A qualitative study on communication challenges in production and operations management of high technology organizations.

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Abstract:

Evaluation of the sensitivities of human communication at production and operations floor were found to be progressive in the literature, and were found to be affecting productivity in different ways. This study employs 30 middle-level technical workmen working in production and operations floor of organizations using high-end technologies. Convenience sampling method was used to gather the data. An attempt was made to conduct a simulation exercise while conducting training programme on communication effectiveness for them. Associative and Expressive techniques (Linzey, 1959) were used to gather workmen experiences at production and operations floor, and their views that represent their attitudinal state of their mind, and how they work upon identified work-place challenges. Interpretive interactionism (Denzin, 2001) and the Sundin and Fahy method were used to analyze the qualitative data. The implications of the study would help in developing certain cases that bring to the exploration of different kinds of human interactions experiences and attitude at production and operations floor in organizations using high-end technologies. Such kind of cases was found to be useful in enhancing understandings related to employee and workplace productivity and enticing excellence.

Keywords- Projective test, Productivity, Communication Challenges, Interpretive Interactionism, a projective test

Prolegomena

As production and operation management aims at transforming production and operational inputs into outputs, it focuses on several elements that include product, plant, processes, programmes and people (Chary, 2009). What remains important in successful transformations of production and operation inputs is how each element is being considered by those who manage these transformations. Supervisors, engineers, workers, managers on the floor communicate effectively with reference to intricacies of such transformations. Success of these transformations depends on how they communicate in given situation. Their abilities to receive, perceive, comprehend and react back in a given situation makes a difference in how endeavors in production and operations are accomplished.

Issues pertaining to human communication at production and operations floor have been progressive. Elizabeth and Francis (1951) have acknowledged the need of employee expressions in this regard. Lull, Frank, and Pierson (1955) explored belief among leaders of the principal 100 U.S. corporations and presented a view that these presidents believed of a poised relationship between communication and productivity. Moving ahead Likert (1967) emphasized on how communication accomplishes psychological needs at workplace and further introspected various features such as magnitude, eminence etc., along with other six factors confirmed to create management systems. Davis (1968) elaborated the needs to communicate technological and psychological needs at production floor. Downs, Hazen, Quiggens, & Medley, 1973 came up with multidimensional communication satisfaction questionnaire that included several factors such as
Communication Climate, Supervisory Communication, Organizational Integration, Media Quality, Co-worker Communication, Corporate Information, Personal Feedback, and Subordinate Communication.

Hellweg and Philips (1980) reviewed the literature to show relations between communication and productivity in organizations and found set of result depicting linear, nonlinear, positive, and negative relations. Litterest and Eyo (1982) explained the gaps in studying relationships between formal communication and productivity and also expressed the need of intruding intervening variables such as morale building, managerial effectiveness, information dissemination, and goal clarification. Mara (1982) explained that the true measure of communication depends on the set of factors such as connection between communication and target audience, role of communication in attaining organizational objectives and motivating people at workplace. Pincus (1986) demonstrated that there exist a significant relationship between communication satisfaction, job satisfaction and productivity.

With time where nature of organizations has changed, the current wave of developments has brought high technology organizations. The recent Robert Half Technology survey suggests that while one-third of 2300 Chief information officers in the United States of America considered communication to be their utmost challenge in managing a distant employees, 22% Chief information officers reflected on productivity and technology as second most challenge (PR, N., 2014). Communication at workplace has now become a need of current times and has found to have moderate association with productivity (Clampitt and Downs, 1993). In the past where transformations in production and operation were characterized with longer product cycles, less clarity in transient consumption patterns, less trained workforces, long-term employments, lack of technology (Gligor and Holcomb, 2012), the new wave has made human communication to be a matter of satisfying working experience (possibly relating to quality of working life).

