



Empowering Employees Through Johari Window: Addressing Challenges, Implementing Practices, and Driving Growth

Sally Saleh¹, Gajendran.A²

¹College of Management, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur, Chengalpattu District, Tamil Nadu, India,
Email id, sallysaleh40@gmail.com

²College of Management, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ktr Campus, Chengalpattu Dist, Tamil Nadu, India,
Email id, gajendra@srmist.edu.in

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of the Johari Window Model on employee engagement by effectively understanding and addressing the psychological needs of employees. Utilizing systematic questionnaires and 360-degree feedback, data was collected from multiple groups of respondents in India and Syria. Statistical tests, including t-test and chi-squared test, were performed to analyze the data. The results highlight the significance of regular peer support sessions and informal meetings in improving employee engagement and the work environment. Implementing the Johari Window Model provides opportunities for individuals to better understand themselves and others, resulting in increased engagement. This research contributes valuable insights to HR professionals, emphasizing the importance of role models and practical approaches to enhance working conditions and foster employee engagement, leading to improved organizational success and customer satisfaction.

Key Words: Blind spot, 360 degree feedback, hidden area, Johari window model, known area, self-awareness.

Introduction

This study refers to the application of human psychology and especially the Johari window model in human resource management. When the HR manager understands his employees well and helps them get to know each other well, it helps to motivate, direct and improve their work flawlessly, which reflects on the company said. Shared. The Johari window model helps to solve many work-related problems that stem from misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the needs and perspectives of others. The Johari Window Model is a tool developed by psychologists Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham in 1955. It also helps people gain self-awareness, helping them understand their relationship with themselves and others. The application of this model to business has given many positive results.

Statement of the problem

It is known that the need for more self-awareness is a massive challenge for employees. The Johari Window model focuses on the blind spot, which also has a powerful impact on employees and the workplace, as it prevents them from understanding themselves and their colleagues. It also helps managers understand and motivate employees, making them more engaged and productive. On the other hand, it allows employees to know how to follow each person's requirements, creating a healthy and comfortable working environment.

To identify research gaps, the researcher collected literature reviews of previous studies. The researcher collected opinions on applying the Johari window model to organizations, which shows the importance of the model and describes its benefits to the entire organization. Some researchers have found the following:

(Oliver & Duncan, 2019) The study talks about the parts of the Johari window model and how understanding them helps us communicate better and make the workplace more comfortable, leading to more employee engagement and productivity.

(Subha et al., 2017). This study identified parts of the Johari window model and discussed the importance of self-disclosure in narrowing down the hidden areas and uncovering the unknowns in employees' personalities. They also discuss how to provide feedback and improve feedback chats, enhancing their quality and impact.

(Parul, 2015) His findings show that communication is an essential tool in any organization, and to communicate correctly, you must have a good working environment that allows it and an excellent personal relationship between the employee and the people they are working with. In this case, you need to understand them, and they need to understand you too, which he believes will increase employee productivity and improve their performance. He has found the Johari window model a handy tool to achieve this. Provide an excellent understanding of self and others.

(Shreekumar & Neelima, 2010) Their research focuses on communication tools in the public sector and how to improve communication skills using the Johari window model. It's about managers and the best way to give feedback, which makes it valuable and useful.

The Research Gap

The way this study analyzes the importance of the Johari window model differs from previous studies that have discussed it. The researcher explained the importance of expanding the extent of the known area uniquely and gathered enough data from different geographical locations about it. The researcher also devised a new way to solve the problem and display the results.

Research Objectives

- Recognize the importance of applying psychology in human resource management.
- Recognize the importance of self-awareness by understanding Johari's window model.
- Explain the 360 degree evaluation method and its relation to the Johari window model.
- Determine the best possible way to give feedback.

Talking about Johari window model:

It has 4 areas as the following

1. The concept of the "Arena/Open Area" refers to the part of an individual's behavior, attitudes, emotions, talents, and perspectives that are known by both themselves and others in a group or organization. It is the area where effective communication and connection take place. The size of this open area can be influenced and expanded through feedback soliciting, sharing one's feelings and thoughts with others, and engaging in respectful communication.

Some key points about the open area are as follows:

Established team members tend to have larger open areas compared to new team members. New members start with relatively limited open areas because others have less information about them. However, they can expand their open area horizontally by actively seeking and considering feedback from other group members.

Other team members can help a person broaden their perspective by providing feedback in a respectful manner. Additionally, an individual can increase the extent of their open area vertically by disclosing more information about themselves to the group.

