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Staff suggestion scheme (3Ss) within the UAE context

Staff suggestion
scheme

Implementation and critical success factors

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Abstract

Purpose – There are two main objectives of this exploratory research paper; first is to identify and understand from a management point of view the key success factors in implementing an effective staff suggestion scheme in an organization based in UAE. The second objective is to develop and recommend a model which can bridge the gap between staff suggestion scheme theories and evidence-based practices.

Design/methodology/approach – A literature-based study that examine the theories related to staff motivation, rewards and recognition, top management involvement, and communication. A qualitative, exploratory research was then conducted using in-depth and semi-structured interviews with two leading organizations and five key informants in the field of staff involvement.

Findings – The study indicates that many factors have been considered in establishing the staff suggestion schemes by both organizations, issues pertaining to the increasing participation and suggestions implementation were detected. The research has recommended action plans to enhance the performance.

Research limitations/implications – This paper presents a focused literature study and does not contain the first-hand empirical analysis for individual organizations. It does, however, provide the basis for future research.

Originality/value – This paper will be useful information for managers and researchers seeking to gain further understanding of the different issues related to the staff suggestion scheme.

Keywords Continuous improvement, Employee involvement, Remuneration, Management effectiveness, Critical success factors, United Arab Emirates

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The key to gaining the competitive advantage in a saturated market is to use existing resources more efficiently and creatively. All businesses have three principle resources; capital, natural, and human resources. Organizations realize the fact that employees are the only resources that cannot be copied by competitors; they make the difference and distinguish successful organizations from less successful organizations. Therefore, they deserve to be treated as a true asset and nurtured to deliver exceptional results for the organizations.

There are different programs under the employee involvement umbrella such as, self-directed teams, quality circles, work enrichment, and staff suggestion schemes. Research has found that employee suggestion systems are a useful way to obtain and utilize employees' creative ideas especially when operating in a world where innovation and constant improvement play an increasingly vital part in economic success.



Staff suggestion schemes are the oldest form of employee involvement; they have displayed an amazing staying power, transitioning themselves from the “box on the wall” to the current continuous improvement models. Yusof and Aspinwall (2000) say that there are numerous healthy practices to promote job satisfaction and continuous improvement in the company, they include a system for job advancement, suggestion schemes, a reward system, education and training for employees (both skills and quality related) and job rotation through multi-skilling.

Marx (1995) defines a staff suggestion scheme as a formalized procedure to encourage the employees to think creatively about their jobs and their job environment and to come forward with ideas for which they will be rewarded on a specific basis, if acceptable and to the advantage of the organization. It should be designed to encourage ideas from employees, evaluate, implement, and award them if they prove to be acceptable.

Critical success factors

Lloyd (1996a, b) lists five critical success factors needed to implement, support and operate a successful suggestion scheme, which includes the following.

Top management commitment

Marx (1995) comments on the management style, managers must believe that people are creative and imaginative, and they will fail to display this only as a result of imposed constraints or a lack of challenge; employees will set and achieve worthy goals without continuing intervention. Given the opportunity, employees will exercise self-direction and self-control if they are committed to objectives.

Commitment from middle and junior managers

Middle managers have particularly an important role to play; they must grasp the principles of employee involvement and explain the same to their subordinates.

Effective administrative and evaluation procedures

Considering the operational side of the program, Marx (1995) outlines the following elements to be able to run a formal system:

- the system should be approved and supported by top management;
- the suggestion must indicate a problem, potential problem or opportunity to improve an existing process or situation;
- it must present a solution to a problem or a potential problem;
- it must be in writing and signed by the suggestor; and
- it must be acknowledged on receipt.

With the advances in technology, staff suggestion systems are now web-based with much useful functionality like tracking the suggestion at every stage. The ability to generate up to date information is one big advantage. Additionally, organizations should make available other trusted options in submitting suggestions in cases where not all employees have access to computers. Clear procedures for each stage of handling the suggestion should be drafted and communicated to all staff concerned.

Regular training sessions on the same are critical. The suggestions must be evaluated in a timely fashion and feedback must be communicated to the suggestors.