Henderson (2004) presented the perspective that abilities to encode and decode information at workplace enhances productivity. Klempa (2006) identified poor internal communication as one of the three important factors that adversely affects productivity. With increasing technologies, researchers have suggested to make individuals work within cross-functional team (Gill, 2012) which in a way is reported to enhancing density of communication, cooperation and conversational coordination at workplace (Minssen, 2006). In the process of thickening densities of communication and conversational coordination within organizations, Bechky (2003) explained the possibilities of work related misunderstanding among engineers, technicians, and assemblers on a production floor on account of their languages used, area of practices undertaken, and conceptualization of products. Tenhiälä and Salvador (2014) suggested that manufacturers can mitigate anomalies by creating capabilities within organizational that may bring resilience. Tenhiälä and Salvador (2014) examined 163 make-to-order production processes and derived that influence of anomalies on performance is dependent on sanctification of in-house communication channels. Zeng, Anh and Matsui (2013) empirically evaluated the positive effect of shop-floor communication (comprising of small group problem solving, feedback, instructive communication, and supervisory interaction facilitation) on the implementation effectiveness of process management practices (comprising of process control, preventive maintenance, and housekeeping) and the consequential quality performance.

Though issues pertaining to human communication at production and operations floor have been progressive, communication with respect to business and its aligned operations are still considered to be a challenge (Koste and Malhotra, 1999, Bao, 2008, Wienclaw, 2008). While all these veracious evaluations justify their purposes demonstrating all kinds of positive, negative, strong, moderate and weak associations, I felt the need to explore work-related experiences of workmen that highlight communication challenges and dissonances at ground reality indicative of factors that affect productivity.

Key research questions:
This study makes an attempt to understand sensitivities of human communication in the form of communication challenges faced by participants working in production and operations management at their high technology organization. An attempt has been made to present cases that
describe how interactions in such organizations takes place. Typified with Indian high-context communication (Mehta, 2012), listening and evaluating workmen stories of communication challenges in production and operations management at high technology organization working in Indian backdrop appears to be an interesting process. These stories do depict broader job related experiences of individuals who essentially bring faults in communication that has paramount connections with productivity. While trailing with the studies in action, I have made an attempt to explore following questions:

i) What factors affect human communication in production and operations management of high technology organization?

ii) How do these communication impact productivities?

Principle in action

The process used in evaluating ground reality at production and operations floor has a similarity to approaches used in exploring realities from trenches (Badaracco, J.L. (Jr.), & Webb, 1995), perspective from middlemen operating in supply chain management (Mehta, 2014) and essentially perspectives of Sundin and Fahy (2008) while having end-of-life decision-making, Hastie and Fahy (2009) with reference to delivery suite in hospitals. However unlike Sundin and Fahy (2008) and Hastie and Fahy (2009), I have not asked for positive and negative experiences separately while interviewing respondents. As I wanted respondent attitudinal spells to emerge automatically after stimulation using associative and expressive technique, I asked them to recall any episode instantly that they remember and that they relate with productivity. Considering Sundin and Fahy perspective, adequate changes should be made to contextualize the issues, I have replaced suitably with Berne’s Transactional Analysis (Berne, 1964). However in view of using critical post-structural interpretive interactionism, this study draws insights from social and emotional intelligence and competence as suggested (Sundin and Fahy, 2008; Hastie and Fahy, 2009).

Berne’s perspective of transactional analysis implying that the adult to adult transactions shall enable participants to solve problems were explained to participants Analysis (Berne, 1964). Prior to this Dani, Backhouse, and Burns (2004) elaborated on use of transactional analysis in supply chain processes and proposed to use the same as an interceding device within holonic manufacturing systems or, in such establishments with possibilities where there are possibilities of consistent collaborative human behavior among different parties. The idea was to sensitize participants with applications of adult-adult transactions. Sekaran’s Narmada River Story (Sekaran, 1989) was put forwarded to participants for discussion and stimulation. The participants were divided into different groups depending on their choice of most offending character. While participants were discussing they were told to bring the unitized solution, their discussion turned into the debate, and none made use of adult-adult transactions. On these grounds, I initiated making observations on individual and group behavior.

