

Feedback Training Needs of Field Work Staff of Telecommunication Infrastructures Servicing Industries for Effective Job Performance in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study examined feedback training needs of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State. One research question guided the study and a null hypothesis was tested. The research question was: What are the training needs for feedback skills among field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State? Descriptive survey research design was employed for the study. Descriptive survey research is concerned with either describing or interpreting the current status of the problem. This research method was used to ascertain the current state of the problem by studying the entire population. The population of the study was 97; which comprised 37 Electrical and Electronics lecturers in 3 Universities in Rivers State and 55 Supervisors in 3 Telecommunication Infrastructures Servicing Industries also in Rivers State. The entire population was used for the study since it is not too large and is manageable. A structured questionnaire which was developed by the researcher on the basis of objective of the study and research questions was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire had two sections; A and B. Section A contained items on the demography of the respondents while section B had 10 items on feedback training skills. Using the Cronbach alpha method to determine the reliability of the instrument, the reliability co-efficient of 0.74 was obtained. The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and to determine the closeness of the respondents' mean ratings. While the z-test was used to analyze the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Thus any item that had a mean rating of 3.50 and above was regarded as agreed while any item with a mean rating less than 3.50 was regarded as not agreed. Also, any item that had a standard deviation of .01 to 0.9 was regarded as homogenous while any item with standard deviation of 1.0 and above was regarded as heterogeneous. A null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance in two-tailed test; which meant that, there was a significant difference between mean scores. Conversely, where the p-value was greater than or equal to the level of significance (0.05) in two-tailed test; it meant that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was accepted. The findings of the study shows that Supervisors and lecturers strongly agree that training in feedback skills on response to questions, enquiries, complaints in real time among others was required for effective job performance of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State. The study recommended that, operators and managers of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State should through workshops and seminars provide training for field work staff on how to response to questions, enquiries, complaints in real time for improved and effective job performance.

Keywords: Telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries, feedback training, field work staff, job performance

Introduction

Telecommunications is the electronic transmission of information over distances. The telecommunications industry began in the 1830s with the invention of the electrical telegraph, the first mechanical communications device. Over time, new inventions broadened the telecommunications industry. Each of the following inventions allowed the creation of new telecommunications networks that expanded the ability to communicate over long distances.

Telecommunication infrastructure is the technological and human components, networks, systems, and processes that contributes to the functioning of the health information system (Braa et al., 2017). It is a set of organizational practices, technical infrastructure and social norms that collectively provide for the smooth operation of scientific work at a distance (Pironti, 2016).

The telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries are made up of companies that make communication possible on a global scale, whether through the phone, the internet, over airwaves, or cables. These companies create the infrastructures that allows data as text, voice, audio, or video to be sent anywhere in the world (Gorge, 2021).

However, their ability to carry out those corporate social responsibilities require effective and diligent workforce more especially, the field work staff. Field work staff are those employees who do not work at the organization's office but travel to different places in order to do their work. In telecommunication infrastructures servicing companies, this group of persons are known as telecom technicians and engineers who usually handle telecom equipment maintenance and repairs. Their duties include planning network installations, troubleshooting outages, testing circuits and preparing installation diagrams and sometimes relating to consumers. In order carry out these duties effectively, training is required.

There are several training needs according Denga (2021) that industries more especially, telecommunication industries ought to provide for their staff for effective job performance; which will enhance the growth of the organization. Among them according to Adams (2021) are advanced technical skill training, administrative skill training, maintenance skill training and feedback skill training.

Feedback is the response, reaction, or information given by the recipient of a message to the sender. It is the process of letting someone know which areas they need to improve. Feedback is crucial in two-way communication to ensure both sides are on the same page and can prevent misunderstandings or confusion. It also strengthens the bonds of trust and rapport between the sender and the recipient (Figh, 2018).

Feedback in communication is the response, reaction, or information given by the recipient of a message to the sender. It is the process of letting someone know which areas they need to improve. Feedback is essential to effective communication because it helps the sender check that their message has been understood and received as intended and modify their communication strategy as needed (Figh, 2018).