Staff suggestion
scheme

Promotion and publicity

Lloyd (1996a, b) thinks that the scheme should be marketed and “sold” to all employees in the same way as the organization’s goods and services are sold to the buying public. A survey by Sheffield University found only 13 percent of the 114 organizations surveyed publicized their schemes regularly, and only 16 percent reported a high level of planning.

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Rewards and recognition

Lloyd (1996a, b) says that there is sadly a misconception that seems to be held by senior management that people submit suggestions mainly for financial reward. Yet research seems to indicate that although money has a strong motivation effect, it certainly is not the primary reason why suggestions are made. The award does not always have to be cash; there are many ways of rewarding people that will remind them of their contribution to the organization long after the money is spent. In some cases, the suggestion scheme has been used to identify creative individuals within the organization. Other organizations use the number of suggestions submitted by employees as an indicator to reward them formally at appraisal time.

Dubai Aluminium Company Limited

Dubai Aluminium Company Limited (DUBAL) is a multi-billion dollar operation, considered to be the largest single site aluminum smelter operation in the western world, encompassing 480 hectares and the single largest non-oil contributor to Dubai’s economy. When the company was first established in 1975, even the amazing foresight of the company’s founder H.H. Sheikh Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum could not have predicted the incredible heights that the company would achieve. In only 25 short years, the company has become one of the major heavyweights in the worldwide aluminum industry and is recognized as an excellent example of efficiency and quality by many companies across the globe.

DUBAL are the leading supplier of high-purity aluminum for the electronics industry and the world’s largest supplier of aluminum to the alloy wheel industry. Over the ensuing years, it has transformed into a global aluminum producer, generating a total volume of 861,000 metric tones of quality metal in 2006. It exports products to more than 42 countries around the world and has a broad base of 240 customers.

Commitment to employee development

One of the company’s greatest asset is its multinational workforce, which currently numbers over 3,300 representing 20 different nationalities, 21 percent are UAE nationals employed in all sectors of DUBAL’s business.

The commitment towards its employees is displayed through its extensive training and development opportunities. DUBAL provides a wide range of learning opportunities for its employees; it coordinates a broad range of technical and competency development programs as well as on-the-job training programs. The company has a Development Pool Programme, which grooms middle managers for

senior management roles and administers Summer Training Programs, a Graduate Training Programme, an Open Learning Unit and a Scholarship Programme that supports higher learning.

DUBAL's Main Training Centre is complemented by several satellite training centres located throughout the plant. The centre, which is certified by the Institute of Leadership and Management focuses on management skills training and the delivery of pre-employment courses to nationals joining the company. Its pre-employment courses train UAE high school leavers to become maintenance craftsmen and smelter, desalination plant and power station operators. It also offers extensive executive training opportunities to employees at recognized international business schools including INSEAD in France and IMD in Switzerland (Table I).

Quality driven programs

The company also actively promotes team projects through its Business Excellence Programme which is the company-wide umbrella initiative for all in-house improvement activities, including the staff suggestion scheme. DUBAL adopted a philosophy of management by objectives (MBO) a few years ago which ensures that corporate objectives cascade down to all levels of the organization through the CEO's visual management challenge. The Business Excellence Programme is the foundation of DUBAL's Continuous Improvement Model. MBO supports the model which also encourages improvement driven through external impetus, like customer complaints as well as suggestions from customers and suppliers. Visual management crowns the culture of continuous improvement. All of these initiatives have resulted in many significant improvements in safety, the environment, as well as operational effectiveness and reliability.

DUBAL staff suggestion scheme

It was established in May 1981 with a simple concept of involving the most valuable asset of any organization, its people. Glyn Ashley, Former Head of Industrial Engineering and Founder of DUBAL's staff suggestion scheme says:

[...] the scope and need for rapid improvement greatly exceeded the limited capacity of our small IE team, we were well aware of the vast cost improvement opportunities that resided beneath our radar screens.

Recently, DUBAL has the following objectives for implementing the scheme:

- to encourage creative thinking and ideas;
- to give personal rewards and recognition;
- to encourage a culture of continual improvement; and
- it is a tool for effective communication between employees and management.

