



Research on Optimization of Knowledge-based Employee Motivation Based on Psychological Contract Perspective

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Abstract: With the arrival of the knowledge economy era, knowledge-based employees have become one of the most important strategic resources of enterprises. Based on the psychological contract theory, it is found that the psychological contract is the intermediary of the operation of the incentive system. At the same time, the premise is to implement the incentive process. Starting from the three-dimensional structure of the psychological contract, it is proposed to construct a contract including the compensation system, performance management system, moderate authorization system, and a system of incentive strategies under the relational dimension of the corporate culture, communication mechanism, and the emotional + spiritual incentive. The system of incentive strategies under the dimension of the relational psychological contract includes corporate culture, communication mechanism, and "emotion + spirit" incentive, and the system of incentive strategies under the dimension of the developmental psychological contract includes training system, career management, and job allocation promotion mechanism, to build a comprehensive and complete incentive system based on the psychological contract for knowledge-based employees.

Keywords: psychological contract; knowledge workers; incentives; human resource management

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In the era of knowledge economy, the competitiveness of enterprises is highly dependent on the knowledge, skills and innovativeness of knowledge-based employees. Compared with traditional employees, they have high autonomy, creativity and career mobility, and traditional motivation methods are facing challenges. The psychological contract, as the implicit psychological expectations between the organization and the employees, has a significant impact on the employees' work attitude and so on. Studying the incentive mechanism of knowledge-based employees from this perspective can enrich the theory and provide practical guidance for enterprises.

1.2 Research on psychological contract theory and knowledge workers

The concept of psychological contract was proposed by Argyris in 1960[1], then developed by Levinson et al.[2], and further deepened by Rousseau[3]. Compared with foreign researchers, domestic scholars have also made many research results by combining the characteristics of the industry, such as the dimensions of the psychological contract structure proposed by California Chen et al[4]. Li Yuan found that the psychological contract is constructed by the normative[5], interpersonal, and developmental dimensions, while Yu Chen put forward a two-level multidimensional psychological contract structure model[6]. Drucker took the lead in defining the knowledge-based employee, who relies on knowledge-based information in the workplace, with its unique characteristics[7].

2. Characteristics of the psychological contract of knowledge-based employees

2.1 Transaction-based contracts

Regarding remuneration, enterprises must refer to their peers to develop a competitive salary structure and give differentiated treatment according to multiple factors such as employee skills to ensure a positive correlation between payment and return. In terms of working conditions, the company should provide a comfortable office environment, advanced office equipment, and reasonable working hours to ensure employees' efficiency and physical comfort.

2.2 Relational contracts

In terms of career development opportunities, enterprises should build multiple promotion paths, such as technical, business, project management, and other routes, to meet the different development needs of employees. Regarding work autonomy, the company should moderately decentralize the authority under the specification of clear objectives, to stimulate

employees' creativity and sense of responsibility. On the level of organizational identity, through cultural construction and value promotion, employees' sense of belonging and loyalty should be enhanced.

2.3 Development compacts

Learning and growth opportunities are the foundation. Enterprises should integrate internal and external resources to provide opportunities for training and further education in professional skills and management knowledge. In terms of innovation space, create a relaxed atmosphere and set up an innovation incentive mechanism. In terms of professional ability enhancement, establish an evaluation system and customize the enhancement plan to promote the professional growth of employees.

2.4 Specificity of the psychological contract of knowledge-based employees

Knowledge-based employees pay more attention to relational and developmental contracts, the content of their contracts is diversified and involves many aspects, and they have high requirements for contract fulfillment, and breach of contract is prone to triggering negative emotions and behaviors.

3. Analysis of the current situation and problems of the incentive mechanism for knowledge-based employees

3.1 Remuneration incentives

Most of the enterprises adopt the basic salary plus performance bonus model, and some of them have equity incentives. However, the salary structure lacks flexibility, and the salary is often set according to the job hierarchy, which does not reflect individual differences, and high performance employees have a low sense of reward. The performance bonus assessment index is single, emphasizing short-term performance and ignoring long-term contributions such as knowledge accumulation.

3.2 Career development incentives

Although the enterprise has promotion channels and training opportunities, the promotion channels are narrow, the competition for management positions is fierce, and the technical and other professional paths are limited. The training content is not combined with the needs of employees, and there are many general courses and little segmented training, which makes it difficult to help employees break through the career bottleneck.

3.3 Corporate culture and emotional incentives

Enterprises attach importance to cultural construction, to carry out team building and values promotion, but the culture is in form, the lack of depth of team building, emotional care is insufficient, staff participation in the work of synergistic enhancement is not obvious, easy to produce burnout.

4. Optimization Suggestions for Knowledge-based Employee Incentive Mechanisms Based on Psychological Contracts

4.1 Optimization of the dimensionality of the transactional psychological contract

The transactional contract focuses on material exchange and optimizes remuneration incentives. Constructing a dynamic compensation system, introducing skills and project pay, and paying employees according to their technical and project achievements, such as setting up subsidies for technical certifications and bonus pools for major projects, to break the rigidity of compensation. Improve performance evaluation, taking into account both long and short-term performance, incorporating indicators such as knowledge sharing, and organizing 360-degree feedback. At the same time, the leadership precise and appropriate authorization to stimulate employee autonomy, to ensure that the goals are advanced.

4.2 Optimization of the dimensions of the relational psychological contract

The relational contract focuses on emotional relationships, with an emphasis on optimizing corporate culture and emotional incentives. We have created a culture of deep integration, refined the values into a code of conduct integrated them into the process, and carried out case selection and commendation. Strengthening emotional communication, monthly one-on-one exchanges between managers, tracking and problem-solving, and integrating humanized elements into the office environment to enhance emotional loyalty.

4.3 Optimization of the dimensions of the developmental psychological contract

The developmental contract focuses on employee growth and promotion and optimizes career development incentives.

Broaden the promotion path of "management+technical+professional", set up high-end positions, and customize the planning and training rotation plan for employees. Build a knowledge-sharing platform, push classes with big data, customize training through school-enterprise cooperation, and set up a mentorship system to pass on knowledge and help employees grow.

5. Conclusion

Optimized in three dimensions according to the psychological contract theory, the conclusion focuses on three aspects. First, the transactional dimension focuses on compensation, builds a dynamic system (including skills, project compensation, and subsidized bonus pool), and improves performance evaluation (taking into account long and short-term performance and knowledge sharing, 360-degree feedback). Secondly, the relational dimension focuses on emotion, shapes the depth culture (refinement of guidelines, case selection rewards), optimizes team building and communication (additional workshops, one-on-one communication, psychological assistance), and optimizes the environment. Third, the developmental dimension focuses on growth, broadening promotion (multi-track channels and high-end positions), and customized planning and training (including rotation, shared platform, school-enterprise cooperation, and mentorship) to help employees develop.

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