The observation included participant’s and group behavior such as lack of listening or developing criticality towards each other, taking space of others, presence of parent and child ego states, lack of openness, etc. Participants were given the on the basis of observations and not perception depending on the pattern of their behavior during the debate. Once the findings were presented to the participants they were told to revisit their behavior or behavior of different people such as bosses, superiors, peers and subordinates behaving at workplace. How do participants have perceived them so far in their life? Does the classroom simulation reminds them of some workplace incidence? Thus in the wake of all these happenings, certain participants narrated their workplace experiences. It would be right to put their narrations as workplace reflection.

Similar to Hastie and Fahy (2008) findings with doctors and nurses, respondents in the present study realized later (after the debate, post presentations of findings) that the parties in communication (negotiation) shall enhance cooperation towards each other and should be less assertive (Harris and Harris, 2011; Kilmann, 1976). The only way to approach win-win situations remains in stroking positively, appreciating each other’s self-interest. However, while the proceedings were in action, none of the participants exemplified positivity in their transactions.
This work has been built upon comparison of ground realities and participants’ changed perspectives post session.

Method
Sampling Details
This study employs 30 middle-level technical workmen working in production and operations floor of organizations using high-end technologies. Nonprobability Convenience sampling method was used to gather the data. All these technical workmen participated in different programmes held at National Institute of Industrial Engineering, Mumbai. Also, certain students having working experience of more than a year in manufacturing organizations were considered for interviews. The details are presented in Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Average Age</th>
<th>Average working experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>MDP/UBP Participants</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>39.4 years</td>
<td>20.36 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Students having working experience</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>23.1 years</td>
<td>1.92 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Sample explored for in-depth interview

Stimulation through Simulation
An attempt was made to conduct a simulation exercise while conducting training programme on communication effectiveness for them. Associative and Expressive techniques (Linzey, 1959) were used to sensitize workmen. It aided in gathering their experiences at production and operations floor, and their views that represent their attitudinal state of their mind, and how they work upon identified work-place challenges.

The classroom session comprised of an experiential learning session based on how participants communicate within the group. For conducting this session, oral consent of participants was first taken and were informed that they will be observed during the process. Psychological contracting ensured that the outcomes of the study shall be published however researchers would refrain from using the name of organization and name of the participants. Once participants agreed for the observation the process began.

Since the communication was initiated, I requested these participants for their interview and an effort were taken to fix up an appointment during the same evening at MDP Hostel. Hence, the interviews were conducted with these participants. The whole process of interviewing 18 MDP/UBP participants took a years’ time. Most of the participants agreed to my request for an appointment however only 17 useful responses were obtained resulting in final success rate of 94.44%.

Interviews and Gathering Data
In order to gather data in the form of workmen experiences at production and operations floor, semi-structured questionnaire was prepared comprising of dichotomous objective and descriptive questions. Selected participants were requested to share any incidence from workplace that must have taken place during technical process (as a result of human communication) during production/operations at shop floor that essentially involves him/her and others working with you in the department.

Questions such as “What do you think may happen in the organization if such incidences happen again? What suggestions do you have in order to overcome misunderstandings encountered? Do you think your suggestions will be sufficient to overcome such misunderstandings? Why?” were used to determine workmen attitudinal state of mind. Certain questions such as why this kind of condition has taken place, what was expected in a given scene, etc. were put forwarded as forwarding questions to maintain communication tempo during the interview with the respondent.
3.4. Analysis Technique

Approach from critical, post-structural, interpretive interactionism (Sundin and Fahy, 2008) was used that comprises of deconstruction, construction and re-contextualization (shown in figure 1).

Findings

The associative technique used bring enable participants in making following kinds of realizations on account of their communication:

Though each of the participants was aware of inducing transactions through adult-adult ego states, none of them used even for single time. All transactions during these simulations were found to be a child to child mode. Similar to Hastie and Fahy’s findings on positive interactions (though I did not have the one), post sessions all participants valued importance of being collaborative rather than competitive. They all wanted to shift to I am okay, you are okay from other areas plotted on the graph between cooperation and assertiveness (Harris and Harris, 2011; Kilmann, 1976).

