

Discussion on the Core of Enterprise Management: Humanism

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Abstract: The 21st century is regarded as the era of the knowledge economy, where the role of knowledge in socio-economic development has gradually strengthened, and its value has become increasingly evident. As consumer concepts and consumption structures change, the significance of sociocultural concepts in modern enterprise management has become increasingly prominent. Humanistic approaches, which prioritize human needs, inspire employee enthusiasm, and foster a harmonious and united corporate environment, are essential. The integration of humanistic care and management is a critical factor for enterprises to consider in democratic management, thereby achieving mutual promotion and support between democratic and corporate management. This philosophy and approach embody the specific application of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, fully implementing the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Adhering to a legal-thinking enterprise management model holds profound significance for the innovation of modern enterprise management perspectives and the establishment of a human-centered enterprise management philosophy. The integration of knowledge economy and human-centered management is an inevitable path for modern enterprises.

Keywords: Knowledge Economy; Human-Centered Management; Enterprise Management Philosophy.

1. Introduction

Enterprise management encompasses a series of activities such as organizing, planning, coordinating, and directing an enterprise's production and operation activities. It is an objective requirement of socialized mass production aimed at maximizing the utilization of various enterprise resources to achieve goals of efficiency, quality, and cost-effectiveness, thereby maximizing enterprise benefits. With the vigorous development of the market economy and increasingly fierce competition, enterprises increasingly rely on talent. Cultivating outstanding talent requires significant time and effort, during which a deep understanding and respect for "people" are crucial. Adopting a human-centered approach can create a corporate culture aligned with contemporary characteristics, inspire employee passion and vitality, and lay a solid foundation for establishing a harmonious and sustainable enterprise. However, different countries should implement different operational models to achieve corporate development. Statistics indicate that only 30% of international cooperation failures are due to strategic, technical, or financial issues, while 70% result from cross-cultural communication problems among personnel. Dutch scholar Geert Hofstede proposed in his research that researchers and entrepreneurs have historically overlooked the connection between culture and management, a significant oversight in the field of management science. Management not only involves handling specific matters but also addressing the essence of "people," whose traits stem from specific cultural environments such as schools, families, companies, and society. Therefore, the philosophy of humanism must permeate all aspects of management and organization.

2. Human-Centered Management and Cultural Construction

The concept of "humanism" is complex and subtle, often misunderstood as merely a contemporary management philosophy embellishment. It is essential to delve deeply into the core ideas of "humanism" to unveil its true essence and establish a central position for human-centered management.

2.1. Contents of Human-Centered Management

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In his seminal works, "The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization" and "Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization," Elton Mayo first proposed the idea of "human-centered management." He firmly believed that emotions and behaviors are closely intertwined, and that group dynamics significantly influence individual behavior. Work goals set by groups determine the production direction of individuals within those groups, and the influence of money on individuals is weaker compared to group standards, conditions, and security. Mayo emphasized the importance of human factors. Theories by Edwards Deming and Tom Peters further substantiate Mayo's views. Deming proposed the "Participative Management" theory, while Peters argued that "employees are the company's most important resource, holding dominant positions both economically and spiritually." Overall, the primary implications of human-centered management are as follows:

(1) Employees as the Core of the Enterprise

Traditional economic theories regard employees as merely a component of production and management, akin to capital

and skills, while overlooking their subjective initiative. In reality, employees are the linchpin of organizations and extraordinary production factors. Enterprise operations involve not only managing products and services but also safeguarding and governing internal personnel. In human resource management, two main strategies exist: highly centralized power allocation and moderately decentralized power allocation. The key is to find a strategy that maximizes resource utilization efficiency.

(2) Equality and Differences Among People

When performing the same task, differences in individuals' abilities lead to varying work efficiencies, illustrating the suitability of different job types and levels. Consequently, different leadership roles and hierarchies exist within organizations or companies, forming the hierarchical structure of enterprise management. Assigning employees with specific abilities to matching management and work levels effectively utilizes their capabilities. To maximize the potential of individuals, we must carefully consider talent selection and work assignments, appointing individuals based on merit to ensure that their skills, knowledge, and work abilities align with actual job responsibilities. Wasting talent or overburdening employees should be avoided.

(3) Desires as Sources of Motivation

An organization's operational effectiveness hinges on its operational efficiency, which predominantly relies on human resources. The driving force of labor stems from the satisfaction of their needs, applying material incentives to meet human desires as the foundation of labor propulsion and a core path in enterprise management. However, it's crucial to emphasize that individuals respond diversely to material rewards. The key to management lies in maximizing the effectiveness of material incentives. Psychological needs generate spiritual incentives distinct from material ones, being more intense and enduring. People's spiritual needs are often linked to their personal values and social systems, becoming steadfast spiritual motivators once formed.

