

# THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY

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## **Abstract**

*This action research investigates the impacts of Organizational Development Interventions (ODIs) on employee commitment and motivation in relation to achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction in a Bangkok-based company: A.E.S. Engineering Co., Ltd, which specializes in the distribution and servicing of high-tech analytical equipment. The respondents were AES sixteen employees and sixty-five clients. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized and data was collected using questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and participatory and non-participatory observation. The research, conducted from January 2008 to March 2009, indicates that employee commitment improved after ODIs, which included formal and informal meetings, English language and leadership training. The improved affective commitment of the staff was reflected in the enhanced levels of contentment within the organization linked to a stronger desire to remain with AES and an increase in team dynamism and reduced staff turnover, both of direct financial benefits to AES. Improved normative commitment created self-motivation and a self-driven desire to help AES survive in a highly challenging market environment. Strategies went beyond improved communication, counseling and training to include financial incentives linked to performance pay and gain sharing. Job enrichment resulted in better client relationships and more efficient scheduling and resource use.*

**Keywords:** *OD interventions, employee commitment, employee motivation, customer satisfaction.*

## **Introduction**

The focus of this research was to identify and investigate the impacts of Organizational Development Interventions (ODIs) on employee commitment and motivation in relation to achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction in an organization. The respondents were the sixteen employees and sixty-five clients of a Bangkok-based company; A.E.S. Engineering Co., Ltd. (AES), which specializes in the distribution and servicing of high-tech analytical equipment.

Founded in 1992, AES managed to survive a number of crises, most notably the 1997 Tom Yum Koong crisis, and lately has been facing intensive competition, especially from Buker,

which manufactures and markets competing products directly in Thailand. AES is also facing stiffer competition from other local and international distributors. In 2006, it started to lose market shares for both service contracts and equipment sales, which have been declining since.

As part of the pre-ODIs, ODIs, and post-ODIs, the respondents were asked to address a range of questions crafted to ascertain their levels of commitment, motivation and satisfaction from a client perspective. All OD interventions were initiated and managed by the researcher in his capacity as AES general manager.

## **1. SWOT Analysis**

OD Interventions at AES started with a SWOT analysis so as to make an initial assessment of the company's situation and identify problems and AES potential for change and development operationally and in

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terms of its functional/organizational chart and structure. Declining revenues also led the company to conduct a customer survey in order to determine the external forces impacting on its performance.

AES main strength is its representative role of top global brands: quality products with a strong reputation. The company also has strong business relationships and is perceived as reliable by suppliers and customers alike (government agencies and universities). These factors have combined to produce large volume sales contracts over the long term. Providing effective after-sales service and professional back-up with scientific and technological support and consultation was also integral to maintaining and expanding AES market shares.

The company's opportunities include its increased investments in scientific and analytical equipment to respond to changes in government policy with regard to having to train more scientists and engineers. Thailand's economic growth and the resultant increase in product ranges to meet new market needs are also seen as opportunities as are foreign investments in Thailand's neighboring countries.

AES weaknesses include the technical staff's limited sales knowledge and experience, difficulty communicating in English and lack of some of the skills necessary to meet customers' requirements. Additional weaknesses are: customer retention; highly-priced niche market products from the United States and Europe; dependency on government policy; and budgets; and time-consuming logistics in the sourcing of spare parts.

Cheap imports from Asian countries, losing exclusive representation rights to new firms entering the market, and the unstable political situation in Thailand which freezes both domestic and foreign investment, have been identified as the main threats facing AES.

It was also recognized that a drop-off in employee commitment and motivation might lead to a drop in job satisfaction, with its resultant poor performance and negative flow in relation to customer satisfaction (Cumming and Worley, 2005).

## **2. Review of the Literature**

The key theoretical issues considered in this study have been the subject of much research as attested by the large body of literature on these topics.

### **2.1 - OD Interventions**

OD interventions have been defined as any actions on the part of a change agent carrying the implication that the actions are well planned, deliberate and presumable, and functional for the purpose of improving and reinforcing strategies, structures and processes which lead to organization effectiveness (Cumming & Worley, 2005).

