THE 5 ‘S’ CONCEPT: A STRATEGY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN RASRTIA ISPATH NIGUM LIMITED, VISAKHAPATNAM

Dr. Arun Kumar Puttapalli
Associate Professor, Department of Human Resource Management, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, India
Email: puttapalli_arunkumar@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT
The concept of HRD assumes immense importance as it plays a vital role in meeting the challenging requirements of highly skilled and competent HR in the present era of globalization. A strategic HRD system is perhaps the most important element in organizational effectiveness, which not only ensures present performance but also its long-term survival and growth. In today’s organizations not only aimed on the workplace but linked directly to the core business strategy.

The methodology comprises for this study based on the both primary and secondary data, which consists of the opinions of the sample respondents, company records, in-house Magazines, etc. To create a competitive environment among employees to increase the awareness, it is suggested that publicity through banners and hoardings at strategic locations will definitely have an impact on the knowledge levels of employees in respect of 5 “S” concept, its benefits to both the employees and organization.

Keywords: Performance; Strategy; Success; Resources; Recommendations; Benchmarking

INTRODUCTION
People can make or mar an organization. Human resources are the greatest assets for any organization. In a global economy if organization are to be competitive and economically sustainable in the long-run, it is not just enough for them for simply employing and paying the people. Koontz and O Donnel rightly observed that an organization is creation of an environment in which people contribute the best of their ability to attain the goals of the organization. At the enterprise level human resource policy needs to ensure effective utilization of this resource to attain organizational goals, which can be accomplished by rightly understanding the nature, potentialities and limitation of these resource and developing the people to actuate their full potentials, utilizing them to the optimal ability of their enterprise, maintaining their quality and amalgamating them with other resources.

People are considered the most important and valuable resource and every organization or institute has this in the form of its employees. Dynamic people can build dynamic organizations. Effective employees can contribute to the effectiveness of their organization. Competent and motivated people can make things happen and enable an organization or institution to achieve its goals. Hence, organizations should continuously ensure that the dynamism, competency, motivation and effectiveness of the employees remain at high levels. In the changing competitive business environment, industry has recognized the need for the productivity, innovation and customer orientation. It is commonly felt that these are the functions of technology i.e. new machines, new processes. But man is behind all of these who uses the technology and implement new system. Today modernization is called not only for necessary equipment and processes but also for human minds; its
The nature of job is constantly changing due to changes in the environment, organizational goals, priorities, strategies, technology etc. Such a change in the nature of jobs requires continuous development of employee competencies to perform the job well.

The 5 S strategies is a Japanese Concept for integrated work place management and consist of five steps. Each starting with S in Japanese language SERI - Sorting, SEITON-Systematic arrangement, SEISO-Clean, Spic and spa, SEIKETSU – Purity and Standardization and SHITSUKE-Self discipline, maintaining and reviewing standards. Hence, Sorting, Straightening, Simplifying, Standardized, Sustaining are the five levels of 5 S implementation. Five ‘S’ is being implemented in RINL for the last there years and in the First Phase four department wire rod mill, utilities central maintenance (Mechanical) and central stores departments which implemented 5 S were awarded certification by Quality circle Forum of India (QCFI) 5 ‘S’ is integrated approach for work place management has been adopted in RINL since 2004 for insuring proper organization neatness, standardization, cleanliness, and discipline in workplace for sustained Manufacturing and Maintenance Practices.

The Success Formula of 5 ‘S

Operations are performed in a systematic and well regulated fashion, resulting in fewer defective items and hence increasing the overall quality of product/service. Operations also performed safely and comfortably, reducing the occurrence of accidents. Machinery and equipment maintained in a better manner. Reduction in number of breakdowns, which performed efficiency, eliminating waste there by increasing the efficiency and productivity. Hence, knowledge of 5’s can also help to keep the things better in the house. On the other Improve safety, Raise employee morale ,Productivity (Eliminating the waste).Identify problem more quickly, Develop control through visibility, Establish convenient work practice, Increase product and process quality, Promote stronger communication among staff and Strengthen employees to sustain their work area are some of the benefits in implementing 5 S strategy in any organization.

Similarly Work place become clean & better organized, Shop floor and office operation become easier and safer, Results are visible to everyone, Visible results enhance generation of more and new ideas, People are automatically disciplined, People become proud of clean and organized work place, Resultant good company image generates more business, Total employee participation in improving the shop floor management is possible. Develop a team work and discipline and forms the basis for advanced models of productivity and quality improvement.

THE STUDY OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

1. To study the procedure, importance and benefits of implementing 5 S concept in public sector undertakings in general, RINL in particular.
2. To analyze, evaluate and interpret the perceptions of the sample respondents with regard to 5’S implementation.
3. To recommend and suggest further advancement and benefit to the users.