Members of a group can play a role in expanding a person's open area into their concealed area (unknown or hidden parts) by asking them about themselves and encouraging open communication.

Managers and team leaders have a crucial role in enabling feedback and disclosure among group members. They can also provide indirect feedback to individuals regarding their blind spots, helping them understand areas of improvement.

Creating a culture of open, honest, positive, helpful, constructive, and sensitive communication within an organization is the responsibility of leaders. Encouraging the growth of the "open area" for everyone is seen as a vital aspect of effective leadership.

Overall, the open area is about self-awareness, understanding, and effective communication within a group or team. As individuals share more about themselves, receive feedback, and engage in open communication, the open area expands, leading to better relationships and a more dynamic connection among team members

2. The "Blind Spot" refers to the aspect of an individual's behavior, traits, or characteristics that are unknown to themselves but known to others around them. It's an area where people might perceive and interpret someone differently than they do themselves. This lack of self-awareness can lead to unintended consequences and misunderstandings in the workplace.

Key points about the blind spot are as follows:

Seeking input and feedback from others is essential to reduce the blind spot and increase self-awareness. By actively asking for feedback, individuals can gain insights into aspects of their behavior or actions that they might be unaware of.

The blind spot is not a productive or useful area, as individuals lack knowledge about it. It can potentially hinder effective communication and relationship-building.

The blind spot is also referred to as "self-ignorance," highlighting the lack of awareness about certain aspects of oneself.

Group members and supervisors can play a role in helping individuals reduce their blind spot by providing constructive criticism and encouraging openness. This process contributes to expanding the open area.

Managers should create a culture of non-judgmental feedback and open communication, which fosters an environment where individuals feel safe to share and receive feedback.

Individuals should have the autonomy to decide the extent and topics on which they seek feedback. It's essential to strike a balance between seeking feedback and avoiding emotional distress.

The process of seeking feedback and gaining self-awareness is related to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, particularly the concept of "self-actualization," which focuses on personal growth and realizing one's full potential.

To effectively manage the blind spot, continuous feedback from others is crucial. By actively seeking input and insights, individuals can reduce their blind spots, gain self-awareness, and improve their communication and relationships in the workplace. Encouraging an open and supportive feedback culture can significantly contribute to this process.

3. The "Hidden Area" or facade refers to the part of an individual's personality or information that they are aware of but intentionally choose to hide from others. It includes private and sensitive information such as feelings, past experiences, fears, secrets, and more. This hidden area exists to protect the confidentiality of certain aspects of oneself and can have an impact on personal connections and relationships.

Key points about the Hidden Area are as follows:

The hidden or avoided self comprises facts, feelings, and knowledge that an individual knows about themselves but does not reveal to others.

The hidden area can also encompass sensitivities, phobias, hidden agendas, manipulative intentions, or any other information that a person chooses not to disclose for various reasons.

Some personal and private information is naturally concealed, especially if it has no relevance to work or the current context. However, there is often information related to job performance that could be more appropriately placed in the open area.

The willingness of team members to reveal their concealed selves is influenced by the organizational culture and working environment. Fear of judgment and vulnerability can lead individuals to withhold information, which, if shared, could enhance mutual understanding and improve group effectiveness.

As individuals interact and build closer relationships, the scope of the hidden area tends to reduce gradually.

Encouraging a culture of trust, psychological safety, and non-judgmental communication can lead to individuals being more open and willing to share their concealed selves. It's essential to recognize that certain information should remain private, but there might be valuable insights and understanding that can be gained by encouraging openness within appropriate boundaries. By fostering an environment where individuals feel comfortable sharing and being authentic, organizations can enhance teamwork, performance, and overall effectiveness.

4. The "Unknown Area" refers to characteristics and traits present in an individual's behavior, beliefs, and emotions that are unknown both to themselves and others. This area encompasses knowledge, sentiments, abilities, and skills that remain undiscovered. It may be the result of past traumatic experiences that have not been recognized or brought to light. The unknown area can include surface-level positive qualities or deeper aspects of a person's personality that influence their behavior to varying degrees.

Key points about the Unknown Area are as follows:

The unknown area comprises aspects of an individual's personality that have not been experienced or recognized. It may include both positive and helpful traits or deeper issues.

Younger individuals or those lacking experience and self-confidence may have a larger unknown area.

Open communication is crucial in reducing the unknown area. By encouraging individuals to share their thoughts, experiences, and emotions, they may discover previously unknown abilities and characteristics.

Practices that help discover unknown abilities and reduce the unknown area include:

Observing employees' behavior and paying attention to small details during their daily activities.

