

Strategies to Improve Employee Performance through Work Discipline and Position Promotion in order to Improve Services at PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Karang in the Customer Service Section

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to outline the approach used by PT PLN (Persero) Karang Customer Service Unit to enhance services by promoting and enforcing work discipline among employees. This kind of research is qualitative, descriptive, and involves three informants in total: managers, supervisors, and workers. Three approaches are utilized to acquire data: documentation, observation, and interviews. The results of this research show that work discipline can help maintain order and consistency in the implementation of daily tasks, creating operational efficiency. Meanwhile, promotions can make employees continue to improve their skills and abilities. The combination of work discipline and promotions creates a positive cycle where employees continually strive to develop, creating a dynamic and progressive work environment.

Keywords: Work discipline, Promotion, Employee performance

INTRODUCTION

In companies, both public and private, employee productivity is a crucial factor to effectively achieve company goals. Human resources have a very important role in driving productivity, and performance improvement strategies are key in achieving these goals. PT PLN (Persero) as a public service provider is also no exception to the importance of employee productivity factors in improving customer service. In the context of PT PLN (Persero) ULP Karang, improving employee performance is a major focus, given its impact on the quality of customer service. However, employee performance management

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in the context of a large company such as PT PLN (Persero) is not an easy task, with various factors such as motivation, competence, leadership, organizational culture, and discipline affecting employee performance.

In the increasingly fierce competition in the electricity industry, PT PLN (Persero) has a crucial role in meeting the needs of the community and industry for electricity. Therefore, strategies to improve employee performance through work discipline and promotions are important in maintaining company sustainability and customer satisfaction.

Previous research has shown the beneficial effects of job promotion and work discipline on employee performance (Arfah, 2021; Siswanto, 2020). For this reason, the author wants to conduct research with the title "Strategy for Improving Employee Performance through Work Discipline and Job Promotion to Improve Services at PT PLN (Persero) ULP Karang in the Customer Service Section."

Research Problems

Some of the research issues raised are as follows.

- a. Companies, including PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Karang, face challenges in improving employee performance, which in turn affects the quality of customer service. The main problem that needs to be addressed is how to improve employee performance in order to provide better customer service.
- b. There are various factors that influence employee performance, such as motivation, competence, leadership, organizational culture, and work discipline. In the context of this research, the focus will be on work discipline and promotion as factors that have the potential to improve employee performance.
- c. The level of employee performance at PT PLN (Persero) ULP Karang has a direct impact on the quality of customer service. Therefore, improving employee performance through work discipline and promotion is expected to improve customer service.

Research Gap and Novelty

Although there have been several previous studies highlighting the factors that influence employee performance in various company contexts, including in the public service sector such as PT PLN (Persero), there is a research gap that needs to be filled. The emerging research gap is the lack of focus on specific strategies such as the



implementation of work discipline and job promotion in improving the performance of customer service employees at PT PLN ULP Karang.

In addition, previous studies also tend to lack consideration of specific company contexts, such as organizational culture and unique work environment conditions. Therefore, the novelty of this research lies in a more focused and in-depth approach to these strategies in the context of PT PLN ULP Karang, as well as an exploration of their significant impact on improving employee performance and customer service efficiency in the company. Therefore, this research is expected to add to the treasure of literature on human resource management, especially in terms of public services in the electricity sector.

Research Questions

Based on the background of the given problem, this study formulates the main problem as follows.

- a. Can the implementation of work discipline strategies be significant in improving the performance of PT. PLN ULP Karang customer service employees?
- b. Can the implementation of promotion strategies be significant in improving the performance of PT PLN ULP Karang customer service employees?

Research Purposes

This study aims to investigate two strategies that have the potential to improve the performance of PT PLN ULP Karang's customer service employees, namely the implementation of work discipline strategies and promotion strategies. The main objective is to assess whether the implementation of the two strategies can significantly improve employee performance in serving the company's customers. Theoretically, this research is expected to expand the author's knowledge about strategies to improve employee performance, as well as enrich the author's experience during the lecture period by comparing these theories with actual practice in the company environment. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide meaningful input for PT PLN ULP Karang in an effort to improve the performance of its employees and create more efficient services for company customers.



LITERATURE REVIEW

This section is elaborated with several theories and previous studies used as research references as follows.

