Priorities of Employees at a Company Which Produces Structures from Reinforced Concrete with Its Headquarters in Prague, Czech Republic

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Keywords: Test of Colour Semantic Differential – TCSD, The conscious, The unconscious, colours, Words.

Abstract. Anonymous group research carried out at companies is important and principal because it points out deficiencies in the company culture, possibilities for further company development, and it secures more trust from employees. We have focused on the priorities within the value hierarchy of the employees at a company which produces structures from reinforced concrete. The cohort of employees underwent two rounds of anonymous testing. The Test of Colour Semantic Differential (TCSD) was used for the purposes of the study. The results are not to be applied generally as every company has its individual needs.

Introduction

The Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of South Bohemia and the Institute for Technology and Business have banded together to cooperate on a research project which aims to chart the essential priorities of employees at engineering and construction companies.

The institutions intend the research to support the efforts of companies to improve work quality, achieve optimal workforce utilisation, and improve company culture.

We aim to describe the attitudes, relations and priorities experienced by the employees at a company which specialises in the preparation, production, installation and sale of prefabricated parts from reinforced concrete and steel structures.

The Test of Colour Semantic Differential (TCSD) combines the advantages of projective methods and questionnaires. [1]

The unconscious priorities of employees thus obtained may be used by the company as it deems fit for further development.

“Like any living being, man cannot live and act against himself. That is not possible. How is a personality which lived off a tiny patch of freedom, being shown its place by everyone around, to find entirely new solutions, where is it to find the courage for a particular act, when everyone who had taught it had left this term out of their dictionaries? But alas, it is possible after all. Only then, however, if we begin to work with their unconscious self.” [2]

Methodology

Our aim was to capture the unconsciously held views of a group of employees with regard to a variety of matters, as well as their priorities and value preferences.

By repeating the study under virtually identical circumstances with the same working team, we intended to ascertain whether the employees’ priorities had changed and, if so, how they had changed.

In order for us to be able to carry out the study at the company, we had to respect its operations, to minimise the disruption caused to its employees by the data collection, and to deliver to the company leadership results which would be of practical use to them.
We selected the Test of Colour Semantic Differential (TCSD), a method from the field of sociopsychology which analyses relations and priorities based on the unconscious comparison of colours and words, with which we have years of experience.

The Test of Colour Semantic Differential (TCSD) method was first introduced at a conference held by the Department of Psychology of the Faculty of Education of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice in 1992, which was targeted at Czech and Slovak experts in the field.

In 1993, it was presented at the 3rd European Congress of Psychology in Tampere, and subsequently in 2007 at the 10th European Congress of Psychology in Prague, as a method whose compatibility was verified primarily by use of a Rorschach test, questionnaire methods, and comparisons with case history.

For years, we have been gathering experience and verifying the results obtained with the help of TCSD. The method itself encompasses the possibilities offered by questionnaires and the functionality of projective methods, it is easily understood by clients and may be used for group collection of data. When assessing the information thus obtained, expert experience is indispensable.

TCSD is original thanks to its comparison of an unconscious attitude with a conscious attitude, as well as due to its informative nature.

We focused at the hierarchy of values which TCSD evaluates on a conscious and an unconscious level. The preferred values at the top of the hierarchy of values (be they conscious or unconscious) are simultaneously not positive values. The same goes for those values which are placed at the bottom end of the hierarchy of values. Subjects do not place values here which they perceive as negative. In life, people gravitate towards things they choose themselves. They may not like it, but they are driven to their choices by the power of the unconscious. TCSD presents an interesting comparison between the conscious hierarchy of values, which can be controlled to a considerable extent, and the unconscious hierarchy of values, over which clients have no control.

We tested two groups of employees – 10 individuals in April 2013 and 14 individuals in June 2015, that is to say, the same team at the same company after a period of several years. The company, whose core employees are responsible for the services described above, had grown somewhat in that time. Both groups consisted of men and women alike and they all had secondary and tertiary education backgrounds.