Providing opportunities for people to try new things without putting excessive pressure on them to succeed.

Counseling can also help reveal hidden concerns and emotions.

In the workplace, it is essential for HR managers and leaders to be aware of all areas, including the blind spots and unknown areas of employees. The blind spots, in particular, can have a significant impact on individual performance and team relationships. Using methods like the 360-degree appraisal can help identify blind spots and support individuals in developing greater self-awareness.

Overall, understanding and addressing all areas, including the unknown area, can lead to better communication, personal growth, and a more effective and harmonious work environment. Encouraging open dialogue and providing support to employees can contribute to uncovering hidden potential and fostering a positive workplace culture.

About 360 degree feedback method

It depends on taking feedback about the performance of the employee from their peers, subordinates, and customers, which allows them to make the blind spot scope narrow. This constant and varied feedback will help keep everyone on task and aware of how they are doing.

Peers

Peer nominations: identify co-workers who are in touch and work with the employee so they know about his performance well. Do not give out the names of those who give feedback. In general, it is best to keep people's names secret to avoid anger and get honest answers.

Subordinates

Taking feedback from many subordinates and then taking the average is better to get a result free of bias and reliability. A subordinate rating is a good quality rating when it is used for developmental purposes. It shows the manager how to improve his managerial style and make the employees more satisfied and engaged.

Self

Asking employees to evaluate themselves may cause them to pause and reflect on their actions. This reduces the blind spot through self-awareness.

Customers/Clients

Consumers who are dealing directly with the employees can give very useful feedback about their performance.

About the feedback that 360 degree provides

As we all know, behavior in the Blind Spot is difficult to discuss with others. However, if we establish rules and provide feedback in a proper way, the message will reach smoothly without causing any harm, and the person will be aware of his/her behavior, which will reduce the space of his "blind spot". As a result, when providing feedback, one should be specific, speak from his own experience (describing what he observed rather than what he heard from others), focus on behavior rather than the person himself, and speak with respect. Doing this can build trust. The Johari Window is useful for gaining awareness of your own behavior and that of others. The blind spot and hidden spot space will decrease when more knowledge about each other will be there.

Feedback from a 360-degree assessment can be a powerful tool in addressing the Blind Spot and reducing its impact. To provide effective feedback that helps increase self-awareness and reduce the Blind Spot, several guidelines can be followed:

Be Specific: When giving feedback, be clear and specific about the behavior or actions you observed. Avoid generalizations and provide concrete examples to make the feedback more actionable.

Speak from Personal Experience: Share your own observations rather than relying on hearsay or rumors. Speaking from your own experience adds credibility to the feedback and ensures it is based on firsthand knowledge.

Focus on Behavior: Direct the feedback towards the person's behavior rather than attacking their character. Separating the behavior from the person helps create a non-threatening environment for discussion.

Speak with Respect: Deliver feedback with respect and empathy. Avoid harsh criticism or judgmental language that could cause harm or defensiveness.

By adhering to these guidelines, the feedback message can be conveyed smoothly, and the person receiving the feedback will be more open to understanding and reflecting on their behavior. As a result, the Blind Spot can be reduced as individuals become more aware of how they are perceived by others.

The Johari Window model is a valuable tool for gaining insight into one's behavior and understanding how others perceive them. As individuals share more information about themselves, their Blind Spot and Hidden Area decrease, and the Open Area expands. The process of sharing and receiving feedback within the context of the Johari Window can promote trust, improve communication, and lead to personal and professional growth.

Overall, providing feedback in a respectful and constructive manner, along with utilizing models like the Johari Window, can contribute to enhancing self-awareness, reducing blind spots, and fostering a more open and transparent environment in the workplace.

Conclusion

Employee engagement is a critical in driving the success of any business. Nowadays, organizations seek professionals who not only possess the necessary qualifications but also demonstrate specific personal qualities and a profound understanding of human nature. In almost every workplace, the ability to effectively manage human resources and promote a positive work environment has become increasingly important. To achieve this, tools like the Johari Window can be employed to facilitate better understanding and management of employees, while simultaneously enhancing their self-awareness.

The Johari Window is a powerful model that aids in creating a deeper awareness of oneself and others by dividing information into four distinct areas: the Open Area (known to self and others), the Blind Spot (known to others but not to self), the Hidden Area (known to self but concealed from others),

and the Unknown Area (unknown to both self and others). By applying this model in the workplace, managers and leaders can foster improved employee engagement and overall team dynamics.

