

The Management Concepts and Models of Enterprise Teams Led by the New Generation of Employees

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the innovation of concepts and models for enterprise team management under the leadership of the new generation of employees. It systematically analyzes the significant characteristics of this group in terms of diversified values, self-actualization orientation, and digital dependence, and reveals the multi-dimensional impacts they have on traditional control-oriented management, one-way communication, standardized incentives, and single career paths. Based on this, it proposes paths for concept innovation from dimensions such as enabling management, meaning co-construction, and personalized support, and constructs model innovation solutions from aspects such as flat organizational structure, diversified incentives, dual-track promotion, and error-tolerant culture. These provide theoretical references for enterprises to activate the potential of the new generation of employees and build an adaptive management system.

Keywords: New generation employees; Team management; Model innovation.

1. INTRODUCTION

As the digital revolution sweeps across the globe and information technology reshapes the social structure with overwhelming force, a group of new-generation employees who grew up in the Internet era, were nurtured in a society of abundant resources, and were shaped in a multicultural environment have become an indispensable core force within the enterprise teams. They entered the workplace carrying values, behavioral patterns, and career demands that are completely different from those of their predecessors, causing traditional management paradigms to encounter unprecedented challenges ^[1]. According to relevant surveys, the new-generation employees exhibit significant differences from their predecessors in terms of personal values and career development priorities, work-life balance, and self-value realization ^[2]. These findings all indicate a profound fact - the management subjects have undergone fundamental changes, and if management concepts and models remain stagnant, they will surely fail in the competition for talents. Cappelli and Tavis ^[3] pointed out that the contemporary labor market is undergoing structural transformation, and enterprises must fundamentally restructure their management logic to respond to the deep-seated demands of new-generation employees for the meaning of work and personalized development. Facing such a drastic generational change, enterprise team management urgently needs to undergo systematic innovation from concept to model. This article aims to systematically analyze the characteristics of the new-generation employees, reveal the multi-dimensional impact they have on traditional management models, and on this basis, propose paths for the innovation of management concepts and models, in order to provide theoretical references and practical guidance for enterprises to build a team management system that meets the requirements of the new era ^[4].

2. CHARACTERISTICS AND VALUE ORIENTATION OF THE NEW GENERATION EMPLOYEES

2.1 Diversification and Personalization of Values

The most distinctive feature of the new generation employees is that their values exhibit a high degree of diversification and individualization. Unlike the previous generation of employees who regarded career development as the sole pursuit, the new generation employees tend to seek balance and satisfaction in multiple dimensions such as work, life, and interpersonal relationships. Their expectations for the working environment have already transcended simple salary compensation and extended to the comfort of the workplace, the inclusiveness of the corporate culture, and the vastness of career development space. The new generation employees show unprecedented emphasis on the compatibility between organizational values and personal values in their job selection, and this value-driven career choice logic requires that enterprises in their management practices must place the integration and alignment of values at a strategic level ^[5].

2.2 Self-Realization Orientation in Work Attitude

The new generation employees exhibit a strong self-realization orientation in their work attitude. They yearn to find their interests in work, exert their personal potential, and make a leap from material satisfaction to spiritual pursuit ^[6]. Burke et al. found in their research on the work motivation of the new generation employees that this group places a significantly higher emphasis on training and development opportunities than the previous generation of employees, and career growth space has become the core determining factor for their choice and retention intentions. They have a particularly profound understanding of the meaning of work, and are reluctant to work merely for the “completion of tasks”, and more inclined to clearly understand “why do this” and “how my contribution affects the whole” ^[7].

2.3 Personal Development and Digital Dependence in Behavioral Patterns

At the behavioral pattern level, the new generation employees emphasize personal development and the deep integration of digital tools. Approximately 70% of the new generation employees consider whether it is in line with their own interests and personality when planning their career, and a large number of new generation employees are accustomed to using their spare time for self-study and skill improvement. They are accustomed to obtaining information and solving problems through the internet, tend to communicate online and engage in digital collaboration, and hold a critical attitude towards traditional processes and paper-based office work. In team collaboration, they value individual contributions and unique value, and tend to express their own opinions and creativity rather than blindly following others. Jonsen ^[8] pointed out in his research on the management of digital-native employees that the new generation employees have formed a deep symbiotic relationship with digital technology, which not only reshapes their working methods but also fundamentally changes their perception of organizational authority and management processes, requiring enterprises in their management design to fully respect and utilize this characteristic.

3. MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACTS FACED BY TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT MODELS

3.1 Complete Failure of Control-oriented Thinking

The traditional management model is based on the bureaucratic system and relies on measures such as attendance systems and performance penalties to constrain employee behavior. Its core logic lies in maximizing organizational efficiency through institutionalized control. However, this logic has completely failed when it comes to the new generation of employees. The new generation of employees are naturally desensitized to management authority, respecting professional capabilities but resenting the sense of superiority resulting from job hierarchy. Those who grew up in single-child families are more accustomed to being noticed and expressing themselves, and have a natural psychological resistance to command-style management. When being fined for being late no longer restrains the intention to quit, when annual awards are difficult to stimulate enthusiasm for daily work, and when the hierarchical reporting system becomes an obstacle to communication, managers have to admit that the control-oriented thinking has lost its effectiveness in front of the new generation. Research shows that over 60% of enterprises have a lagging management concept, failing to fully recognize the values and behaviors of the new generation employees, which directly leads to a significant decline in management efficiency.

3.2 Breakdown of One-way Directive Communication

In traditional management, the communication between managers and employees presents a typical one-way characteristic, namely “assign tasks - check results”. This model is not only inefficient but also interpreted as a “not being trusted” signal, easily triggering rebellious psychology. New-generation employees desire equal dialogue rather than authoritative obedience and expect more voice and participation in decision-making processes. When managers criticize in a condescending manner, employees do not feel guidance but preaching, and passive resistance follows, and communication thus falls into a deadlock. The lack of effective communication not only reduces the efficiency of information transmission but also seriously erodes the trust foundation of the team, causing the authority of managers to be gradually undermined.

3.3 Failure of Standardized Incentive Mechanisms

The traditional incentive system is centered on “fixed salary plus year-end bonus plus annual awards”, with its long cycle, single form, and delayed feedback characteristics forming a sharp contradiction with the new generation of employees’ expectations for immediate feedback and personalized recognition. The new generation of employees are accustomed to the rapid iteration of the Internet rhythm and have extremely low acceptance of periodic assessments. They prefer to receive immediate rewards after completing short-term contributions. At the same time, the mere material incentives are losing

their appeal for the new generation, with about 60% of them believing that in addition to basic salary, career development opportunities, training learning, and work recognition, which are non-material incentives, are equally important or even more crucial. When the incentive methods cannot match the changes in the demand structure, the enthusiasm and loyalty of employees will continue to decline.

3.4 Mismatch between Career Development System Supply and Demand

New-generation employees pursue personalized career development paths and expect enterprises to “tailor” their growth plans. However, most enterprises still follow the traditional concept of setting positions based on events, providing uniform career paths, which forms a serious mismatch with the demands of the new generation for autonomy, growth, and diverse paths. According to statistics, only less than 30% of enterprises provide clear career development paths for new-generation employees, and this supply shortage directly leads to a high turnover rate of core talents. New-generation employees have an extremely urgent need for transparency in career development, hoping to clearly see the direction and possibility of personal growth at the time of entry, rather than wasting their youth in confusion.

4. DEEP INNOVATION IN MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

4.1 Transformation of Role from Controller to Enabler

In response to the characteristics of the new generation of employees, the management philosophy must undergo a fundamental transformation from “controlling behavior” to “supporting growth”, and from “one-way demands” to “two-way co-creation”. The core function of managers no longer lies in issuing instructions based on their position authority, but in providing an efficient environment and conditions for organizational members to create value, allowing them to directly experience the sense of growth brought by their contributions. This transformation requires managers to complete a self-revolution of “de-authorization”, replacing command control with equal dialogue, and winning respect through professional capabilities rather than obtaining obedience through position labels. As pointed out by management scholars, in the new organizational management model, managers must achieve “egolessness”, becoming service providers and supporters for the value creation of organizational members, and fully leveraging the creative passion of each member through empowerment and activation.

4.2 Logical Upgrade from Assigning Tasks to Co-creating Meaning

The new generation of employees often experience “meaning anxiety”, as they find it difficult to work solely for the completion of tasks and need to clearly understand the value and goals of their work. Therefore, the management philosophy must upgrade from “assigning tasks” to “co-creating meaning”. Specifically, this upgrade includes three progressive steps. The first step is goal decomposition, converting the enterprise strategy into specific goals that employees can understand, so that every member can clearly perceive the connection between their work and the organizational vision. The second step is participation in the formulation, allowing employees to participate in the discussion and adjustment of goals, and jointly determining the priority of key tasks at the quarterly plan meeting, transforming the decision-making process from one-way command to collective consensus. The third step is value visualization, regularly providing feedback on the impact of work on the company, customers, or society, and through sharing user feedback, presenting business growth data, etc., allowing employees to truly feel the significance and value of their contributions.

4.3 Paradigm Shift from Standardized Constraints to Personalized Support

The “one-size-fits-all” management model is one of the core pain points for the new generation of employees. They yearn to be regarded as unique individuals rather than replaceable cogs. Therefore, management needs to shift from standardized constraints to personalized support. This requires managers to have deep insight into the needs of employees, through regular interviews, anonymous questionnaires, etc., to understand their career goals, interests, specialties, and work preferences, and accordingly provide differentiated management methods. For employees seeking growth, provide training opportunities and practical project experiences; for those emphasizing balance, allow flexible working hours and remote work; for those skilled in innovation, grant more autonomy and trial-and-error space. The practice of a manufacturing enterprise is quite instructive. Its “dual-track development channels” for technical position employees have increased the retention rate of core technical personnel by 25%, fully demonstrating the significant effectiveness of personalized management.