- 79% wanted a shift from competitive mode to the collaborative mode,
- 11% wanted to shift from accommodation to the collaborative mode,
- 10% wanted to shift from avoidance to the collaborative mode, while
- 0% remain unaffected.

While not having in a collaborative state, various observations such as not being open in communication, not listening, prevalence of ego, entering into others space, etc. were observed. Based on such realizations, they were told to recall instantly any incidence (work-place experience) that comes to their mind first and that had taken place in their organization as a part of their work. Their valuing collaboration was an indication of their preference for positive communication rather than blame game, positive stroking and adult to adult transactions in solving conflicts within organizations, and they do not use these positive approaches in the pursuance of regular interactions in their organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NS N</th>
<th>Narration</th>
<th>Interactional Factor</th>
<th>Personal Factor</th>
<th>Contextual Factor</th>
<th>Affecting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>One night operator X.....</td>
<td>• Bystander Apathy</td>
<td>• Avoid work</td>
<td>• Lack of role clarity</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ego</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Lost focus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Once turbine ....”</td>
<td>• Passing buck</td>
<td>• Ego issues</td>
<td>• Lack of ownership of work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Blaming others</td>
<td>• Playing games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Diverting problems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“In the paint shop…..”</td>
<td>• Getting into other’s space without permission (undid changes)</td>
<td>• Lost interest in work</td>
<td>• Being individualistic</td>
<td>• Lack of standard operating procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“We work with 400 KW…..”</td>
<td>• Bystander Apathy</td>
<td>• Being Closed</td>
<td>• Role Dissonance</td>
<td>• Lack of superordinate goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Management does not…. ”</td>
<td>• No listening</td>
<td>• Class/group comparison with others</td>
<td>• Being mocked by others</td>
<td>• Dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Braid wire…..”</td>
<td>• Taking for granted attitude</td>
<td>• Loss of trust</td>
<td>• Poor resource management</td>
<td>• Chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“If any problems…”</td>
<td>• Poor listening</td>
<td>• Performing under time constraints</td>
<td>• Interpersonal relations at stake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>“In our power plant…..”</td>
<td>• Doubts on intentions</td>
<td>• Life of awareness regarding job</td>
<td>• Unclear job descriptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“During new product…. ”</td>
<td>• Not giving space and scope</td>
<td>• Bad feelings</td>
<td>• New product development</td>
<td>• Poor planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Ego clash…..”</td>
<td>• Superior-subordinate interactions</td>
<td>• Bad feelings</td>
<td>• Proximity with superiors</td>
<td>• Spoiled human relations at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“There are two…….”</td>
<td>• Going beyond boundaries</td>
<td>• Risk taking</td>
<td>• Insensitivity</td>
<td>• Perceived inequality within status of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“Grease is used…..”</td>
<td>• Going beyond boundaries</td>
<td>• Not being competent</td>
<td>• Lack of support from top management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Working in shop floor…..”</td>
<td>• Stopping subordinate and asking</td>
<td>• Intention and action</td>
<td>• Violation of safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“During the design of a minimum…..”</td>
<td>• Misinterpretation</td>
<td>• No onus of communicatio n within team</td>
<td>• Poor implementation -on</td>
<td>• Financial loss to organization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Assimilation of comparable concepts (Expert Opinions in Context)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>“Once I was made …….”</th>
<th>Superior-Subordinate reporting</th>
<th>Ego</th>
<th>Denial of opportunity to learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Our Deputy manager…..”</td>
<td>Rigidity about working schedules</td>
<td>Disappointment</td>
<td>Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“As I was working…….”</td>
<td>Lack of understanding</td>
<td>No openness to learning</td>
<td>Poor Communication Skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

In the pursuance of answering questions regarding factors affecting human communication in production and operations management of high technology organization operating in high context country like India and impact of such communications on productivities, this study evaluates interactional, personal and contextual factors from the narrations of middle level technical workmen. My endeavor remained in making an attempt to understand sensitivities of human communication in the form of challenges faced.