General manager human resources and organization effectiveness at DUBAL says "the most important aim of the DUBAL's staff suggestion scheme is to promote and

Table I.
Training
(man-hours/employee)
at DUBAL

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
	4.0	2.7	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.2

encourage employees to participate in the process of decision making.” He adds “the employee involvement we have in the suggestion scheme is far more important than any financial benefit we get.” In 2006, DUBAL celebrated the 25th anniversary of running the program. In total of 58,500 suggestions were implemented and awarded, more than AED 12 million awarded for the suggestions implemented resulting in more than AED 46 million in savings. For every AED 3.5 that DUBAL spends, it get AED 16.5 in return.

The program evolved significantly throughout the past years, it started as a paper based, where suggestions were submitted on a printed suggestion scheme form. With the growth of the program, this process was a huge draw back; many suggestions were lost causing extreme inconvenience to the suggestors. An in-house designed online suggestion system was introduced in January 1999. The advantages of the fully automated system included a significant increase in participation resulting from online submission and enhanced transparency as suggestors were able to enter, check, query and track the progress of their suggestions. But most importantly no suggestions were ever got lost. The transformation to the online system from a paper based was not easy. Many of the suggestors were not familiar with computers. As with any system, people took time to come to terms with the change. To overcome the initial hiccups, an incentive programme for the entry of suggestions into computers was introduced. Suggestors using the system were awarded AED 4 with an option that employees can send their written suggestions to the scheme office for entry. The incentive scheme was withdrawn when suggestors were settled with the new system. This incentive scheme was extremely successful not only in encouraging employees to submit suggestions but also training and educating employees on how to use computers in general.

As part of enhancing the scheme, DUBAL migrated to a web-based system with many useful enhancements like spell checking and attachment of pictures and documents. The system has a facility of generating management information system (MIS) reports which are up-to date and can be classified by category like pending suggestions for review, by department, by staff member and so on. DUBAL ensured that its employees understand exactly what a suggestion is; the definition and the guidelines for the program were reiterated in all the training sessions including the induction programs for new hires.

The following categories are not considered as valid suggestions from DUBAL’s point of view:

- reporting a problem without a solution;
- a repeated/duplicated idea;
- a complaint/grievance; and
- suggestions not registered within three months of implementation.

The scheme is designed specifically to the 3,000 non-supervisory level employees. DUBAL believes in having different involvement programs for different levels in the organization. It was realized in the initial stages of implementing the scheme, that suggestions were taking a long time to be evaluated and rewarded. Therefore, in the year 2003 a new concept of self-evaluation and rewarding was implemented by involving supervisors, area representatives and department heads to speed up the whole process. DUBAL has a centralized process through the staff suggestion unit,

manned by one dedicated staff member and a Chairman. The unit reports directly to the head of quality and continuous improvement department.

The process works as follows:

- (1) Through the web-based system, all suggestions are forwarded to the supervisors first, who play a very important role in DUBAL's Suggestion Scheme – they are supposed to develop and enhance the suggestions.
- (2) The enhanced suggestions are then forwarded to area representatives in each department who intern evaluate the validity and feasibility of the suggestions and get back to the supervisor with an action plan for each suggestion. This task is supposed to be completed within 14 days of receiving the suggestion. Suggestions that are found to be invalid or not feasible are logged in a deferred file with a proper evaluation slip.
- (3) Rewards for valid suggestions are decided based on an approved grid by the area representatives, they send the suggestions with the entitled rewards to the review team who meets twice a month to review all the accepted suggestions received. The review team comprises of 25 members from key departments including department heads. When the suggestion is implemented, the Suggestion Scheme staff forwards the details to the Human Resources Department for processing the reward. This is the only role, the Human Resources Department play in the process. A copy of the approved and implemented suggestion is kept in the personal file of the suggestor, though it does not count towards his performance appraisal or promotion.

An illustration of the process is shown in Figure 1.

DUBAL rewards the suggestor only when the suggestion is implemented. The awards grid is updated in Table II.