The methodology comprises the data based on the both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data consists of discussions with the some executives and the opinions of the sample respondents by circulating a questionnaire to a sample of 150 employees of RINL. Secondary data consists of company records, in-house Magazines, Journal of RINL and also from the Internet regarding the company profile and significance of 5 S.

The Selected Unit Profile (RINL)

To meet the growing domestic needs of steel, Government of India decided to set up an integrated Steel plant at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of Rastriya Ispat Nigam Ltd. (RINL) an agreement was signed with erstwhile USSR in 1979 for co-operation in setting up 3.4 million tones capacity
integrated Steel Plant at Visakhapatnam. The foundation stone for the plant was laid by the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 20th January 1971. The Project was estimated to cost Rs.3,897.28 crores based on prices as on 4th Quarter of 1981. However, on completion of Construction and Commissioning of the whole Plant in 1992, the cost escalated to around Rs.8500 Cr. Unlike other integrated Steel Plants in India, Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is one of the most sophisticated and modern Steel Plants in the country. The plant was dedicated to the nation on 1st August 1992 by the then Prime Minister Sri. P.V.Narasimha Rao.

New Technology, large-scale computerization and automation etc., are incorporated in the Plant. To operate the plant at international levels and attain such labour productivity, the organizational manpower has been rationalized. The plant has a capacity of producing 3.0 MT of liquid steel and 2.656 MT of saleable steel. The 7m tall coke ovens with dry quenching facility, the 3,200 cum Blast furnaces and the 100% Bloom Casting technology and fully computerized rolling mills are only some of the unique features of Visakhapatnam Steel plant’s most modern assembly of global technologies. RINL is marching ahead excelling in one after other aspects covering the entire gamut of India’s proudest, boldest and most unique experiment in steel industry. The major production units in RINL are Coke Ovens, Sinter Plant, Blast Furnace, Steel Melt Shop, LMMM, WRM and MMSM. Apart from the above works departments, the non-works departments in RINL are Personnel, Training and Development Center, Purchase, Marketing, Finance, Design and Engineering and Township Administration. The whole manufacturing process is divided into two zones right and left zone. The right zone consists of all production units and workshops and the left zone contains all ancillary production units like Raw Material Handling Plant, Coke Ovens & Coal Chemical Plants, Blast Furnace and Steel Melting Shop.

The Interpretations

The awareness about the functioning of 5’S’ implementation in RINL is at different levels. Usually an attitude acts as catalyst in the movement to accomplish the objective of sustenance and achieve performance leadership in the present competitive environment. In addition major steel customers started inclined towards imports as the import duty of steel was drastically reduced this had the tremendous effect on the domestic steel producers. This made the public sector steel giants had to plan the strategies to compete with the private steel producers. In this scenario it is indeed imperative for RINL to all the employee attitudes towards achievement of performance leadership with a view to compete in the domestic as well as in the export market. Hence it is necessary to design and operate the employee attitude measures meticulously. So that they act as catalyst and help in achieving the overall productivity and Quality improvement of RINL. In the process, a survey was conducted to assess the existing awareness of various cross sections of employees about 5”s” implementation.

Having influenced by performance standards achieved by the countries well known for excellent product quality through small group activities, RINL realized the significance of different participative for a like 5s implementation, in achieving organizational excellence. The effectiveness of needed to be assessed with a view to reinforce the existing with emerging concepts like 5s kaizen Bench marking etc. The employees who work under the 5 S concepts generate ideas and views out of their day-to-day observations and their experience. Keeping this in view a survey was conducted for 150 employees randomly who have the familiar with this concept. In the light of the above the respondent opinions are enquired and the perceptions of the employees has been analyzed and interpreted with the help of few questions framed in the questionnaire.

The feedback obtained from Questionnaire was grouped under awareness of certain parameters like concepts, Methodology to be adopted, analysis tools to be used, significance of employee involvement against all the three employees attitude in 5”s” implementation. The individual response in each group for 5”s” implementation were summed up separately and tabulated. The percentage
response is arrived separately for major production and production services departments and major General service departments.

The data was collected in the as per methods adopted in operating 5”s” implementation from management services department and Human Resource Development. This was analyzed against the response received from the total sample population in terms of percentage with respect to awareness of employees about the above mentioned three schemes.

**FINDINGS**

Based on the analysis, comments made by respondents, general discussions with few respondents, Coordinators from management services and Human Resource Development, few suggestions as detailed below are recommended for the effective 5S implementation in RINL. These will definitely help in enhancing the momentum and benefit to both the employees and the organization.

- To create a competitive environment among employees to increase the awareness, it is suggested that publicity through banners and hoardings at strategic locations will definitely have an impact on the knowledge levels of employees in respect of 5 “s” concept, its benefits to both the employees and organization.

- In order to arrive to improvements in workplace management, the 5S members have to follow different steps like finding out root causes for dust generation and unfavorable work practices. Hence it is felt necessary to expose all the 5”s” members about the modus operandi either at the shop floor or at separate training programmes particularly for services and General department employees.

