

“A study on what makes up a good subordinate, applicable to fresh or maximum one-year experience executive in the corporates and business houses of India”

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INTRODUCTION

This paper empirically analysed the concept of superior subordinate relationship and the impact of an efficient subordinate in the growth of a business. An organization is a sum total of various inter-related activities and relationships that leads to achievement of a common goal. Every individual in an organization is involved in a superior subordinate relationship. It is possibly one of the most important relationship and interaction that define the success of a business concern. Mary Parker Follett has defined management as "the art of getting things done through people".

Human resource is considered to be the most important asset of an organization. It is the pillar on which all other resources of a firm are dependent and effectively utilized. This definition of management where it is considered to be an art of getting things done through others is a clear reflection that the manager does nothing on his / her own but gets it done by his subordinates who are the foundation of any business organization. And hence, it is of great importance to know and to have the best set of employees who not only are an effective employee but a better subordinate and helps in the achievement of overall objective of the organization.

The purpose of this study is to examine what characteristics makes up a good subordinate specially, applicable to an executive who is a fresher or has an experience of one year or more. This study focuses on identifying the qualities and traits of a subordinate that are of utmost importance in ensuring the success and sustainability of the company as well as an individual respectively. This study has helped us to explore those untapped areas of improvement where a fresher or newly appointed individual can work upon to not only achieve his set targets but also meet the expectations of the senior management that can help him in his personal growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research has been conducted using primary research technique where data is directly collected from the respondents rather than depending on data collected from previously done researches. We wanted to carry out research that addresses a certain problem and which requires in-depth analysis. Our motive is to highlight and find out the key factors that distinguish between a subordinate and good subordinate. This primary research has helped us to directly communicate with the target respondents and get the first hand feedback and their opinions on the problems and concerns related to the research. Since, this research emphasizes on the relationship of a superior-subordinate, we have selected mid to senior level managers to be our target respondents, who are leading a business team. The respondents include country head, regional managers, project managers, human resource managers and other distinguished officials holding authorities in the reputed organizations. The responses and feedbacks of these respondents has successfully and immensely assisted us in arriving to conclusions that would surely help the budding managers and the subordinates at the various levels of organization to develop and polish the necessary industry skills that can assist in boosting their career goals and self-development as well.

During tough times like today (outbreak of Covid-19), we took necessary precautions while collecting the data supporting our research by drafting a well-structured questionnaire consisting of a formalized set of questions on the subjects pertaining to our research. The questions were created by using "Delphi Method" in three rounds. The respondents were asked to give their subjective replies to the series of questions about what makes a good subordinate. We have chosen

subjective form of questions to avoid limiting the scope of the research by providing the options for each questions. The questionnaire was virtually sent to all the respondents via e-mail on their official e-mail id's (and google form tool) and the responses were received in the same order. After collecting the desired responses, we then finally interpreted and analysed the data to arrive at the concrete and fruitful decisions that will help business concerns while hiring the premium quality candidates for the desired profile as well as assisting the study and preparation of a management student to become an effective subordinate in their corporate career. To measure the attitude of respondents towards the given questions by asking them the extent to which they agree or disagree, we have used “Likert Scale method” to find out the level of agreement or disagreement with the statements related to the questions asked in the questionnaire.

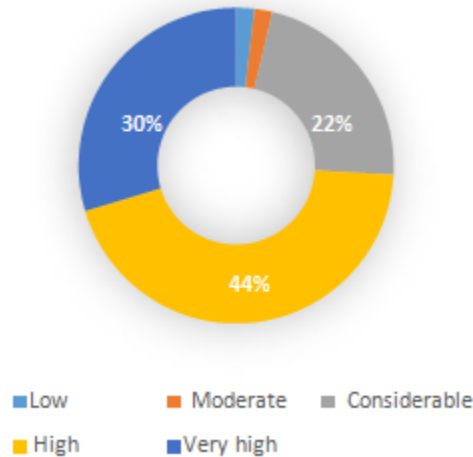
This research has constructively helped us in identifying the attributes and characteristics that makes a subordinate efficient and resourceful to the organization. We believe that an able subordinate can only become an exceptional and a top-notch leader tomorrow if he/she had performed well when being a subordinate. The research has shown that at the beginning of the career managers wants their subordinates to be aggressive while delivering their roles and responsibilities effectively and timely manner specially sales and marketing division. Almost all the respondents agreed that a somewhat and it should be self-motivated and recognition like monetary or non-monetary both helps the subordinate to boost the morale while achieving their set targets in the company. Surprisingly managers want their subordinate to be flexible in decision making and should not depend solely on their reporting managers to take decisions on their behalf. Several other conclusions have been derived while researching on what makes up a good subordinate different from an ordinary subordinate in usual life of business.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

How much level of aggression do you think the subordinate should have in completing the work allotted as per the target?

