Organizational Roles

Concept of Roles

- Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage, and all men and women merely players"

- Role : A set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit

Concept of Roles (contd…)

- Role Identity : Certain attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role create the role identity.

- Role Perception : An individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation.

- Role Expectations : How others believe a person should act in a given situation.

Concept of Roles (contd…)

- Role Conflict:A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations.

- Role Ambiguity :According to role theory, role ambiguity refers to the lack of specificity and predictability for an employee's job or role functions and responsibility

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS

1.<u>Role Ambiguity</u>– norms for a specific position are vague, unclear and ill-defined. Actors disagree on role expectations, not because there is role conflict but because role expectations are unclear.

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS (contd…)

2.<u>Role Conflict</u>– role expectations contradict each other or are not mutually exclusive of each other. Cancel each other out. Makes it impossible for an employee to function effectively.

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS (contd…)

3.<u>Role Incongruity</u>– situation where role occupant finds that role expectations counter to his self-perception, disposition, attitudes or values.

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS (contd…)

4.Role Overload– occurs when actor is confronted with excessive demands to carry

out role obligations. Although able to perform particulars of role competently,

unable to do so in time available. Research evidence minimal that lacking

available time a source of role stress.

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS (contd…)

5.<u>Role Incompetence</u>– when an actor's resources (knowledge & skill) are inadequate to meet the demands of his position.

TYPES OF ROLE STRESS (contd…)

6.<u>Role Over qualifications</u>– when an actor's resources are in excess of his position

requirements. examples: PhD in chemistry working as a cab driver; person with

an advanced degree in nursing working as a staff nurse

Effects of Role Stress/Strain

1. Job dissatisfaction

2. Productivity decreased

3. Job "Burnout"

4. Anxiety among co-workers

5. Absenteeism

6. Illness

7. Increase in job related accidents & injuries

8. Job turnover (increased)

9. Leaving profession

Role Stress Reduction

1. Problem Solving Response

✓ Assess situation

✓ Identify various facets of problem & available alternatives with probable outcomes.

✓ Select a line of action (plan)

✓ Then mobilize resources to act (implement)

✓ Evaluate behavioural responses to his actions. If unfavourable, modify decision – performance sequence.

Time gap between identification of problems and resolution. Subjective tension is present, must be

resolved.

Role Stress Reduction (contd…)

2. Role Bargaining

✓ When unable to reduce role stress by simple means, may need to role bargain.

✓ Direct– individual communicates role problem to those who have established role expectations. Then they negotiate for a change

✓ Indirect– done by dissatisfied individual alone. He begins to alter role until it suits him and hopes that eventually it will be accepted. Not appropriate in all situations. Needs to be done subtly so does not provoke resistance to change.

Role Stress Reduction (contd…)

3. Non conformity

✓ Refusal to meet unrealistic or conflicting role expectations. Similar to indirect role bargaining except it is used in spite of resistance to change.

Role Stress Reduction (contd...)

4. Withdrawal – partial or complete

✓ Voluntary roles are easy to withdraw from but others more difficult if more central to person's life position

✓ Partial withdrawal is done by limiting amount of time and energy and attention and commitment to role. example: individual dissatisfied with job but doesn't quit, does only enough to get by, particularly when tie to retire.

✓ Complete withdrawal is usually last resort. Action taken when all other actions have failed. Can be necessary and constructive action, particularly when role has become highly stressful and destructive.