Giving constructive feedback on communication is a crucial leadership trait. It enables one to support each team member in enhancing their capacity to interact with their colleagues, clients, stakeholders, and outside vendors and convey their requirements and concerns. Feedback is crucial in two-way communication to ensure both sides are on the same page and can prevent misunderstandings or confusion. It also strengthens the bonds of trust and rapport between the sender and the recipient.

There are several types of feedback in communication, each serving a specific purpose in the communication process. James (2021) stated some of the most common types of feedback such as Formal feedback, Evaluative feedback, Prescriptive feedback and Descriptive feedback. Formal feedback is a type of feedback that is received in written form. Many companies adopt this type of feedback for evaluating productivity in a given time. Its structure is simple and objective, giving both the managers and employees a chance to talk about what they can improve in their work and communication strategy. Evaluative feedback is a way to describe an individual's behavior and has beneficial results only when it is positive. This type of feedback is not always recommended because it can often be perceived as too personal.

Prescriptive feedback is a form of advice in which the recipient tells the sender how to correct their way of working. Although this type of feedback can be helpful in the early stages, such as training or onboarding, it can also be a way to avoid giving constructive feedback on the individual's work. While Descriptive feedback as the name implies, this type of feedback is used to describe the effects of an individual's action, which leads to the presentation of a relevant opinion. Descriptive feedback is considered the best form of evaluation in the workplace and other fields, such as education and science.

In order to be motivated especially, when working for someone else, team members need to feel appreciated, even when improvements need to be made. A proven way to provide good feedback is by combining the necessary recommendations with the quality of their work to conclude positively about the evaluated person.

Feedback is a tool that can help people evaluate themselves and their work and also how others perceive them. While employees and students need to receive feedback, it is also essential for leaders who believe in growth to ask for an evaluation, give an example, and be an inspiration for them. Most team members appreciate honest evaluation - approximately 70% of employees said they would work harder if their managers better appreciated their efforts. (Figh, 2018).

Professional feedback will increase communication effects, whether you are a manager, team member, student, or colleague. Therefore, in the feedback culture, evaluation should be used permanently, both professionally and personally.

James (2021) stated some of the reasons why feedback is essential in communication and the reasons are for confirmation of understanding, improves communication, to develops trust, encourage positive behavior and identifies areas for improvement. In effective communication, people need to know that their message has been received and comprehended as intended. Without feedback, it is possible that the sender won't be aware that their communication has been misunderstood, which might cause confusion and blunders. Feedback helps increase communication by informing the sender of what went well and what did not. Also, feedback delivered positively and encouragingly can aid in developing trust between the sender and recipient. Over time, this may result in closer ties and improved communication. Providing constructive feedback can motivate the recipient to continue engaging in positive behaviors. Negative feedback can be used to identify areas for improvement. However, when given constructively and with the intention of helping the recipient learn and grow, this can lead to considerable changes in the caliber of communication.

The power of good feedback comes from the fact that it can change certain behaviors and allows the other person to receive a realistic perspective on his action. When done in the right way and with the right intentions, feedback can lead to outstanding performance. Therefore, feedback is constructive only when it focuses on an individual's work and actions. Feedback is essential in the workplace such as telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries (Figh, 2018).

The feedback skills training as opined by Steve (2021) will involve providing training on how to response to questions, inquiries and complaint in real time, listening, giving clarifications on issues, manifesting emotional intelligence, managing confrontations, being courteous, showing confidence, being consistent among others. This training when given will engender good relationship between consumers and field work staff; thereby improving their performance. Apart from training in feedback skills, training also in administrative skills can enhance the job performance of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructure servicing industries.

The activities of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries according James (2021) revolves around feedbacks from the customers or consumers of their services, employers and colleagues. Hence, training in acquisition of feedback skills is paramount. The feedback skills training as opined by Steve (2021) will involve providing training on how to response to questions, inquiries and complaint in real time, listening, giving clarifications on issues, manifesting emotional intelligence, managing confrontations, being courteous, showing confidence, being consistent among others. This

training when given will engender good relationship between consumers and field work staff; thereby improving their performance.