Strategic Management

Strategic management is the process of making important decisions in an organization or company to achieve predetermined goals (Widanti, 2019). Its main focus is on the formulation and implementation of integrated plans to achieve organizational goals. Strategic management provides long-term direction, helps adapt to change, increases effectiveness, and identifies comparative advantages. By using strategic management, managers are encouraged to think creatively and consider various alternatives for a favorable outcome (Widanti, 2019). Therefore, the implementation of strategic management provides many benefits for organizations in facing the challenges of an increasingly risky environment.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is the result of individual work that is reflected in their work performance in accordance with their roles and responsibilities within an organization or company (Roziqin, 2010; Wirawan, 2009).

The focus of employee performance includes aspects of quality and quantity of work results, with supervisors playing an important role in encouraging quality performance through supervision and motivation. Employees who are professional, have a work ethic, and are responsible tend to achieve good performance, while low employee performance can cause obstacles at various levels of the company (Dharmija, et al., 2019; Yahyagil, 2015). To improve employee performance, companies need to pay attention to their needs and provide appropriate appreciation such as fair promotions and a supportive work environment (Johari and Yahya, 2016). Employee performance evaluation can be done by paying attention to indicators such as punctuality, enthusiasm, discipline, and ability to work together.

Determining good performance indicators in employee performance management requires careful consideration of several performance metrics. These include feedback that allows evaluation of individual performance or processes within the company, as well as employee motivation and commitment that affect satisfaction and productivity levels



(Sinambela, 2012; Wirawan, 2009). In addition, indicator parameters such as productivity, responsiveness, responsibility, and accountability are also a reference in assessing employee performance. The role of leadership and management in guiding, providing feedback, and facilitating a conducive work environment is key in improving performance (Rivai, 2013).

Employee performance not only determines individual success, but also plays an important role in achieving overall organizational or company goals (Panglima, 2023; Rivai, 2013). Performance functions include providing feedback, adjusting compensation, making promotion and demotion decisions, and diagnosing errors in job design. The benefits of performance include improving performance, guiding placement and promotion decisions, and as a tool for employee training and development.

The objectives of performance management include achieving improved organizational performance, developing a performance-oriented culture, increasing employee motivation and commitment, allowing the development of individual capabilities, and strengthening open relationships between individuals and managers (Priyono and Marnis, 2008). In addition, performance objectives also include assessing employee achievement levels, providing commensurate rewards, encouraging accountability, increasing motivation and work ethic, and facilitating employee placement based on their achievements. To improve performance, strategies that can be applied include understanding duties and responsibilities, setting clear goals, guidance, counseling, education, training, and creating a conducive work climate.

Work Discipline

Work discipline is a concept that includes obedience, responsibility, and orderly behavior in carrying out duties and responsibilities at work. This includes understanding and compliance with the rules, policies, and procedures that apply in the organization (Sasrohadiwiryo, 2003; Soejono, 2013). Work discipline also includes aspects such as punctuality, quality of work, discipline, cooperation with colleagues, and efficient utilization of organizational resources (Setiawan and Waridin, 2012; Siagian, 2012).

The purpose of work discipline is to ensure the sustainability of the organization in accordance with current and future relevant dynamics. This involves employees complying with rules and policies, performing their duties well, providing maximum service, using organizational resources efficiently, and creating high levels of productivity (Sasrohadiwiryo, 2003; Soejono, 2013).



In agencies, there are three types of work discipline proposed by Agustini (2019). The first is preventive discipline, which aims to prevent negative employee behavior by emphasizing the desired patterns of attitudes and behavior and motivating employees to comply with applicable regulations. Second, corrective discipline, aims for employees who violate the rules to be given disciplinary sanctions according to the level of the offense. Finally, progressive discipline, provides an opportunity for employees to correct behavior before being given more severe punishment, while allowing management to deal with repeat offenders. According to Agustini (2019), punishable behavior includes violating regulations, work ethics, and harming the office, and sanctions must be implemented appropriately in order to have a positive impact on work discipline.

Promotion

Promotion is a motivation that encourages active participation in the organization, providing opportunities for advancement. It reflects recognition of employee abilities and provides benefits such as social status, authority, responsibility, and greater income. Promotions at PT PLN (PERSERO) ULP Karang are often in the form of promotion by mutation or rotation (Simamora, 2010). Promotion has benefits for companies in business development, as well as for employees to increase motivation and job satisfaction.

According to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, promotions fulfill the need for recognition and self-actualization, providing additional motivation for individuals. Promotion indicators include honesty, loyalty, achievement, education, and work experience (Wahyudi, 2011). Promotion requirements, according to Malayu Hasibuan (2002), include discipline, work performance, skills, loyalty, experience, communication skills, and formal education. Types of promotions include temporary, fixed, minor, and dry, with each type having different characteristics and implications.