DUBAL over the years of implementing this scheme, managed to get greater insights on what appeal to its employees, therefore it designed a reward scheme that provides its employees with different options that satisfy different needs. Points earned can be accumulated and exchanged for cash, additional day off, invitation to the annual Gala Dinner or a coffee break with the CEO. As it can be seen from the above grid, the supervisor which plays an instrumental role in supporting the suggestions gets a reward for his efforts too. By doing this, DUBAL managed to overcome the resistance to change experienced from its first level supervisors at the initial stages. They felt threatened that they might be criticized for not coming up with the ideas presented by their subordinates.

All the awarded suggestions are audited to ensure adherence to the budget assigned to this scheme by the Finance Department. A part from the tangible rewards, DUBAL ensured that their suggestors are recognized for their creativity and efforts. Every six months a ceremony is held to recognize such employees in addition to the mega annual event where participants of the annual suggestion competition are awarded in various categories like quality, environment, plant operations, safety, and energy. In addition to the best Gold, Silver and Bronze suggestion. The CEO and the management team are directly involved in evaluating the suggestions and choosing the winners for these categories. The winners are advertised through the internal staff magazine, posters in prime locations in DUBAL, the intranet and local news papers. Such winners are given

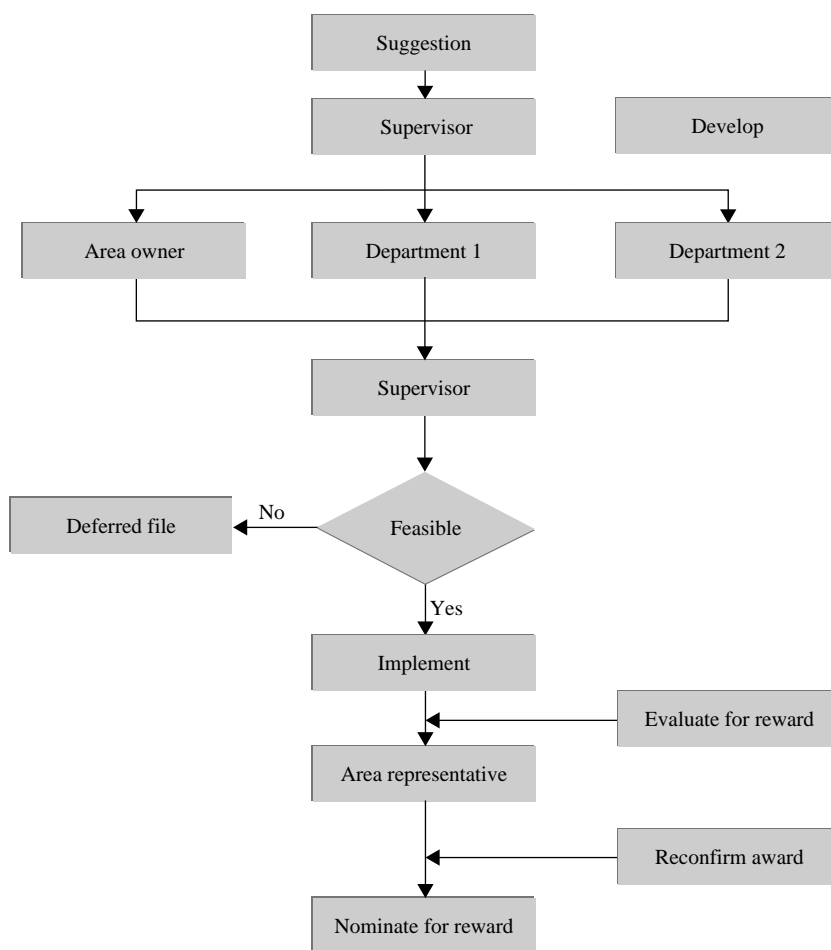


Figure 1.
The suggestion process

Type	Suggestions		Credit to supervisor (%)
	Award	Points	
High cost saver		150	50
AED 25,000 recurring OR AED 50,000 one off	AED 1,500	150	
AED 12,500 recurring OR AED 25,000 one off	AED 1,000	100	
AED 7,500 recurring OR AED 15,000 one off	AED 750	75	
First Award	AED 500	50	20
Second Award	AED 250	25	
Merit Award	AED 50	10	
Area Rep Award	No cash	8	

Table II.
DUBAL's rewards grid

the chance to compete in the international forums like competitions held by Ideas UK and Employee Involvement Association in the USA.

