus different from the traditional modern bureaucracy where people were subject to rationally set rules of regulation and hierarchical control. The Post-modern organisation is one in which highly qualified employees find themselves within culturally complex, but flexible, production structures which are held together by information technology networks (Hassard, 1993).

What the debate has tried to draw so far, is that organisations in Post-modern societies are not static entities that follow universal modernist rules and notions of reality. Reality is constructed by each individual in the organisation in the interplay between the individual and the individual's local community or culture, between the community and the organisation, and between the organisation and the rest of the world. Thus, postmodernism is closely related to relationalist theory, which uses a methodological strategy that aims at understanding conditions of possibility, rather than describing cause/effect relationships in organisations (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). Individuals in the Post-modern society may have some common traits that can be identified by scientific research, but it is the continuous interaction with other individuals sharing a common understanding of the reality (language) that shapes desires, beliefs and actions within a particular organisational setting and the society to which the individual belong. Thus, relational theory has implications for managers as it suggests that managers do not control the fate of their decrees, but instead, power is a matter of social interdependence. That is, we are empowered only through the actions of others (Hassard, 1993).

Burrell tries to summarise this issue by stating that:

Post-Modernism questions the relationship between real and language. The real becomes replaced by the representational so that we can no longer be sure that the *real* exists outside of some group's tendentious, ideologically motivated project (Burrell, 1993:81).

This is one key characteristics of Post-modern thought: it rejects the concept of a universal relation between forms of representation and an objective, “external world” (Hassard, 1993). What this leads to within the Post-modern paradigm is a quest for the “local knowledge” and insights from which to develop the capacity for reflection and reflexivity in managers and employees so that the chaos can be addressed, accepted, and, when possible, controlled and managed (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). In other words, within the Modernist paradigm the whole organisation is more valuable than a piece of it. In Post Modernism, some parts of the organisation may be more valuable than the whole, because it is within these parts that individuals develop their sense of reality through language, symbols and interaction (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). This reality, then, determines the individual employee's productivity and participation within the organisation.

It would be difficult to see a future of Post-modern organisations where empirical research is completely discredited, and the argument that the human factor is merely an factor responding to external influences is just as inconceivable. This would probably lead to even more chaos in our society, especially within large organisations. Giving management no instruments of control would effectively lead to the elimination of any rational power structures that would leave management as a “fleeting image of order and control” and “a transparent myth” (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). Any hierarchies would be dissolved and individuals are left within their sub-cultures or networks to form an image of reality for themselves and act upon that image. One (out of many) paradoxes of Post-modern thought is that it predicts the organisational system to be anarchistically out of control by humans as well as the death of the belief that individuals have power (Beje, Gephart and Thatchenkery, 1996). At the same time, Post-Modernists foresee a future where each individual is given more freedom to act and develop, no longer bound by rules and regulations, hierarchical relationships and other traditional bureaucratic features.

According to postmodernists, the future Post-modern organisation is global, multi-cultural, network oriented, reactive, decentralised, and thrives on a strong culture,

information, knowledge and political (power) relationships (Thompson, 1993). This is not a Post-modern desire, but simply a description of reality, of how organisations are moving away from the modernist ideal structure of an effective organisation. The Post-Modernist paradigm acknowledges this change of nature, and proposes various solutions for how to best understand the change, providing answers to problems that modernism failed to consider. This does not mean that the Modernist paradigm should be rejected, nor does it mean that the Post-Modernist paradigm should be accepted. What it does mean, is that managers should recognise that there is no best way to manage the workforce, and changes in the society and environment necessitate them to look for solutions from different perspectives.

Thus, a synergy between the Modernist and Post-Modernist paradigm is possible, and this is what has been proposed in this assignment. Management can still rely on empirical methods for a broad understanding of the human and organisational behaviour, but cannot simply rely on a universal truth for effective management. What the future holds for management and management research is unclear, but it is obvious that some transition away from the Modernist paradigm is going on. The Post-Modernist ideas are still very ambiguous and controversial, and may not yet provide any real answers to managerial issues. Until they do (if they do), managers are left to *cut and paste* from the different paradigms to ensure their organisation's success and survival, and leave the *major issues* for sociologists.

Bibliography

- Clarke, T. and Clegg, S. (2000). *Changing Paradigms: The transformation of Management Knowledge for the 21st Century*, Harper Collins Business.
- Fulop, L. and Linstead, S (1999). *Management: A critical text*, Basingstoke: Macmillan
- Jackson, N. and Carter, C. (2000). *Rethinking Organisation Behaviour*, Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Mullins, L (2002). *Management and Organisation Behaviour*, Harlow (6th Edition): Financial Times Prentice Hall (ISB 0 273 65417 1).
- Storey, J. (1998). *The Human Resource Management: A critical text*, International Thomson Business Press

References

Boje, D.M., Gephart Jr, R.P., Thatchenkery, T.J. (1996). Postmodern Management and Organization Theory. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Burrell, G (1993). “Modernism, postmodernism and organizational analysis: An introduction”, Organization Studies, Vol 9 No 1: 91-112.

Charlton, J. H (1983). “Employee participation in the public sector: a review”, Journal of General Management, 8:3, pp129-148

Drucker, P (1991). The new productivity challenge, Harvard business Reviews (November-December).

Gergen, K.J. (1992), “Organization Theory in the Postmodern Era”, (pp.207-26) in Reed, M. & Hughes, M. (eds.), Rethinking Organization, London: Sage.

Hassard, J. (1993). “Postmodernism and organizational analysis”, in J. Hassard and M. Parker (Eds.) Postmodernism and Organizations, London: Sage Publications.

Herzberg, F (1966). Work and the Nature of Man, World publishing co.

Hollander, E. P. (1995). Organisation Leadership and Followerships, in P Collett and Furnham editions.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation, Psychological Review, vol. 50 pp.370-396.

McGregor, D (1960). The Human Side Of Enterprise, News York: McGRaw-Hill.

Peters, T. J (1992). Liberation Management, London: Macmillan.

Thompson, P. (1993). “Postmodernism: Fatal distraction” in J. Hassard and M. Parker (Eds.) Postmodernism and Organizations. London: Sage Publications