- 74% of the Managers want their Subordinate to be Aggressive towards completing their targets.
- 22.22% wants their Subordinate to be moderately aggressive.
- The remaining managers are fine with low level of Aggression.

Finding: Managers want their Subordinate to be aggressively aligned with their daily targets which will help them to achieve it as per the projections given.



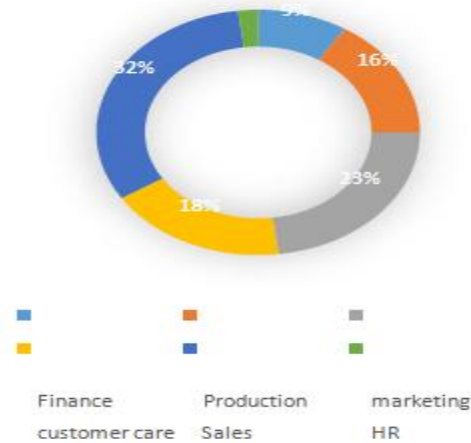
Which function should have maximum aggression?

The functions taken into consideration are Finance, Production, Marketing, Customer Care, Sales and Human Resource and aggression levels are 9%, 16%, 23%, 18%, 32% and 2% respectively

It is evident from the investigation that Sales, Marketing and Production requires Maximum aggression levels

Human Resource and Finance requires the minimum level of aggression

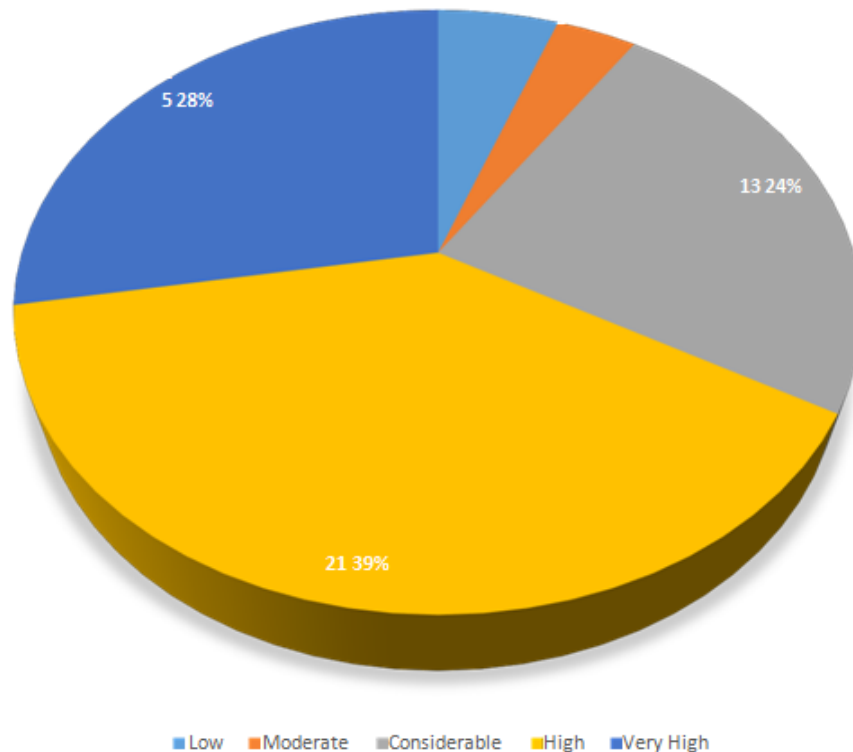
Findings: Subordinate seeking career in Sales and Marketing should be aggressive, adaptable to the changing consumer demand and behaviour and hence should be in – line with the Organization’s expectation. Human Resource and Finance related jobs require more of Conceptual application.



How much should a subordinate follow the system process (SOP) even if it creates bottleneck in performing the work?

- 66.67% of the Managers want their subordinate to follow the Standard Operating Procedure even if it creates gridlock in performing a work
- While 33% of the managers feel that the System process can be bypassed if the situation demands.

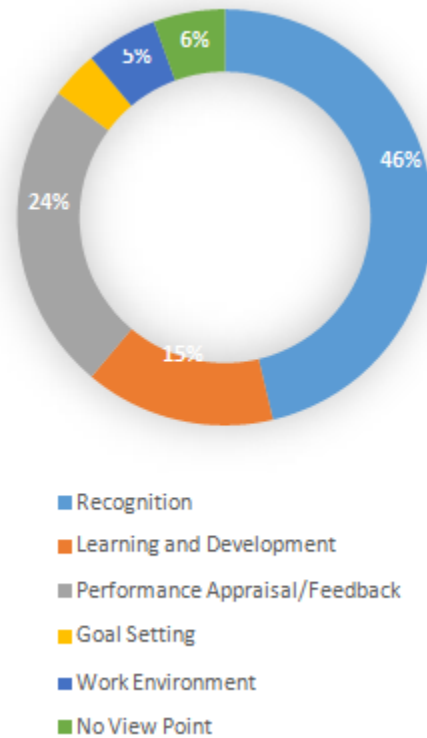
Findings: Apparently, Subordinates are expected to follow the Standard protocol laid down by the organization. With much dynamism in economy, however, some managers want their subordinate to bypass the SOP and be flexible in taking their calls.