Change refers to the transition of standpoints when one's interest is taken into account (yellow-print thinking), by setting results ahead (blue-print thinking), by motivating people to act and making plan changes appealing (red-print thinking), by motivating people to discover and learn from their discoveries (green-print thinking) and by sense-making to overcome obstacles, thereby allowing self-organization and evolution (white-print thinking) (Caluwé and Vermaak, 2007). Change in this research refers to the transiting phenomenon from low customer to higher customer satisfaction after ODIs have been implemented.

### **2.2 - Employee Commitment**

In relation to the issues of employee commitment, the attachment of an individual to an organization involves (i) affective commitment, (ii) continuance commitment, and (iii) normative commitment.

(i) *Affective Commitment* refers to an employee's emotional attachment to the organization. As a result, he/she strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and desires to be with the organization. This employee commits to the organization because he/she "wants to" (Mayer and Allen, 1997)

(ii) *Continuance Commitment* refers to the individual perception of seeing the high costs of losing organizational membership ("side bet theory"), including economic losses (such as pension accruals) and social costs (friendship ties with co-workers) that would have to be

given up. The employee remains a member of the organization because he/she “has to.”(Ibid).

(iii) *Normative Commitment* refers to an individual’s attachment and desire to remain with an organization out of a feeling of obligation. The employee stays with the organization because he/she “ought to.” In other words, he/she remains with the organization because of personal values, and felt obligations, or to return gratitude or repay a debt for being well treated or well trained (Ibid). Normative commitment may also mirror an internalized norm, developed before the employee joins the organization through family or other socialization processes, that one should be loyal to one’s organization (Mowday et al, 1979).

Employee commitment can be achieved through:

- *Redesigning one’s job conditions:* resetting existing tasks to be more challenging, creative, intrinsically motivating, or exciting; instilling higher status; or offering more secure or better working conditions.

- *Attempting to meet expectations:* endeavoring through deliberate choices to engage in activities in order to achieve worthwhile outcomes.

- *Raising benefits accrued:* Linking compensation with performance so as to induce greater efforts to achieve targets.

- *Creating personal values:* Organizing activities to cultivate each individual employee’s attachment to something that serves as a guide to more accomplishments.

- *Instilling felt obligations:* Organizing activities in order to raise personal norms and values so that employees abide by the rules and regulations without any sense of being coerced.

- *Applying appreciative coaching:* Implementing constructionist, positive, simultaneity, poetic and anticipatory principles for the purpose of deepening one’s commitment to achieve personal and company goals.

- *Organizing training:* Educating employees through experiences, both theoretical and actual, in terms of job design in order to enhance their knowledge and skills to

serve existing and future customers better (Hunter and Thatcher, 2007) .

### 2.3 - Employee Motivation

Employee motivation is a process by which employees’ behavior is mobilized, responsibly conditioned and sustained in the interest of achieving the organizational goals (DuBrin, 2007). In this research, it involves motivation through (i) job design, (ii) behavior modification, (iii) recognition and pride and (iv) financial incentives as defined below.

(i) *Motivation through Job Design:* Job design, as its names indicates, is a strategy designed to make an employees’ job more challenging so that he/she feels responsible and is encouraged to perform his/her work more effectively.

Job design involves job enrichment, applying the Job Characteristics Model, and job crafting (DuBrin, 2007).

- *Job enrichment* aims to make one’s job more motivating and satisfying by adding variety, responsibility, and managerial decision making to it. It gives employees a sense of ownership, responsibility and accountability for their works (Yperen and Hagedoom, 2003).

- *The Job Characteristics Model* focuses on the task and interpersonal demands of a job. It is based on the Needs Theory and Expectancy Theory, which concern themselves with how to derive satisfaction from one’s job, i.e. skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback (Hackman and Oldham, 1980).

- *Job Crafting* refers to the physical and mental changes employees make with regard to a task or in relation to some aspects of their jobs. Job crafting involves three specific considerations: the number and types of tasks, interaction with others in the job, and one’s views on the job; all three intended to make the job more meaningful and enriching (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001)

(ii) *Motivation through Organizational Behavior Modification (OBMod)* is an application of the reinforcement theory, which is meant to encourage employees in the work

setting. To modify one's behavior, OBMod typically uses positive reinforcement rather than punishment (Luthans and Stajkovic, 1999).