Previous Studies

Previous research provides a view of the strategies that have been applied in improving employee performance in various companies. From these studies, it was found that strategies such as job promotion, application of work discipline, work motivation, training, rewards, and performance coaching have a positive impact on employee performance (Siswanto, 2020; M. Indra Maulani, 2021; Ely Sekar Sari, 2019).



However, this research also shows that there are several obstacles faced, such as a lack of understanding of technology, limitations in understanding performance indicators, and a low level of discipline (Fitri Febriani, 2018; Muhammad Arfah, 2021; Nur Asiah, 2021).

Conceptual Model

The following is the conceptual model used in the study.



Figure 1. Research Conceptual Model

RESEARCH METHOD

This section describes the research methods used to support this research.

Research Approach

The research conducted used a qualitative approach with a qualitative descriptive method, where observed phenomena were interpreted through various methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, with the aim of describing human resource management practices at PT PLN (PERSERO) ULP Karang in improving employee performance. The descriptive approach aims to provide a clear, systematic, and accurate description of the phenomenon under study, in accordance with the main objectives of this research (Warganegara et al., 2019; Dunan et al., 2020).

Research Data and Location

The data collection techniques used in this research include interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted by asking questions directly to the unit of analysis, while observations were made by going directly to the field to examine the object of research. Documentation involves collecting documents needed for research (Sugiono, 2012; Rachmat Trijono, 2015; S Wulan, Rahayu, 2016). Data sources consist of primary data obtained directly from the object of research, namely customer service employees at PT PLN (PERSERO) ULP Karang, and secondary data that has been previously available and collected by researchers. The research population is all customer service employees totaling 3 people at PT PLN (PERSERO) ULP Karang, while the sample of this study is the entire research population.

This research focused on work discipline and job promotion as strategies to improve the performance of customer service employees, following the understanding that the focus of research is a topic restriction based on the importance of the problem to be solved. The research location was carried out at PT PLN (PERSERO) ULP Karang, Bandar Lampung, with consideration of uniqueness, interest, and suitability with the topic chosen as a place to obtain primary data (Sugiyono, 2015; Sparadley in Sugiyono, 2017).

The Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing, was used as the basis for data analysis techniques in this study. To provide a clearer picture, data reduction was done by categorizing and selecting relevant information from the interviews. Data presentation was done by providing an unbiased narrative text description of the research findings. To ensure that the conclusions drawn are reliable and consistent, the data that has been reduced and presented is consulted again during the conclusion drawing process.



RESULT

The results in this study are described in full in the explanation below.

Company Profile



Figure 2. PT. PLN (Persero)

PT. PLN (Persero) is a state-owned enterprise that has been operating for 77 years in providing electricity to the people of Indonesia, including households, government agencies, and industries. The company logo of PT PLN (Persero) has a symbolic meaning, with the vertical rectangular field symbolizing an organized organization, the yellow color reflecting enlightenment and enthusiasm, lightning symbolizing electrical energy and fast work, and three blue waves representing the determination, reliability, and constant owned by the company in providing the best service.

The company was founded in 1945, initially in the field of sugar mills and electricity. PT PLN (Persero) Karang Customer Service Unit is located at Jalan Diponegoro No. 14, Gotong Royong, Bandar Lampung City. The company's vision is "Becoming the Leading Electricity Company in Southeast Asia and #1 Customer Choice for Energy Solutions", which will be realized through missions such as running an electricity business with an orientation towards customer satisfaction, improving the quality of people's lives through electricity, and carrying out environmentally sound business activities.

The organizational structure of the customer service division of PT PLN Karang Customer Service Unit can be seen in the figure below.

**Figure 3. Organization Structure**

Each functional position has different duties and responsibilities, as seen in the diagram above. In addition to maintaining productive working relationships, the duties of the Customer Service Unit Manager include customer service, meter reading, account management, revenue control, loss control, distribution operations, and financial administration. The Customer Service Division monitors electricity bills, provides services related to new installations and other changes, studies survey results for service improvement, and carries out enforcement and revenue control.