Enhancing Self-Awareness: The Johari Window encourages employees to reflect on their behaviors, strengths, weaknesses, and interpersonal skills. As individuals gain insight into their own Blind Spots and Hidden Areas, they become more aware of how their actions and attitudes impact their colleagues and the work environment. This increased self-awareness is a catalyst for personal growth and development.

Strengthening Communication: The Johari Window model promotes open and transparent communication among team members. By sharing information about oneself in the Open Area, employees build trust and understanding, which leads to more effective collaboration and cooperation.

Reducing Misunderstandings: The Hidden Area often contains sensitive or personal information that employees choose not to disclose. However, fostering a culture of trust and psychological safety encourages individuals to share appropriately, reducing misunderstandings and potential conflicts.

Facilitating Employee Engagement: An environment where employees feel valued, heard, and understood leads to higher levels of engagement. The Johari Window aids in identifying and addressing areas for improvement, ensuring that employees' voices are heard and acknowledged.

Strengthening Team Dynamics: By promoting self-awareness and open communication, the Johari Window model helps team members understand each other better, build mutual respect, and work together more cohesively. This leads to the creation of a stable and comfortable work environment where everyone can thrive.

Overall, incorporating the Johari Window model in the management of human resources fosters a culture of self-awareness, open communication, and trust within the workplace. It allows employees to tap into their potential, contribute meaningfully to the organization, and ultimately enhances employee engagement, leading to the success and growth of the business.

References

- Achmad, L. I., Noermijati, Rofiaty, & Irawanto, D. W. (2023). Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement as Mediators of the Relationship Between Talent Development and Intention to Stay in Generation Z Workers. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(1), e0814. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i1.814>
- Prabadevi, M., & Subramanian, K. P. (2023). "Work Contentment" - an Enabler for Career Development-A Study With Special Reference to the Hospital Industry. *International Journal of Professional Business Review*, 8(5), e01738. <https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i5.1738>
- Nelson, S. A., & Shraim, O. (2014). Leadership behaviour and employee engagement: A Kuwaiti services company. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 14(1/2/3), 119. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijhrdm.2014.068078>
- Lipaz Shamo-Nir (2017) The window becomes a mirror: the use of the Johari Window model to evaluate stereotypes in intergroup dialogue in Israel. *Israel Affairs*, 23:4, 727-746, DOI: 10.1080/13537121.2017.1333737
- Bhargava, S., & Kelkar, A. (2001). Examining the relationship between organisational structure, job involvement, job satisfaction, and empowerment: Implications for human resource development. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 1(2/3/4), 150. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijhrdm.2001.001001>
- Nofriza, F. (2017). Development of training guide johari windows in improving student self-disclosure. *Schouldid: Indonesian Journal of School Counseling*, 2(1): pp. 41-47. DOI: 10.23916/10.23916/008621923-00-0.
- Phoewhawm, R., & Tangkittipaporn, J. (2015). The psychological role of human resources management for upholding learning in a team. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 15(1), 16. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijhrdm.2015.069976>
- Subha Ramani, Karen Könings, Karen V. Mann & Cees van der Vleuten (2017) Uncovering the unknown: A grounded theory study exploring the impact of self-awareness on the culture of feedback in residency education, *Medical Teacher*, 39:10, 1065-1073, DOI: 10.1080/0142159X.2017.1353071
- Dev, S., & Sengupta, S. (2017). The impact of work culture on employee satisfaction - empirical evidence from the Indian Banking Sector. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 17(3/4), 230. <https://doi.org/10.1504/ijhrdm.2017.087118>
- Oliver, S. and Duncan, S. (2019) 'Editorial: Looking through the Johari window'. *Research for All*, 3 (1): 1-6. DOI <https://doi.org/10.18546/RFA.03.1.01>
- Bal, P. M., & De Lange, A. H. (2014). From flexibility human resource management to employee engagement and perceived job performance across the lifespan: A multisample study. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 88(1), 126-154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12082>
- Raveendran, P. T., & Gopakumar, V. (2007). Exploring the conceptual frame work of Johari window: Ingham and Luft's Johari Window model - for self-awareness, personal development, group development and understanding relationships. *i-Manager's Journal on Management*, 1(3), 52-58. <https://doi.org/10.26634/jmgt.1.3.391>
- Goswami, D. C. (2013). Understanding self-awareness in palliative care. *Journal of Pain & Palliative Care Pharmacotherapy*, 27(4), 367-369. <https://doi.org/10.3109/15360288.2013.846954>
- Fuchs, S. (2012). Understanding psychological bonds between individuals and organizations. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137033970>

Johari Window model. (2017). *Leading Collaborative Architectural Practice*, 221–224. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119169277.ch16>