When Organizations Change . . .

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When an organization makes major changes, there are two basic concerns. How can the organization be adjusted to meet the needs of clientele? What effect will the anticipated changes have on the staff's job satisfaction? The authors studied the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service staff where three major organizational changes took place—generalist to specialist, enlarged geographical areas, and a changed supervisory structure. The article suggests guidelines to follow before major organizational changes are made.

Are changes inevitable if Extension organizations are to remain viable to the educational needs of our society? Do organizational changes significantly affect the satisfaction of Extension staff members? Yes, they do. Organizations must change. And, changes affect employee job satisfaction either positively or negatively. The critical question is: What are the sources of these positive and negative feelings?

Technological and social changes are accelerating the educational needs of society. How to relate more effectively to these changing needs is an important question for Extension administrators. Pfiffner and Sherwood, in discussing organizational patterns, say: "The organization is conditioned by the circumstances that give it rise."[1] The Cooperative Extension Service came into existence to meet the educational needs of early America. If Extension continues to fulfill this purpose, it must change as the needs of its clientele change.

A Dual Concern

Administrators must have a dual concern for any organizational change. First, they must analyze clientele needs and determine effective organizational changes necessary to meet these needs. Second, they must be aware of the effect any anticipated change might have on the job satisfaction of the Extension staff. Simon *et al.* warn:

Any change that threatens to decrease the net satisfaction of an organization member—re-

gardless of the reasons for the change—will be resisted by him.[2]

If organizational changes are needed to satisfy clientele demands, the staff of the organization must understand and then accept these changes. Any organization's success or failure rests with its members who have the ultimate responsibility for carrying out the organization's mission. Thus, any change, if effectively implemented, must provide its workers with an increased source of job satisfaction.

Research findings in the past decade have provided many insights into the area of employee motivation. The dual-factor theory or the two-dimensional approach[3] to understanding causes of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction helps Extension agents understand the underlying causes for their feelings. Likewise, this approach gives administrators and supervisors a tool for analyzing and predicting Extension-agent behavior. The two-dimensional approach was first conceived while trying to answer the question: "What do people want from their jobs?"[4]

Several other studies provide additional evidence that satisfying and dissatisfying feelings are caused by different sets of factors.[5] Factors commonly associated with the *psychological* or *self-actualizing* needs of a man were most often sources of job satisfaction. These were achievement, responsibility, recognition, the work itself, advancement, and the possibility for personal growth—grouped around the content and actual performance of the job. A different group of factors was identified as a source of dissatisfying feelings about the job. These were related to the *physiological* and *sociological* or *hygiene* needs of man— supervision, policy and administration, working conditions, personal life, and interpersonal relationships. They are more closely related to job environment than to job content.

Kentucky Staff Studied

The sources of satisfying and dissatisfying feelings of Extension agents related to specific organizational changes were sought through a study of Kentucky Extension workers two and a half years after the state Extension organization had undergone three major organizational changes:

1. Changing the program responsibility of each member of the field staff from generalist to area specialist.
2. Enlarging the geographical area of each agent from a single-county to a multicounty area (7-10 counties).
3. Changing the supervisory structure from a team of supervisors for each district (20-25 counties) to 1 supervisor for each multicounty area.

This study's purpose was to determine if psychological and physiological/sociological factors were still operative as sources of satisfying and dissatisfying feelings af-

ter Extension workers had experienced these three organizational changes. The following findings lend strong support for the dual grouping of the factors. However, the specific factors within each group are more often identified with specific changes.

Generalist to Area Specialist

A ranked listing of factors significantly associated with sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction by the agents when their role was changed from generalist to area specialist were:

Satisfying Factors
Possibility of personal
    growth.
The work itself.
Responsibility.

Dissatisfying Factors
Interpersonal relations with
    county clientele.
Policy and administration.
Working conditions.
Clientele expectations.
Supervision.

When discussing sources of satisfying feelings, agents said their new role enabled them to grow in their intellectual skills and to get satisfaction from using those skills. This change gave them an opportunity to do a specific job in depth, making the work more creative and challenging. This change also gave them more feeling of responsibility for "their" particular phase of the program and thus more potential for expanding the program.

When discussing sources of dissatisfaction, agents said that more demands from area clientele and lack of understanding from county clientele were dissatisfying. Area specialists had less opportunity to respond to the general requests from clientele in their home-base county. Disagreement with organizational policies, harmful or ineffective organization of work, and harmful personnel policies or the lack of policies were also reported as dissatisfying. Working conditions were a source of dissatisfaction due to increased travel and less accessible clientele. Over-supervision and subjective performance evaluation were other sources of dissatisfaction.

County to Multicounty Responsibility

A ranked listing of factors significantly associated with sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction when agents' geographical location of work was changed from a single-county to multicounty area were:

Satisfying Factors
Achievement.
The work itself.
Responsibility.
Interpersonal relations
    with other agencies.

Dissatisfying Factors
Working conditions.
Interpersonal relations with
    county clientele.
Clientele expectations.
Personal life.
Supervision.

When discussing sources of job satisfaction, agents cited increased opportunity for creative and innovative work as a "specialist" in neighboring counties. Achievement was a source of satisfaction when agents were able to help a client complete a job successfully or see favorable results of their efforts. Increased responsibility was satisfying . . . agents felt more responsibility for their own efforts, felt they were allowed to work without excessive supervision, and visualized potential for program expansion. This change also brought agents in contact with representatives from more agencies, and the cooperation received from these agency representatives was reported as a source of satisfaction.