OBMod follows eight rules of thumb: (1) appropriate rewards or punishments should be chosen (Smith, 2001); (2) the behavior to encourage should be reinforced; (3) ample feedback should be given; (4) rewards should be commensurate with the good deeds; (5) rewards should be scheduled intermittently; (6) rewards and punishments should follow the observed behavior closely in time (DuBrin, 2007); (7) rewards should be made visible to the recipient and to others as well (Kerr, 1999), and (8) rewards should be changed periodically (DuBrin, 2007).

(iii) *Motivation through Recognition and Pride* stem from the direct applications of positive reinforcement: Both pride and recognition operate as motivators. Recognition is a common human craving for appreciation (Smith, 2001). It includes: giving feedback for work done; genuine praises; linking rewards and recognition to organizational goals; and valuing types of rewards and recognition and assessing their effectiveness (DuBrin, 2005). Pride involves dignity and honor for worthwhile achievements. It satisfies the need for self-esteem and self-fulfillment. It is a form of intrinsic reinforcement (Byrne, 2003).

(iv) *Motivation through Financial Incentives* consists of monetary rewards meant to encourage good performance. It predates behavioral modification. It can be offered by linking pay to performance, for example, via employee stock ownership or options (in a listed company) and gain sharing. In this research, only linking pay to performance and gain sharing are considered.

Linking pay to performance ties an employee's financial rewards to specific performance criteria and directly links them to value-enhancing business results either individually or as part of a group (Davidson, 1997).

Gain sharing is a program designed to increase motivation and productivity through a company-wide bonus plan linking incentive pay to performance. It leads to more employee involvement. (DuBrin, 2007)

In summary, employees can be motivated through: Job enrichment (Cumming & Worley, 2005), empowerment (Nelson, 2000), involvement (Cumming & Worley, 2005), job crafting (Wrizesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Cumming & Worley, 2005), OB Mod (Cumming & Worley, 2005), rewarding recognition (Ibid), raising pride (Ibid), linking pay to performance (Davidson, 1997), and gain sharing ((DuBrin, 2007).

#### *2.4 - Job Satisfaction*

Job satisfaction is the amount of pleasure or contentment employees experience with an existing job, and future assignments, leading to a desire to stay with the company with higher job commitment and self-motivation to achieve personal and company goals (Cumming & Worley, 2005).

#### *2.5 - Customer Satisfaction*

Customer satisfaction is a measure of a customer perception that the services or goods supplied not only fulfill his/her needs but goes beyond his/her expectations, leading to higher customer satisfaction. In this research, customer satisfaction involves: (1) product performance and ease of use; (2) service response times to call center, (courtesy, expertise of service engineers, time to diagnose problems, time to repair systems and availability of spare parts); (3) training (quality of training services for onsite training); (4) commercial and technical documentation (brochures, user manuals), and information about new products; and (5) overall satisfaction (Keiningham et al., 2004; Sandholm, 2005; and Thornton, 2005).

### **3. OD Interventions**

#### *3.1 - Formal and Informal Meetings through Storytelling*

- Formal Meetings were organized in order to redesign the job conditions, determine the expectations to be met, raise benefits, create job availability, and reengineer motivations through job design and financial incentives. These meetings were conducted in various forms: Q&A, information sessions,

problem solving, brainstorming, and teambuilding meetings.

- Informal Meetings were held in order to enhance Motivation through OB Mod and Recognition and Pride. These motivational meetings were conducted anytime, anywhere, whenever, and wherever necessary and/or permitted. They could take place, for instance, at coffee breaks, afternoon breaks or after office hours, in the workplace or outside the workplace, and even while traveling to visit clients. The informal style of these meetings made AES staff feel comfortable sharing ideas and interacting freely. Also, during those meetings the researcher introduced and implemented appreciative coaching (see subsection 3.3 below).

### 3.2 - Special Training

Special training included (i) BrainMap and (ii) English training.

(i) *BrainMap* – a selfware profile. Brain Map is a tool to check individual characteristics, insights, appeal activities/pastimes, information sources and traits (The Brain Technology Corporation, 1981, 1995, 1997 and 2006).

The characteristics involved in BrainMap include: reactions upon facing problems, individual contentment, sensitivity when moody, individual talent, handling information, and individual worldview (Ibid).