(4) Social Competitiveness Among Individuals

Individuals vary in abilities and possess inherent traits, with potential differing from capability due to the role of incentives. To satisfy various needs, individuals with social attributes possess an inherent competitive drive, predominantly manifested through information exchange between organizations or enterprises and the external environment, serving as a bridge between the organization and the outside world.

2.2. Environmental Conditions Required for "Human-Centered Management"

(1) Optimizing the Enterprise Management Environment

Environmental factors significantly impact individuals' emotions, spirits, and productivity, as emphasized by management theorists advocating for humanistic management. They categorize environments into natural and social dimensions. Natural environments include lighting, color, and noise, influencing motivation, talent, and emotions within institutions. Social environments encompass national policies, laws and regulations, and company rules and regulations, determining an enterprise's competitiveness in the market.

(2) Establishing Sound Corporate Values

During commercial operations, contemporary enterprises firmly adhere to basic principles and action norms, forming their values. From the developmental trajectory of

contemporary enterprises, corporate values typically evolve through three stages: maximizing profits, pursuing transparent profits, and advocating socially shared interests. Although these stages appear sequential, their fundamental orientation remains profit-driven. Ultimately, the goal of corporate values is to pursue profits. Corporate values influence employees in various aspects, affecting their perceptions of others and teams, acceptance of corporate decisions and management styles, assessments of the company's current state, expectations for future development, and evaluations of personal moral standards. Corporate culture profoundly impacts employee behavior, encompassing overconfident individual behavior, compliant behavior, and honest behavior.

(3) Building Corporate Culture Based on the Contemporary Background

In human-centered management models, culture plays a unique and indispensable role compared to psychological and material factors. Humans are emotional and rational beings, each with a unique cultural background that profoundly influences them. Therefore, successfully implementing a "human-centered management model" necessitates constructing a robust corporate culture. This culture exerts significant influence over the management process, representing the enterprise's exclusive spiritual wealth with tangible characteristics, such as corporate values, ethics, personal behavior guidelines, historical evolution, cultural environment, and cultural products. The hierarchical structure of corporate culture comprises these elements, with different levels reflecting the implementation level of the "human-centered management model" and concurrently affecting its efficacy.

2.3. Participative Management as the Core of Human-Centered Management

George Elton Mayo, an American management scholar, introduced the concept of "social man" in the 1930s, emphasizing that individuals strive to meet social needs and hope managers satisfy their physical and mental requirements. This concept laid the foundation for participative management. Since the 1960s and 1970s, when participative management theory was proposed, management researchers and practitioners have engaged in extensive discussions and experiments, yielding diverse practical approaches and fruitful outcomes. Among them, Deming's views are the most influential and embody "humanism." He emphasized the importance of "decision-making authority," "information flow," "required knowledge and skills," and "appropriate rewards" for employees in the participatory management process. Granting employees decision-making authority, ensuring necessary information reaches participants, guaranteeing they possess the knowledge and skills to make decisions, and providing appropriate rewards can attract more participants and enhance management efficiency, thereby boosting overall labor productivity. For modern enterprise operations, developing a sound commercial management philosophy is paramount. Operators shaping human-centered management models must first understand the content of human-centered management, continually improve the human-centered management environment, and prioritize shared management to drive enterprise innovation and facilitate sustained creativity and development.

2.4. Human-Centered Enterprise Management

Western Management's "Humanism" Perspective and the Evolution of China's Enterprise Operation Philosophy

In the developmental trajectory of Western management schools, research on human value has consistently held a prominent position. The foundations of various management theories primarily stem from diverse viewpoints and theoretical presuppositions concerning human nature and motivation. Typically, significant theoretical breakthroughs result from rapid advancements in human cognition. The diversity in management theories primarily arises from enterprises' varying understandings of "people." In the 1980s, Japan's rapid economic growth prompted American scholars to investigate differences in management approaches between the United States and Japan. Studies revealed that American enterprises tend to prioritize strategy, structure, and systems—the three hardware "S"—in management, whereas Japanese enterprises consider these three hardware "S" alongside four software "S": skills, staff, style, and shared values. In Japanese management practices, they often adopt a human-centered strategy, taking employee needs as a starting point, thereby creating a distinctive corporate culture. This sparked a corporate culture craze, bringing widespread attention to humanistic management models. From the developmental history of Western management philosophy, it's evident that "employee-centered" management thoughts have gradually become prevalent in enterprises across most developed countries. In contrast, China's enterprise management evolution has undergone three stages, each encompassing three unique management philosophies. The first stage, from the completion of socialist transformation in 1956 to the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, focused on material resources in corporate administration. The second stage, from the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee to the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, emphasized financial operations in enterprise management. The third stage, from the 16th National Congress onward, Chinese companies began implementing an "employee-centered" management philosophy. In the material resource-centered management philosophy, enterprises excessively focused on product quality and quantity, neglecting humanistic care for employees. The financial operation-dominated management philosophy prioritized maximizing economic benefits, overlooking the creation of a unique corporate culture and concern for employees, lacking an "employee-centered" philosophy. The current management philosophy not only values product quality and quantity but also emphasizes humanistic care for corporate employees.

