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16. Corporate culture as an integral part of effective functioning of the organisation

Inna Martyniuk

National University of Food Technologies

Introduction: Corporate culture is a set of behaviour models acquired by the organization in the process of adaptation to the external environment and internal integration which proved to be effective and are shared by most members of the organization.

Corporate culture incorporates all the attributes that belong to the culture in general: the system of values, rules, norms, myths, traditions, rituals, ways of information exchange, language, etc. It is a definite system of shared values, attitudes and guidelines as to what is happening in the firm. It is learned by managers and other employees of the organization while resolving internal and external problems. Understanding cultural traditions that were formed in the organization allows newcomers to feel and understand colleagues [1, c.235].

Resources and methods : The overall goal of corporate culture is to create a healthy psychological climate at the enterprise so as to bring workers together to work in a team which complies with certain ethical, moral and cultural principles [2, c. 243].

The objectives of corporate culture are:

- adaptation to the external environment;
- creation of unified organizational environment by integrating its members.

The functions of corporate culture are:

- creation and maintenance of spiritual values;
- assessment of personnel in accordance with accepted regulations;
- development of corporate standards and their inclusion in the regulations (job descriptions, as well as monitoring their observance);
- staff training;
- staff involvement in determining the sense of life, sense of their work and social mission;
- support of staff's mutual understanding and interaction;
- retention and accumulation of experience in human relations within the organization.

Results: Corporate culture formation can be divided into four steps [3, c.44]:

- identification of the current state of corporate culture;
- retention of viable elements of corporate culture;
- identification and rejection of non-viable elements of corporate culture;
- update (replacement) of the elements of corporate culture which are out.

We can distinguish three levels of corporate culture. The top and visible (external) level is formed by visible objects, artefacts of culture: dress code, code of behaviour, symbols, organizational ceremonies, celebrations, arrangement of offices. The second and third levels are invisible. The structure of the second level is represented by values and beliefs which are expressed in words and deeds and in practical behaviour; they are intentionally shared and cultivated by its members and appear in stories, language and symbols. The third level is constituted by basic assumptions and deep beliefs [3, c.236].

There are four types of corporate culture: "Baseball Team Culture", "Club Culture", "Academy Culture", "Defence Culture" ("Fortress"). Each culture has different impacts on the organization and the career of employees.

"Baseball Team Culture" appears in business environment with a high risk level.

"Club Culture" is characterized by loyalty, devotion and harmony of staff, effective team work.

"Academy Culture" implies a gradual career development of employees within the company.

"Defence Culture" ("Fortress") may appear when the company is just trying to survive (eg. in case of industry-wide decline) [4].

The strength of corporate culture is the characteristic that describes its stability and efficiency in opposing other trends [5, c.311].

The strength of corporate culture of the enterprise is determined by the following parameters [5, c.312]:

1) the thickness of corporate culture (number of important assumptions, which are shared by workers, ruggedness of assumptions relating to corporate culture, concretisation of its individual elements);

2) sharedness of corporate culture (number of employees who share the principles of corporate culture);

3) clear priorities of corporate culture (certainty, reasoning of behaviours in different situations).

Conclusions: Thus, corporate culture in enterprise management system should be seen as a strategic tool that makes it possible to target all of its departments and all employees at common objectives, enhance staff initiative, ensure loyalty to the common cause, facilitate communication. The higher is the level of corporate culture the higher is the prestige and competitiveness of the enterprise.

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Scientific supervisor: Liudmyla Shapran