Do you think a subordinate should be self-motivated to perform at workplace? How can this self-motivation be generated by the manager?

Investigation shows that 99% of the respondent wants their Subordinate to be self-motivated in work cultures 46.30% feels that the self-motivation can be attained by recognizing the work and efforts instilled by the Subordinate, whereas 24% of the Manager feels that motivation can be infused by providing regular feedback and through performance appraisal technique 14% of the managers perceive that through systematic learning and development programs, they can keep the subordinate motivated, while 5.56% managers feel that keeping a healthy work environment can establish self-motivation in the subordinate.

Findings: Recognition, in any form, like monetary, non-monetary, praising the Subordinate can really inject the needed motivation in the employees whereas regular feedback and performance appraisal system can help the motivation intact.



CONCLUSION

This research paper entitled on ‘What makes up a good subordinate, applicable to fresh or maximum one year experience executive’ is our smallest yet a sincere effort in scrutinizing and recognising the highly looked traits and characteristics that makes up the best subordinate in current corporate atmosphere specifically for Indian corporate industry. This research paper has successfully highlighted the nature and breed of human resource that Indian business Industry demands.

The aim of this dissertation was to bridge the gap of demand and supply of an apt and industry-friendly human resource required by Corporates in India and to assist the preparations and selection of young candidates aspiring to make their corporate careers in business management.

This study will surely help all the beneficiaries of the research to learn and inculcate all the skills and competencies that have been shared to us by the esteemed and distinguished respondents holding the key authority positions in their respective companies. Some of the significant conclusions of this exploration are shared below-

For our research, we ensured that all our respondents are either working as a top-level or middle level managers in esteemed organizations like HDFC Bank, Microsoft, Oracle etc.

1. Out of all the respondents, 67% respondents waved a big yes to presence of 'Aggressiveness' in a freshly appointed employee in executing his professional duties.
2. Among all the business function i.e. sales, production, Human resource, finance etc, 'Sales' function demands highest level of aggression work. Since, Sales professionals are key responsible individuals for generating revenue and increasing the customer base, 'Aggression' is among the highly looked for and demanded characteristic when it comes to hiring a sales professional.
3. Also, Recognition for tasks done and regular feedback boosts the morale of an employee- A key point to be noted by any employer reading this!

In our Research we bifurcated different time periods of employment cycle and the different skills and competencies that a manager looks for in an employee in order of most preferred to least preferred skills.

4. First 3 months of joining- For the initial period of joining, first 3-6 months, The most preferred skill that a manager appreciated in a newly appointed employee is 'Willingness to learn', followed by basic understanding of 'Fundamental knowledge' of the job and lastly, 'Team spirit'.
5. During 7-12 months of joining- Every employee at this period of employment, is provided with certain set of tasks and duties that he is expected to diligently perform and not just perform but, deliver results. Hence, at this time period, the manager wants his subordinate to be 'Result-Oriented'. Being an efficient 'Team player' is among the all-time favourite quality that manager seeks in an employee at all the managerial positions.
6. A subordinate expert at managing and having work-life balance. As having a solid peace of mind at work requires a subordinate to have a peaceful and happy personal life as well.
7. We concluded that managers prefer an employee to be more dedicated and hard-working even if they underperform. Dedication in long run will ultimately deliver desired results.
8. It wasn't surprising, but, managers appreciates subordinates who follow set-hierarchical system while communicating in the organization i.e. for any request, complain, and demand or assistance, subordinates must follow the hierarchy.
9. All the respondents gave a green signal to a subordinate who shares ideas, takes initiatives, is creative and risk-taker than the one who simply follows SOP.
10. It was overwhelming to believe that employers and managers prefer subordinates who are master at single task than who multi-tasks, today! Among all the respondents, 64% respondents stated that they prefer an employee to be a single-task master than being a multi-tasker who divides his attention in varied tasks and may dilute its efficiency.

We hope all these above mentioned findings and conclusions help every reader and user of this report. Our research has been prepared with the bona-fide intention of serving all the stakeholders with some relevant, constructive and first-hand information that will assist both the employer and employee, Academicians and students and every superior and subordinate to draw benefit from this research and excel in their personal as well as professional lives by inculcating above-stated industry-friendly skills and competencies.

Wishing you all a happy learning and best wishes for the future!

We would also like to thank our respondents, as below, for sharing their pearls of wisdom and valuable insights, without which this research would never be possible.