Recently, this highly successful programme is recognized regionally and internationally. DUBAL's suggestions have won awards in international competitions, including:

- (1) *Ideas, UK:*
 - Environmental Award – 1997 and 2004.
 - Health and Safety – 1999 and 2001.
- (2) *Employee Involvement Association, USA:*
 - The Best Environmental Award – 2002-2005.

International participation and recognition played a very important role in stimulating further new ideas and increasing the participation of the employees. The challenges that faces DUBAL are:

- Continuing the momentum of success in terms of generating more ideas and more importantly involving more employees. Currently, the suggestion unit monitors the flow of suggestions from different departments regularly and reports are generated when the performance of some departments drops sharply. The Head of the Quality and Continuous Improvement Department visits such departments to understand the reason for the drop and encourage them to participate.
- Access to computers. Not all employees have access to computers to be able to voice their suggestions, today they either write or meet up with the staff suggestion scheme staff. Installing some computers in the residential area is one option which DUBAL is considering.
- The biggest challenge is implementing the approved suggestions. The dissatisfaction level among the suggestors increases when they come to know that their suggestions are approved but yet to be implemented. Department heads are the only bodies that can help overcome this obstacle. Regular meetings with department heads are held to speed up the whole process of implementing the approved suggestions.

The success of DUBAL's scheme is due to a number of critical factors:

- Top management's involvement – Glyn Ashley – Former Head of Industrial Engineering and founder of DUBAL's staff suggestion scheme says "DUBAL's management really BELIEVES in its people and VALUES their knowledge."
- Middle management support, DUBAL managed to get all levels of staff involved in the implementation of the scheme and shared one common goal with them; which is continuous improvement.
- Through effective communication channels, the barriers between the shop floor and management were removed. DUBAL managed to gain the trust of its employees. The management team is very often seen in the shop floor.
- Solid and transparent processes for collecting, evaluating and rewarding the suggestions.

- The constant appreciation and recognition of positive behaviour displayed by the staff members.
- The culture of innovation and creativity was well established by the management, change to the better is becoming a way of life in DUBAL.

Staff suggestion scheme

DUBAI Municipality

Dubai Municipality is a local governmental body of the Emirate of Dubai established in 1951. It is considered to be the backbone of Dubai's development as it provides diverse services to the public including developing the necessary infrastructure and services in terms of general projects, public health, drainage, irrigation, construction. Furthermore, maintaining the cultural values and conserving the heritage of the city are two important activities that the municipality is responsible for.

Dubai Municipality is one of the largest governmental entities in terms of the number of employees, the volume of the services it provides and the projects it carries out. It has around 10,000 employees in 30 organizational units such as departments, centres, sections, and offices. Dubai Municipality core values are represented in the following Table III.

Quality driven strategic programmes

Published on the web site is Dubai Municipality's strategic direction till the year 2009 which embraces concepts like continuous improvement, employee empowerment, effective leadership, and excellence. Here, are some examples of its strategic goals:

Leadership

- It shall make every effort to build, develop and maintain an effective and efficient leadership team to successfully lead the transformation process.
- It shall build strong leadership at all levels of the organization through world-class learning, development and succession planning.
- It shall create an effective communication system that anticipates and serves the needs of the strategic partners with minimal delay and maximum convenience.

Innovation, continuous improvement and learning

- It shall continuously improve as an organization in terms of quality of services, efficiency, and stakeholder responsiveness.
- Innovation will be the key to success; it shall reinvent itself so that change becomes constant.