Insights for BrainMap purposes refer to: decision-making, righteousness, mood-control, self-control, sociality, open-ended thinking, anticipation, environmental awareness, information handling prioritization, comment attentiveness, context-based problem solving techniques, managing the future, communication significance, chance-taking, and dealing with issues (Ibid).

Pastimes/activities with regard to BrainMap include: person-contact and non-contact games and physical and mental games characterized as both adventurous and non adventurous such as, for example, football, tennis, fishing, and reading (Ibid).

Information sources involved in BrainMap include: childhood memories, accidental notice, biography, future books and articles, manuals,

paintings, printed matters, questioning, self conceptualization, trades and reports, external ideas, and specialized magazines (Ibid).

The comparative traits included in the BrainMap tool are: (a) thing-handling, (b) adjustments, (c) aspirations and (d) emotions. BrainMap also considers eight factors within an individual: (1) capturing one's basic profile; (2) understanding the 'thinking lens' of one's views of the world; (3) individual skills and qualities both personal and as part of a team; (4) other special individual skills; (5) contributions to the organization and to oneself; (6) the hidden 20% that matters; (7) building new thinking; and (8) aiming for self-change through BrainMap (Ibid).

(ii) *English training*: The need for basic English language training for sales, services and leadership was reported in the SWOT analysis discussed earlier. AES employees, most of whom are engineers and scientists, do not have the knowledge, skills and experience to deal with customers in English. This lack of linguistic skills affects AES ability to retain customers and maintain relationships and connections.

### 3.3 - Appreciative Coaching

Appreciative coaching as defined by Orem et al (2007) consists in implementing the *constructionist, positive, simultaneity, poetic, and anticipatory principles* in order to raise one's level of commitment to achieving personal and company goals. It also assists employees to think about themselves relative to the past and present and how they might form foundations to shape their future. Appreciative coaching supports and reinforces motivation through recognition and pride, which boost both extrinsic and intrinsic morale, as observed by the researcher.

- Implementing Constructionist Principles forms the foundation of how staff members better know themselves and take action in creating their own future, i.e., (1) ensure what they focus on becomes reality; (2) create clear images of the key attributes they want to keep; and (3) take responsibility for what they know (Ibid).

- The Positive Principles refer to all the

concrete ways one ensures that employees maximize the positive effects from the coaching relationship. They include four positive emotions as identified by Fredrickson (1998): (1) joy/happiness, which sharpen one's willingness to try new things; (2) interest (curiosity, intrigue, excitement or wonder); (3) contentment (tranquility, serenity or safety); and (4) love, the center of all positive emotions, which leads to the expansion of one's repertoire of human capabilities [physical-ability to outmaneuver predators; intellectual ability (a detailed cognitive map for finding one's way), social ability (i.e. the ability to form lasting and supportive relationships)] (Ibid).

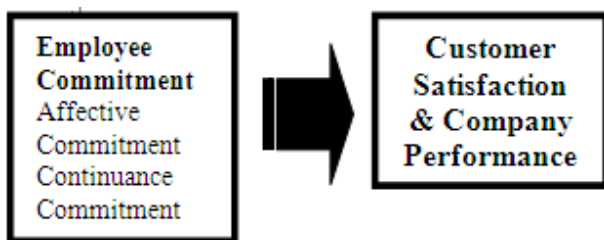
- The Simultaneity Principles refer to the constant interaction between a person and his/her environment, both influencing one another through the coaching process, which starts with appreciative questions reminding employees of their strengths and successes. This positive interaction determines their positive feelings and actions (Ibid).

- Implementing the Poetic Principles means that employees do not see the organization as a machine but *"as a story co-authored [...] that can be read and interpreted in multiple ways"*. Staff members will view themselves holistically and liberate themselves from a narrow linear view of time that weakens their expression and autonomy.

- Finally, the Anticipatory Principles refer to the staff capacity to imagine and create their own future and direct their actions and thoughts toward their desired future.

#### 4. Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

Based on the literature reviewed the theoretical framework for this research was designed as follows:



This action research was designed to investigate and identify the impacts of carefully selected OD interventions on employee commitment and motivation with regard to customer satisfaction. The respondents were the 16 AES employees and 65 AES clients. The research was conducted between January 2008 and March 2009. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used and data was collected using questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and participatory and non-participatory observation. The process involved three stages: (4.1) a pre-ODI diagnosis stage; (4.2) ODI stage; and (4.3) evaluation stage.