The performance of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Nigeria and especially in Rivers State is crucial due to high importance attached to telecommunication services and products. The performance of these staff could make or mar the reputation, credibility and dependability of these industries.

Statement of the Problem

The performance of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Nigeria needs improvement. This is evident in several complaints made by numerous users and subscribers of telecommunication products and services. The complaints ranges from drop calls, network interferences, bad networks, echoes, feedbacks, subscription issues among others. This situation according to Young (2021) usually affect businesses and other organizations such as banks and educational institutions in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular, whose activities and programmes largely depend on the services and products of telecommunication industries. The huge cost in terms of man-hour loss, unfulfilled promises and targets by bank staff usually affect the banking industries dearly. In most cases students in higher institutions find it difficult either to initiate online activities such as to sign in, upload and download documents, access their portals for fees payment, result verification and examination. This unpleasant situations are occasioned by truncated and poor networks service.

This situation could be averted if field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries possessed feedback skills. The researcher is worried that, this situation if left unchecked may not only result to the sanctioning of these telecommunication industries by the government but also lead to protests and picketing of these industries by users and subscribers of their services. Hence, the study on feedback training needs of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State becomes imperative.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine vocational training needs of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State. Specially, the study examined:

1. the training needs for feedback skills among field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance.

Research Question

The following research question guided the study.

1. What are the training needs for feedback skills among field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and supervisors on training needs for feedback skills among field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State

Theoretical Framework

Human capital theory initially formulated by William Becker in 1962 and Stan Rosen in 1976, states that individual workers have a set of skills or abilities which they can improve or accumulate through training and education. This theory is built on the classical theories of the growth, learning and the labor markets. The theory argues that employees are the main asset of the organization and training is consider as the important constituent of the human for optimum job performance (Enrique, 2017).

Theory is basically based on the two attributes; that is Individual and Organization (John, 2017) Human capital investment has developed in the past years. This investment helps in increasing the worker and the organization quality. They are often considered the main resource or capital of an organization. Training and development is the most important constituent of the human resource that help in increasing the organizational performance. The main goal and aim of training is to increase the organization efficiency. Organizations overall efficiency, profitability and the productivity is improved by training. Employee's capacity of performing well in the organization and their motivation level is increase by the help and training and development. Through training the organization get a competitive advantage, because the workers become more committed and more productive towards the organization. Further, the success of an organization is dependent on the employee performance, and training is the only method through which the employees become more competent. The task becomes easier for employees and they can see a very clear path towards their goal (Khan 2021). The training helps in increasing the worker skills, knowledge, behaviors and capacities which leads towards the success of an organization (Olaniyan & Lucas 2018). In this competitive world, to sustain in the market an organization must train its employees in order to make them more resourceful, innovative and enhancing their performance. In this modern era, organizations face different challenges because of technology advancement. In order to cope up with these challenges they provide training to their staff. This theory is related to this study in that it seeks to determine the connection that exist between training and job performance as a tool for organizational growth. The study therefore, centers on feedback skill training needs required to improve job performance of field work staff telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 97; which comprised 37 Electrical and Electronics lecturers in 3 universities in Rivers State namely University of Port Harcourt, Choba, Rivers State University, Nkpolu Oroworukwo, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni and 55 Supervisors in 3 Telecommunication Infrastructures Servicing Industries in Rivers State namely Prime infrastructure and Engineering Service, Helios Towers Nigeria Limited and Swap Technologies and Telecoms PLC. The entire population was used for the study since it is not too large and is manageable. A structured questionnaire of 10 items with 5 response options of Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1) was used as instrument for data collection. The items on the questionnaire borders on feedback skills. Three experts in Industrial Technical Education Department of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education validated the content of the instrument. Their corrections and contributions were used in structuring the instrument. 20 Copies of the questionnaire for the study were administered to 10 Electrical and Electronics lecturers of Niger Delta University Bayelsa State and 10 Supervisors in Telecommunication Infrastructures Servicing Industry in that same state. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability the instrument; which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.74. The researcher with the help of research assistants who were personally and thoroughly trained administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents. The data collected for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions and to determine the closeness of the respondents' mean ratings. The z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance

Decision Rule

The mean value of 3.50 was used as the criterion reference mean since the mean of the response options was 3.50. Thus any item that had a mean rating of 3.50 and above was regarded as agreed while any item with a mean rating less than 3.50 was regarded as not agreed. A null hypothesis was rejected where the p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance, it meant that there was a significant difference between mean scores. Conversely, where the p-value was greater than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), it meant that there was no significant difference and the hypothesis was accepted.