5. SYSTEM INNOVATION OF MANAGEMENT MODEL

5.1 Flat Organization Structure and Open Communication Mechanism

The primary task of management model innovation is to break through the traditional hierarchical barriers and establish a flat organizational structure. By reducing management levels and shortening the decision-making chain, information transmission becomes more efficient, allowing employees to directly participate in goal setting and problem feedback. At the communication mechanism level, enterprises should build a digital proposal system and anonymous feedback channels, and organize cross-departmental roundtable meetings regularly to ensure that employee suggestions can reach the management level and receive substantive responses. The realization of effective communication relies on the listening ability and feedback skills of managers. A sincere attitude, careful listening content, and appropriate repetition of key information are the foundation for building trust. At the same time, managers should avoid giving feedback with negative language such as “you always” or “you never”, but should give constructive opinions on specific behaviors based on the facts. Only when employees feel that “my voice is heard” can their sense of identification and belonging to the team be truly stimulated.

5.2 Construction of Diversified Incentive System and Instant Feedback Mechanism

Incentive is the core lever of management. Facing the diverse and dynamic new-generation employees, enterprises need to build a multi-dimensional incentive system of “material plus spirit plus growth”. In the material aspect, an elastic welfare package model can be attempted, converting some welfare into optional items such as health check-ups, learning subsidies, and vacation exchanges, allowing employees to independently customize based on their own needs. In the spiritual aspect, the effect of regular non-material incentives is often better than a simple salary increase. Public recognition, personalized rewards, and lunch with senior executives can effectively meet the high-level needs of employees for recognition. In the growth aspect, design clear promotion paths and skill advancement routes for employees, and present the requirements and development paths of different positions through charts or digital tools. Particularly crucial is the establishment of an instant feedback mechanism, providing small cash, electronic gift cards, or additional vacation as immediate rewards for short-term contributions, forming a positive cycle of “small achievements - quick feedback”, and avoiding the erosion of employees’ enthusiasm due to the time gap between effort and reward.

5.3 Personalized Development System and Dual-track Promotion Path

The career development needs of new-generation employees have shifted from a single vertical promotion to diversified growth paths. Enterprises should design personalized career development plans for them, helping employees clarify their long-term career direction through job rotation immersion, mentorship systems, and practical project experiences. The design of dual-track promotion paths is particularly important. That is, establish parallel development paths of management sequence and professional sequence, allowing employees to choose to become management cadres or technical experts based on their own strengths, and provide customized training plans for different paths. The cross-departmental job rotation mechanism enables employees to access different business modules, fully understand the operation logic of the enterprise, and simultaneously discover potential multi-skilled talents. The reverse mentorship system is implemented by arranging new-generation employees to serve as technical advisors in traditional business departments, achieving knowledge feedback through the teaching of digital tools and insights into emerging markets, promoting the flow and renewal of organizational wisdom.

5.4 Innovation Tolerance Culture and the Creation of Psychological Security

The innovation ability of new-generation employees is the key source for enterprises to maintain competitiveness. Innovation inevitably involves the risk of failure. Therefore, the management model innovation must include the construction of an innovation tolerance mechanism. Enterprises should clearly distinguish between strategic mistakes and operational errors, be inclusive of failures in exploratory innovation, and extract experience through review and analysis, converting failures into resources for team learning. Establish an innovation fund or special support plan to reduce the cost of innovation trial and error for employees, and publicly recognize innovative behaviors regardless of success or failure. The core of this tolerance culture lies in building psychological security for employees, allowing them to break away from conventions, express different opinions, and not worry about being punished for failure. When managers can implement the practice of “public praise and private criticism”, and create an atmosphere in the team that encourages taking risks and tolerates failure, the creativity of the new generation of employees can truly be unleashed.

6. CONCLUSION

The management of enterprise teams led by the new generation of employees is essentially a profound transformation from “control” to “empowerment”, from “command” to “co-creation”, and from “standardization” to “personalization”. This transformation is not a simple repair of traditional management, but a systematic reconfiguration of management concepts and models. When managers transform from controllers to enablers, when communication upgrades from one-way instructions to two-way collaboration, when incentives shift from material motivation to meaning-driven motivation, and when career development expands from a single path to multiple paths, enterprises can truly activate the creative potential of the new generation of employees and transform it into the core driving force for the organization’s continuous innovation. In this era of accelerating change, the essence of management is no longer restraint and control, but the stimulation of kindness and potential - only by understanding the new generation can one win the future.

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