

Chapter 1

Six Ethical Challenges of Valuing People and Technology in the Workplace: An Introduction

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides a brief introduction and synopsis of the purpose of work. It questions where organization value resides and introduces six challenges for leaders to consider: (1) The ethical people and technology development intention of management and leadership. (2) The ethical ways that managers and leaders value people and technology in the workplace. (3) The ethical impact of organization development initiatives that align people and technology within the workplace. (4) The role of the cognitive, behavioral and/or cultural philosophical perspectives of organizations and its ethical effect on people and technology. (5) How ethical leaders can understand and use diversity intelligence® (DQ) to ethically value all employees in the workplace. (6) The ethical implications and imperatives for managers and leaders to be successful integrating people and technology in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Work, in all its forms, has been required of humans since the beginning of time. It has been defined by many, understood to mean different things to

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-5321-6.ch001

everyone, and its value to the individual and society remains a heated debate. The discussions around work are grounded in philosophy and how well those who explain work are understood by those receiving the explanation. Different societies have different perspectives about how much work should be required of individuals. These perspectives create divisions within communities and between countries as money has emerged as a central focus of work. Altruistic work is misunderstood, at times, if no monetary value is assigned to the work.

THE PURPOSE OF WORK

Philosophically, what is the purpose of work? What is the difference between work and employment? What has been philosophy's influence on work. There is no work without philosophies about work. Those who do no work even have a philosophy about work which is to do no work. What is the meaning of work to those who choose not to work? Is it the same as those who choose to work? When work is to be done, there is typically people and technology. So, how people and those who expect the employee to perform the work think about work matters. Do leaders think about their people or technology more? Is technology, philosophically, more important than people in the workplace.

People as Technology (PT) (Hughes, 2010) matches the development of people to the deliberate methods organizational leaders and managers use to introduce and integrate new innovations and technologies into organizations. The PT concept is a proactive, strategic method to introduce, develop, and integrate employees into organizations. Applying the PT concept requires leaders and managers to think of employees similarly and as positively as they think of technology. Technology in the context of this book includes all technology within organizations.

People are considered the most valuable asset within an organization. Yet, many employees do not feel valued by their employers. This is very evident with the quiet quitting phenomenon that has been highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic (Formica & Sfodera, 2022; Lord, 2022). There has always been quiet quitting within organizations but not to the extent that is evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees who are quiet quitting do not believe that organizations value them enough to appreciate any extra efforts, so they only perform the bare minimum that their job requires. Several questions remain to be answered by organization leaders including:

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