2.5. Establishing Human-Centered Management Thoughts

Management thoughts serve as guidelines for enterprises' concrete implementation of management. Enterprises must first establish correct and scientific management philosophies to formulate blueprints and goals for future development. The "human-centered" enterprise management philosophy encompasses the following points:

(1) Establishing an Employee-Centered Philosophy

All enterprise production processes are inseparable from employees, necessitating an employee-centered philosophy and recognizing that employees' value surpasses that of

products themselves. Clarifying the interrelationship between direct and ultimate goals of corporate management is crucial. The direct goal lies in manufacturing quality products and generating profits through them, while the ultimate goal is to provide society with richer, higher-quality goods and services, fostering sustainable economic and social development and comprehensive societal advancement. The rise in corporate economic benefits complements employees' personal development. Although employees' development shouldn't be solely viewed as a means to produce excellent products, provide quality services, and achieve economic benefits, the comprehensive development of personal abilities, full utilization of individual intelligence, and continuous strengthening of innovative spirits all propel enterprises toward technological advancements and product innovations, thereby enhancing corporate interests.

(2) Establishing a Customer-Centered Philosophy

Enterprises' ability to maximize profits hinges on whether their products and services resonate with consumers. Therefore, all operational management actions should fundamentally aim to satisfy customer needs, with enterprise development directions and goals centered around consumers. Placing customers first requires not only understanding, guiding, and satisfying customer needs but also establishing customer value-led business objectives and a customer-centric mindset. To adopt a customer-centric marketing management approach and attract more customers, leading to customer referrals, enterprises should focus on two aspects: enhancing service quality and product quality to shape a complete corporate image and elevate customer value, and reducing production and sales costs, shortening customer purchasing times, and minimizing efforts and actual expenditures for customers. Learning from Western marketing management's concepts of attracting, retaining, and comprehensively considering customers holds significant guiding significance.

(3) Establishing a Reputation-Centered Philosophy

Enterprises' continuity and development rely on a positive social reputation and public image. Creating a proactive corporate image and reputation hinges on how enterprises adapt to external environmental changes, particularly market environments—the most critical aspect of the external environment, as enterprises exist within it and all commercial activities are closely linked to market environments. Only by selling products and generating profits in the market can enterprises sustain and grow. Therefore, clarifying and managing the relationship between reputation and markets pose significant challenges in enterprise operational management. Corporate reputation serves as a stepping stone for enterprises to enter markets. To establish a foothold in consumers' consciousness, enterprises must first build social reputation. Market competition is essentially a contest of corporate reputations. Although advertising might seize some market share in the short term, it cannot establish a firm position for enterprises in the market. A corporate image that deeply resonates with consumers is pivotal to an enterprise's market competitiveness, with potential for increased market share in the future. Many promising companies rely on their reputation to triumph in market competition.

2.6. Methods for Formulating Human-Centered Management Philosophies

To identify effective methods for establishing human-centered enterprise management systems, focusing on

human-centered management and application as research priorities, cultivating unique corporate cultures as kernels, and actively enhancing corporate momentum, core competitiveness, and team cohesion are essential.

(1) Continually Enhancing Enterprise Development's Driving Force

When selecting and hiring talent, we adhere to principles of openness, transparency, equality, fairness, and selecting the best. Following the principle of "efficiency-first, fairness-secondary," we abolish outdated wage grade systems and bonus distribution methods, adopting just and reasonable distribution approaches. Establishing objective and fair performance evaluation systems to objectively assess employees' work attitudes, outcomes, professional abilities, and contributions can better stimulate employees to learn and innovate, enabling them to focus on work and provide necessary impetus for enterprise development. In a knowledge-driven economic landscape, emphasizing human-centered human capital management, particularly cultivating employees' adaptability, innovation, and active participation spirits, is paramount. Therefore, enterprises must create a pleasant work environment, introduce outstanding talent, and tap their potential, while also nurturing and educating in-service employees, fostering a place that respects talent and applies it fairly. Integrating human-centered principles into daily work and sincerely treating every employee enables them to deeply comprehend and integrate personal interests with corporate objectives, viewing the enterprise as a belonging where they possess an owner's spirit.

