



Stress and Change CSR, Emotions and Well-Being at Work

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Abstract

Today, firms are setting up organizational change projects in order to be able to adapt to modifications in their environment which are becoming increasingly competitive. Because of this context, firms are often confronted with problems linked to stressful situations which they themselves have brought about. Our exploratory study investigates the effects of new managerial policies concerning health and well-being at work during the process of change. More specifically, we explored the policies which have been applied by one of the branches of the Essilor Group within the context of organizational change in which the objective was to move from a "Taylorist" approach to a "learning organization" approach. First, we analyzed the effects produced by this policy has had on stress-related issues. Second, we looked at how negative stress and to improve well-being on the work site. We were particularly interested in how much emotions are involved in the process of change and how much they must be taken into account concerning the setting up of managerial policies. Emotions appear to be, in fact, at the heart of change management and can either serve as obstacles or as leverage mechanisms depending on the choices made by management.

Key words: Case study – Change Management – Stress – Emotions - Well-Being at Work

Introduction

Questions concerning negative stress, or excessive stress, are becoming an important part of the agenda for Management regarding what concerns health and well-being at work. New forms of organization are being tried out thus making a break with the « Ford-Taylor » model and freeing workers from the hardships of work. New forms of discomfort, however, are becoming visible, such as excessive or negative stress, giving physiological and emotional indications of discomfort or distress of workers on the work site.

Many firms are setting up projects for organizational change in order to adapt to the changes in their competitive environments and are coming up against difficult challenges linked to the stress that they themselves often bring about. With this study, we wish to explore the effects of new managerial policies which are being implemented concerning health and well-being at work during moments of change. More specifically, we have explored the policies set up in one of the branches of the Essilor Group within a context of organizational change and whose goal it is to go from a "Taylor" approach to a "learning organization" approach. First, we analyzed the effects on stress brought by this policy, and, second, we looked at how Essilor-Dijon takes into account these effects in the management of its staff so as to reduce negative stress and to improve well-being on the work site.

We are particularly interested in what impact emotions have on the work site, and how they must be taken into consideration when setting up managerial policies. Concerning our methodology, we started from a case study of Essilor –Dijon and we mixed qualitative and quantitative analyses. After having presented the context of the case study and given a brief review of the research literature regarding this issue, we state the research question, and formulate hypotheses with analysis and results related to the case study involving Essilor-Dijon. Finally, we make a few general recommendations to be considered.