

Career development in a Caribbean nation: “When hard work and dedication are not enough” – TEACHING NOTE

Learning objectives

Career development and job fit

To show that personal needs can be met if departmental needs are addressed, while ensuring that individuals are assigned to roles and tasks which would allow their personalities and capabilities to be used in filling organisational needs.

Decentralisation

To assess whether the Public Service Commission should select and staff for all departments in the government service.

Motivation

To address the challenge of getting a workforce to engage in lifelong learning, focusing on young recently graduated employees or older employees who may be closer to retirement; and to look at the role that the leader must play in dispensing empathy in a business environment.

Questions

- To examine the role of the employer in staff career development.
- To examine the issue of decentralization in the public service.
- To examine methods of motivating staff.

This teaching note was written by Ann Wallace with supervision by Dr Richard Norman at the Caribbean Case Writing Course in Barbados, July 2004. It has been prepared to accompany Case 2004-55.1. Use of teaching notes is restricted to authorised persons.

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Brief synopsis

The appointment of a new staff member creates a feeling of unhappiness for one existing member of staff. The situation has forced the senior management of the department to assess its position with regard to the centralised procedure of appointing clerical staff to the department and to examine career development within the department.

Immediate issue

Addressing job-fit within an organisation while motivating staff.

Basic issue

Centralisation of services in the public sector.

Suggested assignments

1. Write a report to the Ministry of the Civil Service regarding the situation at SOOR with recommendations for decentralisation.
2. Write a memo to Lola Kato stating how the situation could be resolved.

Suggested reading

Organisational behaviour

Gordon, Judith, *A Diagnostic Approach*, 7th edition, ISBN 0-13-032847-2

Kempe, Ronald Hope Snr, *From Crisis to Renewal – Development Policy & Management in Africa*, ISBN 90-04-1253

Possible teaching aids

Discussion questions for use in class

1. Should clerical positions in the public service be decentralised?
2. Should Mrs Waterford approach the PSC from a general policy perspective on centralisation, or only in respect of her department?
3. Should Mrs Waterford recommend a transfer out of the department for Lola Kato?
4. Should Mrs Waterford continue to ignore Mr. Keithley's harsh remarks about other staff members?

5. Should promotion be from within the department? If yes, what would be the benefit to be derived?

Possible answers

1. This answer should address the nature of the work in the department; the value of institutional memory; the need for upward mobility for staff within the department incorporating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.
2. To answer this question, students should research the policies and practices in their particular government service and respond giving reasons for the method selected.
3. This answer should show the advantages/disadvantages to Lola Kato and the department of her transfer. Satisfaction theories, incentive theories and intrinsic theories should be incorporated into this answer as it addresses Lola's needs. Selection criteria and mechanisms should be identified for the department.
4. The answer to this question should focus on leadership styles.
5. If no, state why showing disadvantages of promotion from within. If yes, the answer should address motivational theories. The answer should also pay attention the value of having people in the organisation who are familiar with the lowest level of the operation, and who could help the organisation by access to institutional memory.