(2) Continually Enhancing Enterprise Core Competitiveness

The uniqueness of corporate culture is shaped by management philosophies, behavioral norms, and value concepts relied upon during corporate development, which are not only keys to enhancing employees' skills and abilities but also sources of vitality and motivation for employees, regarded as the enterprise's heart. Therefore, human-centered management should prioritize creating a distinctive corporate culture and strive to integrate corporate values, spirits, and images. Among these, corporate values are paramount, with corporate spirits guaranteeing the realization of values and corporate images serving as potent weapons to propel value realization. The effective combination of these three elements constitutes the essence of shaping corporate genuine competitiveness. Without values, corporate spirits vanish, and corporate images become hollow shells. Even with values, lacking spirits renders value choices difficult to actualize, and shaped images fail to form. If only correct values exist without vividly demonstrating them to the market, social impacts and economic benefits cannot be created. In summary, in corporate culture construction, only by combining values that understand and respect people with team cohesion can employees be stimulated to continuously strive and innovate, forming powerful cohesion to propel corporate development.

(3) Enhancing Corporate Cohesion

All human behaviors are influenced by factors such as inner thoughts, emotions, values, and needs, particularly emotional factors, which exert the greatest influence on whether individuals make changes. If enterprises demonstrate friendly attitudes toward every employee, and leaders genuinely care for subordinate employees, employees will possess infinite trust in the collective, enhancing team cohesion. Conversely, if internal personnel relations are tense, psychological barriers may form between superiors and

subordinates, potentially evolving into opposition and negativity. Enterprise leaders must deeply understand employees, frequently pay attention to their thoughts, attitudes, and psychological changes, provide care and assistance to employees encountering difficulties, respect their needs, and enable them to genuinely experience the warmth of the corporate family, thereby fostering trust in the enterprise and boosting team morale. In other words, adopting a human-centered commercial operation strategy as the foundation for an enterprise's survival and continuous development in the new era market is crucial. Employees' advancement and corporate development must progress in tandem, shaping a community of shared fate. We should construct incentive and encouraging systems to help employees cultivate a spirit of viewing the enterprise as home and nurture conspicuous corporate cultures and characteristic management methods. Concurrently, corporate core competitiveness will be strengthened, and enterprises can maintain a positive, healthy operational status

3. Conclusion

The essence of humanistic management lies in viewing employees as the core of an enterprise's operational activities. In fact, regardless of perspectives from economics, politics, military affairs, or culture, the ultimate aim of social progress is to enhance the quality of human life. We pursue societal development to elevate everyone's living standards, making lives more affluent, civilized, educated, and as close to perfection as possible. In enterprise operations, the "human-centered" principle can create an excellent environment that respects, cares for, and nurtures talent. The oldest and most widely recognized philosophical principle, "Do not do unto others what you do not want done to yourself," also serves as a fundamental principle in business management, incorporated into the "put yourself in others' shoes" behavioral guideline. In the management chain, people play a central role, indispensable in every step and various practical factors. To achieve management goals, active human participation is imperative; otherwise, management loses its foundation and impetus. Therefore, we must adhere to a human-centered management style, respecting and caring for employees, particularly emphasizing the exploration of employees' capabilities and potentials. Regardless of philosophy or practical operations, enterprises, particularly their leaders, should transition from solely valuing material management to a human-centered management approach. They should draw close to employees' lives, understand their feelings, actively adjust, and propel enterprise stability. Treating employees indifferently or adopting high-pressure tactics is unacceptable; employees are not only production elements but also vital production resources. Concepts should shift to the level of "enterprises exist for talent," profoundly understanding that enterprises rely on employees' efforts to achieve development. The most crucial aspect of human-centered management is that all management tasks should center on stimulating employees' enthusiasm and managing employees. The CPC Central Committee advocates advancing theoretical renewal in practice, with understanding and mastering the worldview and methodology of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the primary mission, correctly applying its implications and strategies. For human-centered enterprise management philosophies, this undoubtedly poses higher-level requirements. Only by steadily implementing human-

centered management can enterprises contribute to constructing a harmonious society and a sustained societal development outlook, simultaneously surviving and functioning in new environments.

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