This study presented recognition of the needs of middle-level technical workmen’s of psychological overhauling and realizations that communication challenges that exist in the organizations where they work/worked, lead to loss of productivity. One of the interesting evaluations that may be understood from the study is dissonance in perspectives of their valuing high context communication. Where all participants theoretically acknowledged and valued amicability, being together and collaboration, most of them were found to be individualistic and using low context perspectives in their communication approach.

Psychological overhauling presented through the session using transactional analysis was considered to be useful in understanding human communication. Their theoretical acknowledgment and acceptance on adult-adult transactions and its impact on collaboration were futile as the reality comprise of dissonance of theoretical understandings and actions and that they would never be able to fulfill these gaps unless they work on overcoming such dissonances. The pursuit of this study remains in findings from the study that clearly indicates that despite having technical skill set among middle managers do not suffice productivity and overall effective organizational well-being. Despite critical reporting of dissonances to participants, they were found to be positive in their approach in their intents to apply change individual behavior not only at workplace but also in personal lives. This suggested that such evaluations may be useful for better organizational development. The cross-checking of findings of the study with participants also presents its strength.

The implications of the study have helped in developing certain cases (Table 2/Annexure 1) that bring to the exploration of different kinds of human interactions experiences and attitude at production and operations floor in organizations using high-end technologies. These kind of cases were also found to be useful in enhancing understandings related to employee and workplace productivity and enticing excellence. Also, directions for model building may possibly be obtained on account of interactions among interactional, personal and contextual factors as depicted in Table 1 that explains loss of productivity. Further analysis of this study confirms findings of previous research that explains factors such as Communication Climate, Supervisory Communication, Organizational Integration, Quality, Co-worker Communication, Corporate Information, Personal Feedback, and Subordinate Communication (Downs, Hazen, Quiggen, & Medley, 1973),
association with productivity (Lull, Frank, and Pierson, 1955; Davis, 1968; Clampitt and Downs, 1993; Henderson, 2004; klempa, 2006; Zeng, Anh and Matsui, 2013)

The limitations of the study include lack of quantification of data and hence does not measure the impact numerically. For sure the limitations of working with purposive sampling were existing. The context of communication in high technology organization was limited to middle management only and hence included tactical issues. In any way, this work does not include strategic issues.

The future studies (in-process) shall comprise of enabling participants in using fundamentals such as a theory of constraints that will help them in overcoming such challenges.

Conclusion

The communication challenges faced by high technology organization by middle-level managers are enlisted in Table 2. This study evaluates interactional, personal and contextual factors from cases (narrations) of middle-level technical workmen working in production and operations floor of organizations using high-end technologies. The study presents an exploration to different kinds of human interactions, human experiences and attitude at production and operations floor in organizations using high-end technologies. These kind of cases were also found to be useful in enhancing understandings related to employee and workplace productivity and enticing excellence.

Several work-related experiences that participants believed could have easily worked out but were not worked out were narrated. These examples are presented in Annexure-1/Table 2. Based on expert opinions from academic peers, interactional factors, personal factors and contextual factors were identified and assimilated in Table 2.

One of the major understanding that I have drawn in this study was that productivity in organizations cannot be overhauled exclusively with technological development. The significant approach to deal with communication challenges and productivity also remains in psychological overhauling of all those who strive to work, supporting professionals in breaking cocoons created by them around them, letting them explore their own intentions and actions vis-à-vis that of others, making them work by having understanding of what they feel and how would they be managing the same.

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Annexure-1

Respondent's Narrations to understand Communication Challenges

1. One night operator X (engineer) called a maintenance person (Y) and informed him that Pneumatic valve was not working. The maintenance engineer (Y) told X to check the air pressure. X replied that there is no air-pressure. Y told X that without air pressure, pneumatic valve will not operate. X told Y that, "As I have informed you that pneumatic valve
is not functioning, my responsibility is over. Now you come over here and declare that there is no air. I will not take responsibility in all of this.” X was aware of the basic problem and solution. Instead of taking responsibility and solving the problem, he is just telling another person that his responsibility is over. These kind of interactions adversely affect the working capabilities of people working in my department. We lose our focus on work and get impacted with negotiations of such persons, and tend to avoid work. Hence, the productivity in the organization suffers.