Results

Research Question 1 What are the training needs for feedback skills among field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State?

Data collected in respect of research question 3 was analyzed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents mean ratings on feedback skills' training for effective job performance

S/N	Items	Respondents					
		Supervisors			Lecturers		
	Aspects of Feedback Skills' Training	\bar{X}_1	SD_1	Remark	\bar{X}_2	SD_2	Remark
1.	Training on response to questions	3.61	0.53	A	3.72	0.54	A
2.	Training on respond to enquiries	3.52	0.54	A	3.59	0.41	A
3.	Training on response to complaint in real time	3.54	0.43	A	3.51	0.31	A
4.	Training on active listening,	3.51	0.42	A	3.74	0.32	A
5.	Training on giving clarifications on issues	3.53	0.42	A	3.58	0.54	A
6.	Training on manifesting emotional intelligence	3.51	0.76	A	3.62	0.43	A
7.	Training on managing confrontations	3.57	0.41	A	3.62	0.44	A
8.	Training on being courteous,	3.50	0.76	A	3.55	0.53	A
9.	Training on showing confidence,	3.61	0.69	A	3.53	0.34	A
10.	Training on being consistent	3.51	0.51	A	3.51	0.41	A
	Cluster Mean	3.54	0.53	A	3.60	0.43	A

Data in Table 1 indicates that all the items have a cluster mean of 3.54 and 3.60 for supervisors and lecturers respectively. This means that the respondents agree that re-training in the above listed feedback skills are required for effective job performance of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State. The cluster standard deviations of 0.53 and 0.43 for supervisors and lecturers respectively, shows that the respondents are homogenous in their response.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and supervisors on feedback skills' training need of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State

Data obtained in respect of hypothesis 1 were analyzed and presented in Table 2

Table 2. Summary of z-test comparison of the mean ratings of feedback skills' training on effective job performance.

Respondents	N	\bar{X}	SD	α	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Supervisors	55	3.54	.53	0.05	90	0.43	.059	Not Significant
Lecturers	37	3.60	.43					

Data in Table 2 show that supervisors and lecturers did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the feedback skills' training need of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State. The Table shows a t-value of 0.43 and a p-value of .059, at a degree of freedom of 90. Testing at alpha level of 0.05, the p-value is not significant since the p-value is greater than the alpha value (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers and supervisors on feedback skills' training need of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State

Discussion

Results of the study this study revealed that training in feedback skills are required for effective job performance of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State. The study shows that training on response to questions, respond to inquiries, response to complaint in real time, response to complaint in real time, giving clarifications on issues, manifesting emotional intelligence, managing confrontations, being courteous, showing confidence and being consistent were the feedback skills' training need of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State.

This findings is line with that Steve (2021) who observed that feedback skills' training involve providing training on how to response to questions, inquiries and complaint in real time, listening, giving clarifications on issues, manifesting emotional intelligence, managing confrontations, being courteous, showing confidence, being consistent among others. This training when given will engender good relationship between consumers and field work staff; thereby improving their performance. The analysis of the hypothesis reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of supervisors and lecturers on the feedback skills' training need of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study, it was concluded that, feedback skills' training is required of field work staff of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries for effective job performance in Rivers State.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study and the conclusion reached, it was recommended that operators and managers of telecommunication infrastructures servicing industries in Rivers State should provide:

1. regular and adequate training on manifesting emotional intelligence through workshops for field work staff.
2. regular and adequate training on response to complaint in real time by means of seminars for field work staff.
3. regular and adequate training on active listening through symposiums for field work staff.
4. regular and adequate training on respond to enquiries through conferences for field work staff for effective job performance

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