Employees	The real asset
Stakeholders	Commitment to partnership and appreciation of their needs and expectations
Transformation	Appreciation of change and strive for positive development
Performance	Doing the right thing right
Interdependence	Focus on team work through cooperation and sharing of ideas
Innovation	The adoption of initiatives and recognition of innovation

Table III.
Dubai Municipality core values

- Shall sustain competitive advantage through its continuous building of its strategic and operational capabilities in the areas of innovation and creative provision of new products, services and processes at every work location.

Employees

- It shall put in place a career bath that allows individual employees to achieve their highest potential.
- It shall create a reward system that recognizes the value created by the employees through their individual and collective performance.
- It shall encourage employee participation in decision making.
- It shall empower its employees to effectively and efficiently respond to the stakeholders' different and changing needs.
- It shall develop a culture of teamwork within departments, between departments and with stakeholders.

Organization structure and culture

- It shall encourage free and open communication across all organizational units and functional levels.
- Transparency shall be an integral part of the culture.
- It shall ensure that all appropriate employee levels are permitted, encouraged, recognized and rewarded for their involvement in the planning process and implementation of Dubai Municipality strategic and operational priorities, goals, and objectives.

Staff suggestion scheme

Early 1998, Dubai Municipality organized a training program on innovation and quality management to 3,000 of its staff with an objective of building a culture that welcomes and adapts change and quality concepts. One of the positive outcomes gained from the training program is the need to introduce an involvement program that connects the management with the staff at all levels. The staff suggestion scheme was launched then as a very simple and manual program. Subsequently, an official automated program was launched in the year 2000 incorporating the learning's from DUBAL.

The scheme was called "Have Your Say" opened to both internal and external customers wherein both can submit suggestions to improve the quality of the municipal services. The focus in this research is on the staff suggestion scheme only.

Apart from the above objective, the municipality aims at:

- building a culture of teamwork and co-operation between the various organizational units;
- leverage on employees' talents and creativity to come up with solutions to existing challenges; and
- improving the overall performance of the municipality by enhancing work processes and simplifying procedures.

Have You Say scheme is manned by two dedicated staff members who report directly to the Head of the Administrative Development and Quality Improvement Department,

who in turns reports to the director general. A suggestion is defined as any new idea that contributes to improving the workflow/processes. The term “suggestion” also implies remarks on any existing procedure which will bring forth practical benefits and make remarkable, positive impact related to customer satisfaction, quality, efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of work, work environment and other fields related to the tasks and functions of the municipality.

The municipality classifies the suggestions under two categories:

- (1) suggestion with positive financial results; and
- (2) suggestion with no financial results.

Considering that not all the municipality employees have access to computers, it opened up many channels a part from the web site for forwarding the suggestions to the unit. For example, suggestion boxes were put in prime locations in the municipality; suggestion forms can be mailed, faxed or handed into the unit. Additionally, suggestions can be verbally communicated to the staff unit who enters them into the system. The municipality is the only organization in Dubai that uses the SMS service to inform the suggestor that his/her suggestion is approved. There are 58 coordinators representing the 29 units in the municipality who are responsible for evaluating the suggestions. These coordinators are nominated every year by each department to represent it in the evaluation process.

Have Your Say process is shown in Figure 2.

The suggestor uses any of the above methods to inform the unit with his suggestion. The suggestion is input into the system and a reference number is generated and passed to the suggestor. The suggestion is screened first by the unit to evaluate the validity of idea presented and then forwarded to the coordinator of the impacted unit. Within a week a feedback and an action plan are to be communicated to both the suggestor and the staff member at Have your Say Unit. If the suggestion is not feasible and rejected, a full explanation is given to the suggestor and if the suggestion is feasible, the reward will be calculated based on the nature of the benefits, i.e tangible financial benefits or intangible benefits. There are ceremonies held every six months and a grand annual ceremony; both are attended by the director general and the management team.

The web-based system has a capability of generating MIS reports which gives the unit an update on the progress on every single suggestion. Monthly reports are shared with the unit head who in turns tries to solve the issues highlighted.

The reward structure for suggestions with financial benefit is outlined in Table IV. The reward structure for suggestions with no financial benefit is as follows:

(1) *Before the implementation:*

- Idea only = 3 points.
- Idea and feasibility study and result given material = 9 points.