##### 4.1 - Pre ODI-Stage Diagnosis

The purpose of this stage was to understand how the company was functioning at individual, group, and project levels and provide the information necessary to design change interventions (Brow and Harvey, 2006). This stage involved collecting pertinent information about the current operations, analyzing those data and drawing conclusions for potential change and improvement. This stage was also to identify weaknesses and threats and find appropriate ODIs to address them (Cumming and Worley, 2005; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006; and Massarik and Pei-Carpenter, 2002).

##### 4.2 - ODI Stage

This stage saw the application of the planned actions or events intended to help the company increase its effectiveness (Brow and Harvey, 2006). Interventions purposively disrupt the status quo as they are deliberate attempts to change a company and its sub-units into a different and more effective state (Brown & Eisenhardt, 1997). In this study, effective OD interventions were to focus on (1) employee commitment in areas of affective, continuance and normative commitment; and on (2) employee motivation through job design, OB Mod, recognition and pride, and financial incentives (Cumming and Worley, 2005; Hatch and Cunliffe, 2006 and Massarik and Pei-Carpenter, 2002).

### *4.3 - Post-ODI Stage Evaluation*

This stage considered both the implementation success of the intended interventions and the long-term results they produced. The two key dimensions for an effective evaluation are measurement and research design. The intervention dimensions and processes contribute to the institutionalization of ODIs in the company (Cumming and Worley, 2005).

## *5. Analysis of the Findings*

### *5.1 – Data Analysis*

Consistent with the research objectives, this study investigated the affects of employee commitment on customer satisfaction and the effects of employee motivation on customer satisfaction. It also identified the impact of OD interventions on employees' commitment and motivation in relation to customer satisfaction before, during and after the OD interventions. The research questions attempted to support the objectives of the Action Research.

Part I (Employee General Information) was tabulated in terms of frequency and percentage. In Part II, the researcher used a four-point scale to assess and interpret the findings regarding employee commitment and motivation, and customer satisfaction. And, in Part III (additional suggestions), the results were also tabulated in terms of frequency.

Descriptive statistics by frequency and percentage means that standard deviation were used with regard to the demographic information and data collected from in-depth triangulated interviews, direct and indirect observation and from some AES-related documents.

Frequency and percentage means, that standard deviation and standard error were used with regard to employees' commitment, motivation, and satisfaction and customer retention and satisfaction. The T-test was applied to test the relationships among the variables and SPSS-PC used to process data.

### *5.2 - Summary of Findings*

#### *i) Employee Commitment and Motivation*

The OD interventions addressing employee commitment via formal and informal meetings and special training (language, leadership, and BrianMap) resulted in positive changes in terms of employees' commitment, which in turn had a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

The OD interventions designed to address employee motivation consisted of formal and informal meetings and appreciative coaching. Significant changes in employee motivation were achieved through job design strategies, OB Mod, recognition and pride, and financial incentives. Those changes had a significant impact on customer satisfaction

With regard to job design, it was found that the OD interventions enriched jobs at AES as they provided more variety, allowed individual initiatives and gave employees a better sense of ownership through flexible working hours (with a commitment to work late when required in order to close projects).

OD interventions also benefited the staff who found their work more attractive and interesting. Working at AES met their need not only in terms of financial rewards but also in terms of self-actualization and job security, especially in the midst of an economic crisis, which required even more personal involvement in order for the firm to survive.

However, it also became apparent that not all staff members wished to embrace the greater responsibility that promotion carried with it. Overall though, most of the staff relished their newly-found power and authority. The OD interventions ushered in more freedom and independence as they provided for the exercise of individual discretion, turning meaningless tasks into meaningful ones and enriching their workplace experience.

OD interventions focusing on behavior modification not only influenced the staff members but also the owner (the researcher), and the managerial team, who gradually took steps to support employees through financial or other forms of rewards for their enhanced performance.