When discussing sources of dissatisfaction, agents most often talked about undesirable working conditions such as more travel, more work, and less accessible clientele. Interpersonal relations with county clientele were dissatisfying when agents failed to receive cooperation or understanding of this organizational change from the same clientele the agents had previously worked closely with in their home-base county. More demands from clientele and supervisors who didn't understand the total situation or make their expectations understood were sources of dissatisfaction. Increased travel resulting in more time away from home and family was of tremendous concern and a great source of job dissatisfaction, particularly to the home demonstration agents.

Team of Supervisors to Single Supervisor

A ranked listing of factors significantly associated with sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction by the agents when the organization changed from team supervisors to a single supervisor were:

Satisfying Factors
Supervision.
Responsibility.

Dissatisfying Factors
Interpersonal relations with co-workers.
Policy and administration.
Interpersonal relation with county clientele.
Salary.

Agents said this change in supervision was a source of satisfaction because it provided for: (1) more "unity of command," (2) greater competence in supervision, (3) greater understanding of the total situation, (4) more objective evaluation, (5) more accessible supervision, and (6) more on-the-job supervision. Increased responsibility allowing agents to work without excessive supervision and being responsible for their own efforts gave them satisfaction.

When discussing sources of dissatisfaction, agents said that a lack of cooperation on the part of their co-workers was dissatisfying. When the organizational policy wasn't clear, when the personnel policies were harmful, or when there was a lack of policies, agents ex-

pressed dissatisfaction. They also reported that poor working relationships with organized clientele groups in their home-base county and the lack of cooperation and understanding on the part of these clientele were sources of job dissatisfaction. When wages compared unfavorably with others doing similar work or the wage increase was less or later than expected, it was dissatisfying.

High- Vs. Low-Performance Agents

Maximizing employee job satisfaction is a noble and worthwhile effort if for none other than humanitarian reasons. However, in reality, most administrators are concerned with the effect that employee job satisfaction has on performance and, thus, the productivity of the organization.

Earlier performance ratings were available for all Kentucky Extension agents. Therefore, another logical dimension of this study sought to determine if significant differences in sources and effects of job satisfaction existed between agents with high-performance ratings compared to agents with low-performance ratings.

Low-rated agents identified achievement and interest in job performance as a source of satisfying incidents a significantly greater percentage of the time than did the high-rated agents. This indicated that low-performance agents had a greater need for experiences that allow for a feeling of achievement. On the other hand, high-rated agents more often received satisfaction from incidents that afforded them greater responsibility. The findings also indicated that the lack of status was a source of dissatisfaction for low-rated agents, but was of little concern to high-rated agents.

Conclusions

The reasons Extension agents derive satisfying feelings from their jobs and thus want to perform more effectively and efficiently, even in the wake of organizational change, include:

1. Positive interest in achieving results in the job being performed.
2. Desire to be recognized from within the organization for the job done and be appreciated by the clientele served.
3. Feeling of obligation to the clientele and a desire to maintain positive relations with supervisor and co-workers.

On the other hand, organizational changes can and will create employee dissatisfaction if:

1. Organizational policy and administration aren't clearly understood.
2. Changes in working conditions or job environment conflict with the personal goals and aspirations of the employee or his family.
3. Organizational changes reduce in any way the employee's op-

portunity or ability to fulfill clientele expectations.

Implications and Suggestions

What implications do these conclusions offer Extension administrators faced with the need to make major organizational changes? For major changes, a particular factor or group of factors often are a source of satisfying or dissatisfying incidents. Before organizational change is introduced, the anticipated sensitive factors should be identified and analyzed. This identification and analysis must be made with an understanding of what people want from their work.

How can an administrator keep job satisfaction at a maximum and simultaneously reduce job dissatisfaction?

1. Involve all staff members to the extent that they understand the rationale for the change and the policies, procedures, and guidelines associated with the change.
2. Present a plan for change that will assure the staff they'll be able to more effectively serve their clientele, and thus reach their personal and professional goals.
3. Structure the jobs so the staff will be able to see more results or achievement from their efforts, and thus receive greater appreciation and recognition from the clientele served.
4. Assure the staff that the organization understands and ap-

preciates their feeling of obligation to the clientele and their desire to work closely with their co-workers and supervisor.

Before introducing any organizational change, an administrator should be able to give an affirmative answer to the following questions: Does the change give the employee: (1) an opportunity to assume greater responsibility, (2) an increased opportunity for successful completion of the job, (3) a built-in mechanism for recognition and appreciation, and (4) an opportunity for personal and professional growth?

Footnotes

1. John M. Pfiffner and Frank P. Sherwood, *Administrative Organization* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), p. 7.
2. Herbert A. Simon *et al.*, *Public Administration* (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), p. 112.
3. The dual-factor or two-dimensional theory introduced by Fredrick Herzberg, Bernard Mausner, and B. B. Snyderman, *The Motivation to Work* (New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1959), proposes that two distinct sets of factors account for overall job satisfaction. These aren't opposite ends of a continuum, but they represent two distinct continua. The job, as a source of satisfaction, constitutes one. The work environment, as a source of dissatisfaction, constitutes the other.

4. Fredrick Herzberg *et al., Job Attitudes: Review of Research and Opinion* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Psychological Service of Pittsburgh, 1957).

5. For example, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, *Motivation to Work*; Fredric Anderson, "Factors in Motivation to Work Across Three Occupational Levels" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, Department of Education, Salt Lake City, 1961); and Denzil O. Clegg, "The Motivation of County Administrators in the Cooperative Extension Service" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Department of Education, Madison, 1963).