(2) *After implementation:*

- If the result after the implementation is tangible = 24 points.
- If the result after the implementation is intangible = 6 points (Table V).

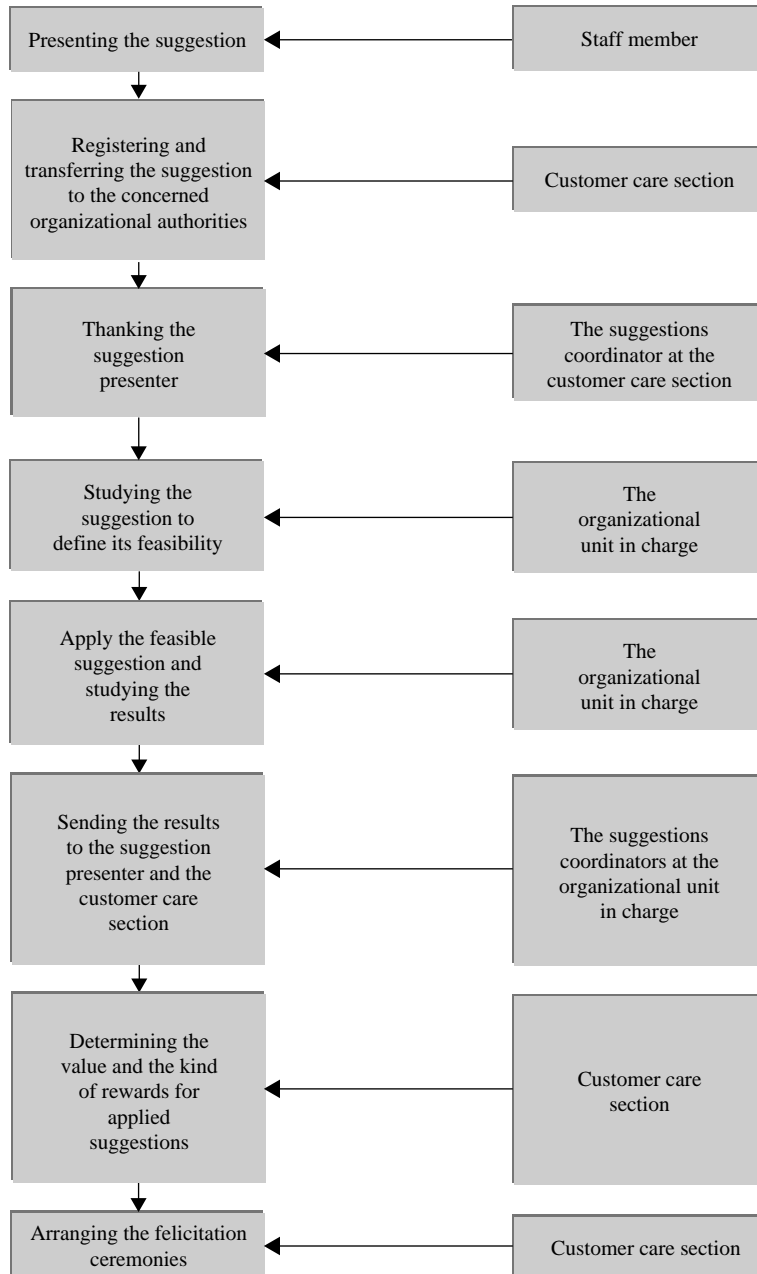


Figure 2.
Dubai Municipality
process flow

There are six categories of suggestors who are awarded in the annual ceremony, details are as follows:

- (1) Best individual suggestion – AED 5,000.
- (2) Best group suggestion – AED 10,000.
- (3) Best department (with maximum number of suggestions, the reward is decided by the management team).
- (4) Best suggestion co-ordinator – AED 3,000.
- (5) Best contributor (suggestor with maximum number or suggestions – AED 3,000).
- (6) The lucky suggestor – AED 2,500.

