

Human Resources (HR) Utilization at a Short-Term Insurance Organization in a Continuous Improvement (CI) Effort to Increase Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to present findings on how a local insurer utilises its staff to continuously increase customer satisfaction. The way human resource is managed at the local insurer is reviewed in terms of its implication in CI efforts and tools related to efficient HR utilization in CI implementation are proposed. A questionnaire was developed in order to acquire data in terms of HR utilization, aimed at providing a perspective from staff complement on their view of CI at the insurer, and presenting CI's state of affairs with regards to the HR utilization to improve customer satisfaction. Although human force is regarded as an important asset, more than half of the staff do not believe that employee empowerment is regarded as a main drive in CI. HR play a vital role in positioning an organisation as a leader in today's highly competitive South African short-term insurance industry. Therefore, it is important to consider the impact HR plays in the CI efforts within the organisation. A South African perspective on CI in short-term insurance industry is presented, therefore widening the knowledge in the field of CI in the insurance sector, with a special emphasis on HR utilization.

Keywords

Human Resources, Continuous Improvement, Customer Satisfaction, Empowerment

Biography

Sambil C. Mukwakungu is an academic who has been lecturing Operations Management to first year students, Food Production, and Quality Management at the University of Johannesburg since 2009. His passion for teaching and learning has allowed him to make a difference in at least one student's life every year. He is a young researcher who is still establishing himself in the area of knowledge creation with keen interest in Service Operations Management, Lean Operations, Continuous Improvement, as well as business innovation and innovation in Higher Education. He serves as country chair for 2nd International Conference on Digital Economy Emerging (ICDEc2017).

Prof Charles Mbohwa serves as Vice-Dean: Postgraduate Studies, Research and Innovation in the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment at the University of Johannesburg (UJ).

As an established researcher in the field of sustainability engineering and energy, Prof Mbohwa's specialisations include sustainable engineering, energy systems, Life-Cycle Assessments (LCA's) and bio-energy/fuel feasibility and sustainability with general research interests in renewable energies and sustainability issues. Prof Mbohwa's current research in sustainability engineering includes: Social and climate change comparison of bio-diesel life cycle impacts in Brazil and South Africa; Life Cycle Assessment and Comparisons of Rail and Road Freight Transportation in China and South Africa; The Potential, Energy and Environmental Impacts of Bio-energy in the Sugar Industry in South Africa; and the Economic, Energy and Environmental Evaluations of Biomass-based Fuel Ethanol based on Life Cycle Assessment. He is a co-author of the second chapter of the United Nation's Environmental Programme's (UNEP) Global Guidance Principles for Life Cycle Assessment Databases: A Basis for Greener Processes and Products 2011. In addition he is Project Leader for the Development of the Climate Change Response Strategy and Action Plan for the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development: Use of indigenous knowledge.