Two kinds of financial benefits were used to motivate people and instill a sense of pride. One was to link pay to performance, as

measured by agreed upon criteria and standards so as to avoid resentment by those who might otherwise feel their good performance was overlooked. The other was gain sharing, another way for AES to reward staff and ensuring that colleagues worked harmoniously together. However, with the financial crisis wreaking havoc the world over, the staff realized that the company had to survive in order for them to have a job. So gain sharing not only meant monetary gains but also sharing the good times and the bad times in the workplace.

Post OD interventions revealed that all the staff members were eager to meet their expectations. And, as we all know, happy individuals contribute positively to the organization for which they work.

Their commitment to the company also means that there is no high employee turnover issue at AES. Moreover, it ensures loyalty to both customers and among staff members. This is particularly important given that customers coming back to the company for additional services prefer to deal with staff members with whom they have already worked.

This normative commitment generated a high level of self-motivation among the staff and secured their own survival and that of AES. This process also ensured a slow burnout, if any, and enlivened the staff to take good care of customers which, in turn, improved the image of AES and fostered better business relationships.

OD interventions focusing on job design and job enrichment generated a sense of autonomy and responsibility with regard to decision making. It gave the staff a sentiment of ownership and work accountability which, in turn increased their job satisfaction. Moreover, empowerment and involvement imbued the staff with some authority to make decisions in relation to the projects they “owned”.

The Job Characteristics Model and Job Crafting extended the staff authority in terms of technical initiatives to meet the specific needs of customers; a process that produced changes for the better and again resulted in greater customer satisfaction.

Increased Motivation through OB Mod required AES to provide support and means for the staff to fulfill their duties, i.e., a commitment to come through with what the company had promised or agreed to deliver to its customers.

However, recognition and pride as motivators needed to be linked to AES goals and strategies. Though staff members were empowered, the company’s strategies could not be by-passed. So, linking pay to performance was based on set standards and criteria and applied to all positions. And gain sharing was matched with productivity, improved-performance, effective teamwork, and cost-saving success.

#### *ii) Customer Satisfaction*

It is essential for AES to satisfy its customers’ needs in all areas; that is, provide adequate services and documentation and train clients.

The average satisfaction level with regard to product performance and ease of use ranged from good (56.5%), acceptable (19.6%), excellent (17.4%) and need to be improved, (6.6%), respectively.

Satisfaction level in relation to the services provided pertained to the call center response times and courtesy, reaching work sites as scheduled, expertise of service engineers, problem diagnosis time, system repair time, availability of spare parts, regular scheduling of customer visits, and seminars and training for customers. The satisfaction level ranged from excellent (7.4%); good (44.7%), acceptable (35%), needed to be improved (12%), and not acceptable (0.9%), respectively.

Both the psycho-physiological and technical services adopted by AES were acceptably good although 12% called for improvement and 0.9% considered the standards unacceptable; issues which AES could not ignore.

The results also indicate that clients rated AES’ performance as acceptable (23.4%), good (48.7%) and excellent (4.5%).

Average satisfaction level with regard to documentation, including commercial and technical documentation (manuals) and product information, ranged from good



(50.8%), acceptable (40.2%), needed to be improved (6.0%), and excellent (3.0%) respectively, which shows that the documentation serves customers' purposes well. This also implies that manufacturers provide user-friendly, practical, and clear information on what are generally considered very sophisticated products far from easy to document. Still, since it was also noted by 9.1% of the respondents that the technical documentation needed to be improved, AES staff committed to assisting the manufacturers in presenting their products; a clear illustration of their level of motivation and dedication.

### *iii) Unexpected Findings*

There were some unexpected findings. One such finding was that empowerment was not for everyone. Not all staff members wished to take on more responsibilities.

Secondly, linking pay to performance was assumed to benefit all positions. This, however, proved not to be true in all cases, especially when AES was experiencing the full effects of the U.S.-induced sub-prime crisis. Many workers confirmed both during informal conversations and in the course of interviews that the company had to survive in order for them to survive. So, for them, less financial rewards were preferable to being jobless and payless.

Thirdly, in the same vein and prompted by the same concerns, it was also found that gain sharing needs not be in monetary terms, especially in bad economic times. Joint efforts and collective brainstorming as ways to achieve project goals and sharing good times and bad times in the workplace were aspects of gain sharing which the staff valued.