The last category is selected randomly from all the suggestions presented in the full year by the director general of the municipality. The winners and their photographs are displayed in the newsletter. The municipality is a member of the Employee Involvement Association in the USA, IdeasUK, and Ideas.Arabia. There are two main challenges which face the municipality:

- (1) Implementing the approved suggestions by the various departments. “Have Your Say” Unit does not have any authority to mandate the implementation of the approved suggestions. The most common reason for the delay in the implementation is the budget required for the implementation to take place. The unit is addressing this issue by having departmental meetings to facilitate the implementation and getting the necessary approvals on the budget required for the implementation.
- (2) Encouraging more employees to participate considering the above negative impact on employees’ morale. The unit is addressing this concern by repeatedly launching campaigns with different themes and advertising them effective ways.

Award category	Financial return	Award value
First	More than AED 500,000	AED 30,000
Second	From AED 500,000 to 300,000	AED 15,000
Third	From AED 300,000 to 100,000	AED 10,000
Forth	To AED10,000	AED 5,000

Table IV.
Rewards for suggestions with financial benefit

Award category	Points	Award value
1	30	AED 1,500
2	60	AED 3,000
3	90	AED 4,500
4	120	AED 6,000
5	180	AED 12,000

Table V.
Rewards for suggestions with intangible benefits

Despite the limited number of suggestions that were implemented, the municipality witnessed huge tangible benefits; this in itself is seen as a very positive result. The success in doing so is attributed to:

- Top management's keenness in introducing a mechanism for communication between them and the staff at all levels. The management was the driving force for this program to be introduced.
- Availability of methods which facilitates the suggestions to reach the team, considering that computers are not accessible to all and the huge number of potential suggestors.
- The evaluation process of the suggestions is seen to be fair and transparent. This assures the staff that they will get the credit for their proposed ideas.
- The management managed to build a culture which accepts change and welcomes improvement options; this was a major advantage when the program was first introduced. No resistance was witnessed from direct supervisors.
- The reward grids for both the suggestions with financial and non-financial benefits are seen to be appealing from the employees' point of view.

Conclusions

It is hoped that this research would bring greater attention and rigor to the understanding and usage of staff suggestion scheme in organizations as an effective tool to motivate employees and enhance the creativity and innovation processes. Although this study has been critical on the usage of two cases analysis, the merits of using this research method cannot be discounted.

It is an acknowledged fact that innovation, the generation and exploitation of new ideas, is vital to the prosperity of an organization as well as the whole country's economy. Organizations need to enable the free flow of suggestions between employees and their managers across the entire organizations structure and work seriously on implementing them. Providing the appropriate platform is important, a suggestion program becomes an employee involvement technique, a quality and productivity enabler and a vehicle for providing timely and meaningful recognition to all staff.

A key to profitability within an organization context is a clear understanding of what leads to sustainable growth and delivering strategic business results. It is dangerous, however, to take action on misleading suggestions or ideas from particular schemes which have been collated without keeping the points discussed in the various literatures cited in this research paper.

In general, the use of staff suggestion scheme was found to be a very popular method among organizations and therefore the research focused on examining the operations of two known organizations from the UAE "Dubai", in implementing their staff suggestions systems with an objective of identifying key success factors and provides good practice for other organizations to follow. Through the analysis of the two cases, it was found that strategies need to be thought about, depending on the lifecycle stages of the staff suggestion program. DUBAL is witnessing the effect of running the program for a long time; their program is in its maturing stage. Tactics need to be implemented to increase participations of older staff. Ceremonies need to be revamped to overcome the boredom effect of seeing the same thing again and again.

Organizations also need to adopt different rewarding strategies for the different stages the program passes through so they can maintain the engagement of employees in the thinking process. Dubai Municipality rewards employees for their approved suggestions and then rewards them again when they are implemented. As a strategy for a start up program it might work, but once the program is well established this double rewarding should be stopped and to be replaced by various intangible rewards.

In the final concluding remarks and due to the fact that there is a lack of studies about the implementation of staff suggestion schemes in the UAE in general, therefore, it is recommended to extend this research further and conduct an empirical investigation to test staff opinion on the above mentioned success factors.

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