2. Once turbine got started. Its vibration goes very high at a particular place. As HOD (operations) is there, he told one engineer (B) to check the vibration sensor and identify the reasons for vibration. The speed of the turbine was just 4 rpm. It is impossible that the vibration would occur at such rpm. Instead of knowing this, HOD was focusing and giving instruction to engineer to find the reason for such vibration. He could have checked the problem on his own or any other person working under him but he chose to pick up engineer who was not working under him to pass the buck. He is blaming other for the problem and diverting from the problem.

3. In the paint shop, oven setting is not done on a regular basis, but when it is done lot of balancing and cleaning is done thereafter. I was working as a shift in-charge, and we initiated the oven setting process. After oven setting the process, it is the responsibility of the maintenance department to make it ready and balance the setting. But on the next day of production the oven did not function properly, and the blame game began. After a lot of checking it came out that whatever changes we made were undid by the maintenance department. It impacted us negatively. We lost interest work and teamwork deteriorate. We used to take decision collectively but now somehow everything has become individual.

4. We work with 400 KW high tension motor which is important and costly. This requires a lot of protection in terms of its lubrication, handling of temperature, vibration sensor. If lubrication pressure falls below a certain level, the fan has to stop otherwise fan will get spoil. Small drop in pressure for 5-6 seconds for 7-8 times had taken place in three days and which was affecting the process. Mechanical Engineers were adamant stating that it is an electrical fault and were not ready to check the line while Electrical engineers were reluctant of checking the instrument. Being closed in our perspectives and not sharing responsibility had cost our company delay of three days and productivity suffered. Loss of one-hour amount of loss of productivity of 200-250 tons (approximately Rs. 25000 per ton) so you may check how much toll company had to take on productivity.

5. Management does not listen to our request and has a closed outlook towards us. In our organizations there exist two wage structure as a part of government policy (executive and non-executive). Diploma candidates were inducted in wage group 7 directly with one year on the job training. After 15 years all of them were promoted to wage level 10 (highest level). In the new career plan, management introduced one more criteria. TC-1 to TC-5 were designated as non-unionized supervisory level. Special increments were given after attaining a special status to both executives and non-executive including TC personnel but the executive wage revision was done by government guidelines (two years earlier to the non-executive wage revision). Where the special increment status was nomenclature as special pay in the case of nonexecutive and was continued to be negotiable. At this juncture, the people who were promoted (wage group 10) of non-executive cadre to TC-1 or E-1 (who were already drawing special pay at the existing wage group 10) was sacked resulting in salary loss of Rs. 6000/- per person. While no overtime compensation is provided to us, a helper of wage group 1 cadre is drawing the bonus of Rs. 45000 per annum up to wage level 10, whereas a person in newly promoted cadre gets Rs. 15000 bonus. Unfortunately, both are given same rating of A+ for our performance. There are very high terminal benefits for non-executive cadre while we as executives ends up having loss of about Rs. 15 lakhs for the balance period of service. Where non-executive enjoys benefits of 450 leaves at the time of retirements, poor we have a norm for 300 leaves only. Now the scene is that an ITI person who joined at par with diploma holder is claiming more salary of Rs. 10,000 than their counterpart with the same length of service. We have requested management many times. In fact, the court case was filed but nobody listens to us. Non-executives make mockery of us.

6. Braid wire was procured through a supplier. Each braid wire spool comprised of 100m wire. It happened that Quality control approved the same just on the basis of supplier’s label. Hence, it was issued for making cable assembly. While assembling began, worker reported us that the braid wire was found to be less as per allotted quantity. Hence, only 45 cabinet assemblies were made out of 50 adversely affecting percentage yield. We initiated investigations. In fact, the worker, security department all were scrutinized and were checked. Later spool was checked, and shortage in various spools was detected. Finally, we questioned supplier and quality control department. Quality Control’s taking for granted attitude brought a lot of problems to all of us. This has created chaos in organization and loss of trust and affected our relationships with each other badly.