### *5.3 - Rating of ODI Tools Used during this Action Research*

The ODIs selected to address employee commitment and motivation were ranked as follows:

1. Self-reflection – Appreciative Inquiry (Appreciative Coaching)
2. Brain Map – opening up the staff mind/ letting the team know more about their insights

3. Business English
4. Breakthrough Performance
5. Ideal Team member workshop
6. Leadership skill development
7. Storytelling interventions

### ***Conclusion and Recommendations***

The introduction of OD interventions to AES, which started in early 2008, was beneficial. It enhanced employee commitment and motivations, and increased customer satisfaction.

Appreciative Coaching redirected employees' attention, efforts and energy. This required AES to recognize the value of its staff and positively fulfill its duties and responsibilities as a facilitator and staff supporter.

While most staff development processes and training required the sales staff to change, OD interventions also necessitated managers to be adaptive and/or become role models for development.

The inner-most profiles and backgrounds of employees needed to be investigated prior to any development, an approach which BrainMap facilitated in order to focus on personnel development and improve the company's overall performance.

It was then necessary for AES to instill a positive employee commitment to the company in order to cultivate the staff "beyond competitiveness" and enable them to ride through economic crises.

As mentioned earlier, there were also unexpected outcomes. Promotion, linking performance to financial rewards, and gain sharing did not receive the unanimous and unequivocal endorsement one would expect.

For some employees, empowerment (position, reward, promotion, and authority power) was meaningless. They found that they could contribute more without promotion. Commitment internalized their personal pride, values, and integrity.

Besides, though employees may be positively commitment-oriented, a sense of reality and moral incentives also need be planted in them even when situations are unpleasant and financial expectations remain

unmet. Some staff members with an open-ended “thinking lens” seldom completed the tasks, were flighty, impractical and unrealistic or dreamers. Their lack of focus caused them to lose sight of the corporate goals. These flaws can be effectively addressed by using Albert Ellis-based CBT (Cognitive Behavior Therapy)<sup>2</sup> so as to refocus these employees and eliminate *laissez-faire* and negative consequences.

#### *i) Recommendations for Future OD Interventions*

Various OD interventions have been developed and used since 1947 to enliven the recovery, growth and survival of businesses (DuBrin, 2007, Gomez-Mejia, et al, 2008). Some are ubiquitous, such as coaching, conflict management, culture change, feedback, interpersonal exercises, leadership training, management development, process consultations, strategic planning, and team building. Some are more company-specific such as process analysis, empowerment, evaluation, 360-degree feedback, force-field analysis, future search, large systems change, learning organization, organization design organization diagnosis, transition/change management and visioning (Massarik, and Pei-Carpenter, 2002). This research suggests that the following ODIs be implemented in the future:

1. An ODI using 360-degree feedback since the style of feedback it seeks is very effective.

2. An ODI focusing on future search as no company or staff can afford to be blind to the future. It will help companies and staff readjust and sense changes in advance and equip them to meet those changes.

3. An ODI relating to conflict management because the current growing internationalization is drawing various national groups to work together and requiring companies and staff to work harmoniously; unity within a democratic diversity is a challenge to OD management.

4. An ODI in terms of visioning is no less important. It is an integral part of the leadership principles for all the staff especially

managers. Business leadership requires long term vision which helps companies direct and utilize their core competitiveness.

#### *ii) Recommendations for Further Studies*

1. Empowerment could be thoroughly investigated to explore why some key staff members reject positions of power and even promotion.

2. Since all companies fear failure, there could be further research to identify sustainable and lasting ODIs to assist firms to survive and grow and determine what leads companies and staff to success.

3. A total of 66 ODIs are used worldwide, there is a need to incorporate managerial ethics which lie at the core of quality outcomes and personal happiness. While Managerial Ethics is not generally incorporated into ODIs, it could also be studied further.

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### ***Notes***

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (or ***cognitive behavioral therapies, cognitive behavior therapy, CBT***) is a psychotherapeutic approach that aims to solve problems concerning dysfunctional emotions, behaviors and cognitions through a goal-oriented, systematic procedure. The title is used in diverse ways to designate behavior therapy, cognitive therapy, and to refer to therapy based upon a combination of basic behavioral and cognitive research. (Albert, Ellis (1913-2007); British Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Psychotherapies: What are Cognitive and/or Behavioral Psychotherapies? Retrieved on 2008-11-1).