Data Analysis

Based on the understanding that employee performance and productivity are crucial factors in the success of a company, PT PLN (Persero) Karang Customer Service Unit implements a strategy of Work Discipline and Position Promotion as an effort to improve employee performance. The formulation of this research problem is whether the strategy is effective in improving the performance of customer service employees at PT PLN ULP Karang. The method used is qualitative with a qualitative descriptive approach, with data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. Data sources consist of primary data and secondary data, with samples in the form of managers, supervisors of the customer service division, and customer service employees who constitute the entire population consisting of three people.

Work Discipline Factors

At PT PLN (Persero) Karang Customer Service Implementation Unit, work discipline is very important to achieve organizational goals because with high work discipline, the results achieved will be better. The definition of discipline is an attitude of submission and obedience to standards that are seen as obligations, such as doing office work and arriving on time. Employee performance is positively affected by a high level of discipline, which motivates workers to work long hours to meet organizational goals. Progressive work discipline is implemented at PLN ULP Karang, where employees who violate the rules are given the opportunity to improve themselves before facing more severe consequences. Such violations are evaluated at monthly meetings, and employees who continue to commit violations will be followed up with appropriate sanctions.

The impact of this work discipline is seen in the commitment of managers, supervisors, and employees to provide the best service to customers, thereby increasing customer satisfaction. All employees perform their duties in accordance with applicable operational standards, which has enabled significant changes in customer service, optimal complaint handling, and continuous socialization of the PLN Mobile application. In addition, another positive impact is the increased responsibility and obligation felt by all employees in carrying out their duties, as well as improvements in task execution.

The results of this interview are in line with previous research on employee performance improvement strategies, which shows that discipline is an important factor in improving performance. Furthermore, according to WF Glueck and LR Jauch's strategy theory, a strategy is a plan that links the company's strategic advantages with external obstacles and is intended to help the organization implement it properly to achieve company goals. The implementation of progressive work discipline at PLN ULP Karang proves that work discipline can maintain order, consistency, improve work quality, and create a foundation for operational efficiency.

Promotion Factors

Promotion at PT PLN (Persero) Karang Customer Service Unit is a process in which an employee is promoted to a higher position after going through an evaluation and being deemed worthy. Job promotions play a role in improving employee discipline, because promoted employees must meet the established discipline standards. The



impact is improved work efficiency, enhanced employee competence, and increased employee loyalty due to recognition of their contributions.

Promotions also encourage employees to be more competitive, improve their work output, and communicate well, especially since customer service units interact directly with customers. In addition, promotions are also an important step in employees' career development, providing additional motivation and salary increases as incentives to excel.

Previous research has shown that promotion is an effective strategy in improving employee performance. Promotions are based on performance reviews, which provide motivation and recognition to employees in the workplace and help the organization achieve its goals. According to WF Glueck and LR Jauch's strategy theory, a strategy is a plan that links the company's strategic advantages with external problems to ensure that its objectives can be implemented and achieved properly.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory also emphasizes that promotions can be a form of recognition and additional motivation for employees, as achieving higher needs such as recognition and self-actualization can motivate them to improve performance. Thus, promotions at PLN ULP Karang not only serve as career advancement, but also as a motivational boost for employees to continue to excel and commit to their duties.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews and research, it can be concluded that the job promotion applied at PT PLN (Persero) ULP Karang is a permanent promotion. The findings show that promotions provide incentives for employees to continuously improve their skills and knowledge, as well as make them ready to take on greater responsibilities. In addition, promotions can also increase employee loyalty and be an important step in their career development.

The results also show that work discipline helps maintain order and consistency in the performance of daily tasks, and creates a foundation for operational efficiency. In the context of a combination of discipline and promotion, a positive cycle is created where employees are constantly striving to improve. As a result, a dynamic and forward-thinking work environment is created, which benefits each employee as well as the company's overall performance and productivity.



PT. PLN (Persero) ULP Karang has found that integrating work progress with work discipline has improved employee performance, fostered a forward-thinking work environment, and improved service.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

Some conclusions that can be drawn are as follows.

- a. Disiplin Work discipline can contribute to improving the quality of work results. By following established procedures and guidelines, employees can maintain work quality standards. The implementation of work discipline provides a strong foundation for achieving company goals through increased productivity, quality and good work.
- b. Promotion has a positive impact by increasing employee motivation, encouraging skill development in order to strengthen team performance and increase employee loyalty. It creates a dynamic work environment and supports the long-term growth of the company.

Recommendations

The author of this study offers several recommendations to researchers and related parties based on the conclusions mentioned above. Initially, this research is expected to enlighten future researchers and become an important source of information for the public in need. Furthermore, this research is expected to be a reference or source of comparison for related research in the future.

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