- It is also suggested the role of different stages like coordinator, leader and members has to be taught to all the 5S groups to understand the structure of 5S functioning and responsibility of each stage in the structure to have role clarity and smooth functioning of 5S’.

- For effective functioning in 5’S the logical sequence of different steps to be followed by shop floor, stores and offices has to be laid down clearly as per the applicability and relevance. In case of common areas and surrounding premises specific responsibility is to be given to a particular group in each department.

- As employee’s participation has a very important place in the present Industrial scenario, Management has to regularly check up the performance of the workers, and move freely with workers and they should take their views in to consideration and they should each and every employee.

- It is suggested that a conductive environment is to be provided to conduct 5S’ meetings regularly involving all the members once in every month. This arrangement provides as platform for all the working level employees to contribute their opinions / ideas towards improving the their own work-life This is the starting point for empowering employees in bringing improvements on continuous basis as a part of enhancing overall productivity of RINL.

- Nominating the best 5“s” teams to national and international level conventions /seminars also motivates the non- partcipating employees to involve in 5“s”. Hence it is suggested to ensure more participation of RINL employees in external conventions.

KAIZEN ‘’ a successful Japanese concept ‘‘may be introduced in the organization to involve all the employees in bringing improvements in 5S. The meaning of KAIZEN implies continuous improvement. The employee participation at all levels to come out with a view to improve the existing working styles and environment. The concept bases on the philosophy that every activity can be improved over its existing condition on a continuous basis. In this direction it is suggested to open 5S corners in all the departments to display the visual improvements and creative ideas particularly from
the working level employees. This provides an exclusive arrangement to induct competitive spirit among all the employees in the relevant fields.

The new concept of BENCHMARKING also may be adopted by the employees to best strategies of 5S implementation from other successful organizations. Bench marking is a systematic and continuous measurement process. This facilitates continuous measuring and comparing different organizational processes against business process leaders anywhere in the world to gain information which will help the organization take action to improve its performance. Effective training classes and seminars have to be conducted in more committed manner so that the workers gain knowledge about their role in decision making. Similarly based on the workers performance they have to give some incentives so that other workers may motivated

CONCLUSION

Survival of the fittest is the trend is the prevailing in the present liberalized and globalised economy. Availability of plenty of choice makes the customer more quality conscious and cost effective oriented. This compels all the organizations to align their strategies in line with changing market environment and customer preferences to achieve competitive edge. Achieving excellence is the need of the hour. The employees who are behind any activity of the organization have to be provided with the opportunity to strive for organizational excellence through the channel Called empowerment. The concept of empowerment is based on philosophy of involving the employees in decision making through various means.

The latest trend of business process re-engineering insists upon employee involvement and decentralization of decision making. This leads to flatter organization and empowerment of employee. Today, the organizational focuses are getting shifted to human software from hardware to achieve productivity leadership. The change in attitude of the employee towards optimum utilization of organizational resources is the key success factor for improving productivity through employee empowerment. The efforts and interests of all the employees need to be channelized with the overall objectives and goals. Effective communication system is the prerequisite to synchronize the individual goal with the mission of the organization. The task of today’s management is therefore to motivate, empower and mobilized the employee’s commitment to work. The participative management techniques are to be the most effective tools in empowering employees for taking appropriate decisions in their jobs for the benefit of the company.

No society and no nation can be proud of its human resource unless there is a systematic and sustainable development of capacities of its people and convert the human resource into human capital. All the employees are potential enough to excel in their area of work by involving in small group activity. Cost reduction through productivity improvement place a vital role in achieving competitive advantages is the present scenario of buyers’ market environment. Continuous improvement is possible only through innovative ideas which can be harnessed from the creative talents of the employees are the best means of achieving the above goal. Delayed commissioning of different production units, increased project cost had contributed a lot in the accumulated losses of RINL. Inspite of high initial capital investment, RINL could cope up with the changing market environment by optimizing the cost of production RINL could also established its presence in the competitive market by maintaining international standards in respect of quality and customer service.

Having influenced by performance standards achieved by the countries well known for excellent product quality through small group activities, RINL realized the significance of different participative forms like 5s implementation in achieving organizational excellence. The effectiveness is needed to be assessed with a view to reinforce the existing with emerging concepts like 5s kaizen Bench marking etc. It is concluded that this study provided valuable information; certain useful and feasible recommendations are suggested in each area. The decision making power of the employee can be improved, if the suggested recommendations are implemented. The management of RINL needs only to trust and pose confident in the abilities and the enthusiasm of employees. The working level
employees in RINL are to be given the opportunity to contribute their best through participation. The organizational excellence can easily be achieved with performance leadership and organization will flourish and can see the greater heights.

REFERENCES