7. If any problem arises during the operation, people do not listen to others or if they have to finish the work as soon as possible for providing the clearances to operation department. People do not communicate with colleagues. So because of inadequate dissemination of information problems arises at the time of operation.

8. In our power plant there were three different departments apart from operations. We were not sure about the boundary of job between mechanical maintenance and instrumentation. One day our main air-gate was not closing fully, and we told mechanical department to deal with the issue. They checked and told there were some water in airline it was not closing. Then they started to work on that. However, finally we discovered that it was a mechanical fault. They were running away from their responsibilities. I wish they understand their part of the job and communicate effectively.

9. During new product development, we need the machines for trial purpose & trying the development of new product at times this needs to be done in regular shift hours stopping the current production. For this, we need 6 to 8 hours’ time and inform the production planning department to schedule the process properly. However, mostly what happens that either the planning team does not include it in the plan because of not taking place as production people do not free the machine for trial purpose. We feel bad that our work is not given adequate importance, and this also leads to conflicts between our departments.

10. Ego clash takes place because people want to come in lime light, want to become close to boss, top management direct deal with low level management bypassing middle/senior level management. management not recognizing people properly for their work. My friend Mr. X (we were working together for last 8 years) and his junior Y was initially working with him in a project in the initial five years. Mr. X has been an experienced person, and Mr. Y was just graduate engineer trainee, fresh pass out of college. My friend taught him how to work in industrial life, how to read technical
drawings, taught about equipment, and many other things. At that time, nobody knows who is Y. They worked together for last 5 years, and now Mr. Y started thinking of himself and find himself to be superior to X. This thing has brought differences in human relationship at work.

11. There are two different sections in our company i.e. Boiler turbine generator (BTG), switchyard ignite, and balance of plant. It has been understood that all employees in BTG belongs to creamy section where one can directly noticed by management because it is the heart of the plant. The other section seems to be isolated. So there is always a cold-war between people working in a different section as isolated area is popularly called punishment area.

12. Grease is used as consumables for manufacturing of glass for vehicles, I was not getting the glass and was not able to produce the cabin, then I wanted to get into problem and found that there was a problem of grease supplier but purchase department was not taking any interest. I was hearing support from my higher management and started dealing with the vendor directly. The problem was solved, but the vendor was not getting the payment due to delay in the system. As the vendor was an OEM, he stopped supplying the grease, and I have an argument with him. Then I told him I will develop new vendor. He has written a letter to my GM, and I was struck very badly. (Bottom line is should not do the work of another department because I was not competent)

13. Working in shop floor exposed me to all types of people that are mentioned above. One such event where I found a subordinate working in violation to safety. I stopped him and asked for an explanation to his behaviour. He replied telling me that, he was running short of time and needs to get the job done. Though his intentions were good but his action was bad. It brings catastrophic situation that can have larger damage than production loss. Such incidence happens so often.

14. During the design of a minimum flow gate in the dam, the vendor misinterpreted the directions provided to him by us and ultimately fabricated a gate that had an error as large as 20 mm. It cost a loss of 32 lakhs to the company.

15. Once I was made a planner for a week where I was supposed to plan the activities of maintenance and allocate the job amongst the team. The team considered other members from different engineering background, and many of them were seniors to me. One of them straight away refused to work under my planning by stating that he will not work under anyone junior to him. Maybe his ego forced him do so.

16. Our deputy manager in Dhanbad operations was very rigid about work schedules and refused to entertain the requests of one of his subordinate for change in the weekly off. As it was Chat pooja, the subordinate was very disappointed and couldn’t concentrate on the work and charged dolomite into furnace instead of coal. This destabilized the blast furnace and resulted in some amount of loss of production. Worker was warned and suspended for two days but ultimately it raised conflict between workers and supervisors.

17. As I was working in Gujarat, and I am from Rajasthan. 30% of the operator were unable to understand Hindi. So, I was unable to convey my message to them. I used to talk to them by using a mediator who knows Hindi & Gujarati. One day I told the operator to keep machine stop because pump was leaking, but he did not understand and kept the machine on. Machine operator blamed me for that saying he did not understand my language.