

The Counselling Effect

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KZK Corporation, a multinational organization with offices in numerous countries, recently went through a major reshuffle process. It resulted in significant changes in the organizational structure, job roles, and responsibilities of employees. Many employees from one of its Unit in South India reported high levels of stress and anxiety as a result of the restructuring process.

Ramesh had been working in the finance department for the past five years in the Unit. He had always been a conscientious and hardworking employee, but he felt lost and confused now. He became unsure about his role in the company and was struggling to cope with the changes. Ramesh started to exhibit signs of stress and anxiety. Noticing his mood swings, lowering productivity, and increasing absenteeism, his reporting manager-Chandran became concerned about his well-being and decided to schedule a counselling session for him.

Restructuring had resulted in alterations in the marketing strategies and goals too. It caused negative impact on Srinivas-the Area Sales Manager and his team. Due to the need for working diligently for new demands and expectations, there were extensions in working hours and sometimes no weekends. This made the marketing head (Srinivas) fatigued and over-stressed. His team mates supported him well in meeting the new challenges for smooth transition into the new phase. The team stayed cohesive to face the situation with self-determination without any counselling or psychotherapy.

A software engineer named Preeti had been working in the technical team for the past two years. She started showing signs of tension and unease. According to her colleagues, she turned irritable and restrained from socializing with them anymore. She has been missing project deadlines and her work quality also decreased. The company's HR department scheduled a counselling session with her to address her issues and improve her work performance.

During the counselling session, Ramesh expressed his concerns and fears about his existence, he doubted the future of his job and career. He also revealed that he had been experiencing sleepless nights and was finding it difficult to concentrate at work. The counsellor listened patiently and empathetically, acknowledging Ramesh's feelings and concerns. The counsellor stated that thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are interconnected, and that by changing our thoughts, we can change our feelings and behaviours. He suggested for having shift in the thought process and prescribed few relaxation techniques to Ramesh. For Preeti, the approach

of counselling was different. She was probed for her childhood memories and fears. There were long two-three sessions. After a week, she was prescribed for identifying potential triggers or stressors and developing a plan to manage them in the future, or finding ways to continue practicing self-care and relaxation techniques.

Srinivas decided to organize a positive psychology session for his entire team in order to further enhance their morale. He approached the counsellor voluntarily and described the situation. The counsellor pledged to keep his visit private and to have a session for the entire Unit rather than just the Marketing Department. Soon, there was the circular and mail from the HR department that KZK SI Unit will have a motivational session on coming weekend. Seeing Mr. Joseph Mathew-the Counsellor as the speaker, employees had apprehensions and doubts. The talk began with general interaction and eventually the session turned out to be an energy booster for everyone. Simultaneously and subsequently, Person-centric approaches for Ramesh and Preeti were continued for the desired spell. Ultimately, there were noticeable changes in the Organizational climate in few months and a new equilibrium was set.

Answer the following questions:

Q1. What types counselling approaches are mentioned in the case?

Q2. Why do you think that Ramesh and Preeti were addressed differently by the counsellor?

Q3. Justify the move by Srinivas as a team leader.

Q4. Why visiting or listening to a counsellor is often looked upon with doubts and apprehensions?

Q5. Analyze the situations in case with respect to thinking and feelings of the main characters in the case. (Ramesh, Chandran, Preeti, Srinivas, Joseph)

Q6. Identify the important characteristics of a counsellor.

Q7. Depict the flow of session that was conducted by Mr. Joseph that eventually turned out to be an energy booster for everyone.

Q8. What lessons can be drawn about team work and change management from the above case?