We used a base of 51 terms from TCSD which we expanded to a final total of 102 terms. The test subjects assigned three colours from a total of twelve colours on offer to each term. They subsequently stated the conscious value of the word and the colour hierarchy.

We focused on extreme values on the conscious and unconscious hierarchies as these values are the most informative and have the greatest illustrative potential.

Results

The hierarchy of values in TCSD starts with the most preferred values in 3rd place and ends with the least preferred values in 36th place.

First group (10 individuals), tested in April 2013

The first group consciously placed at the top of the pyramid of values the terms “love” and “sex” (7th place), somewhat lower they placed “joy” and “happiness” (7th – 8th places), then “the ideal woman” and “harmony” (8th place), followed by the terms “home”, “goal”, “to be”, and “advantage” (8th – 9th places), then “future” and “to pass, to succeed” (10th place), and others.

At the end of the conscious hierarchy of values, the first group assigned “death” to the 32nd place (out of 36 possible grades of the conscious hierarchy of values), “illness” was placed somewhat higher (30th place), followed by “fear” and “drugs” (29th – 30th places), then “pain” (29th place), which itself was beaten out by a slight margin by “blocking” (28th – 29th places), then came “boredom” (28th place), and others. The placing of conscious values, whether it be at the top or the bottom of the pyramid of values, has a certain logic to it. Ambivalent values, which the group placed at the middle of the conscious value ranking, were not of particular interest to us, since the members of the group were not particularly certain of the placement of these values.
The unconscious hierarchy of values of the first group was as follows:
At the top of the value hierarchy, the group placed “happiness” (8th – 9th places), just below it they placed “education”, “intimate contact”, and “to be” (9th place), then came “reward” (9th – 10th places), followed by “future” (10th place), and others.
At the end of the unconscious hierarchy of values, they placed “solitude” (24th – 25th places), just above it was “death” (24th place), somewhat higher still was “brawl” (23rd – 24th places), followed by “illness” and “costs” (23rd place), and others.
Second group (14 individuals), tested in June 2015
The second group placed the terms “home” and “family” at the top of the conscious pyramid of values (6th – 7th places), then came “children”, “love”, and “house” (7th place), somewhat lower came “fun”, “dreaming”, “success”, and “vacation” (7th – 8th places), followed by “joy”, “life”, “sex”, “husband”, “happiness”, and “dreams” (8th place), underneath which the group placed the terms “me”, “the ideal me”, “intimate contact”, and “reward” (8th – 9th places), then “serenity” (9th place), and others.
At the end of the conscious hierarchy of values, the second group placed “death” last (33rd place), above it ranked “rape” (32nd – 33rd places), somewhat higher came “war” (31st place), followed by “solitude” and the term “unemployed” (29th – 30th places), above these they placed the terms “pain” and “poverty” (28th – 29th places), higher still came “to attack”, “medication”, “price increase”, and “loan” (27th place), and others.
At the top of the unconscious hierarchy of values, the group placed the terms “home” and “family” highest (7th – 8th places), then “fun” and “victory” (8th place), followed by “life”, “dreaming”, “love”, and “the Czech Republic” (8th – 9th places), then came “me”, “sex”, “dreams”, “house”, and “future” (9th place), somewhat lower came the terms “children”, “friends”, “mood”, “success”, and “treasure” (9th – 10th places), followed by “joy”, “spouse”, “reward”, “I know” (10th place), and others.
The second group placed the terms “row”, “death”, and “war” at the end of the unconscious hierarchy of values (20th place), just above these came “anxiety” and “boredom” (19th – 20th places), higher still came “illness”, “medication”, “unemployed”, “politics”, and “loan” (20th place), above which they placed the terms “to attack”, “fear”, and “crisis” (18th – 19th places), followed by “solitude”, “pain”, “imperiousness”, “to move house”, “law”, “punishment”, and “the European Union” (18th place), and others.
It is interesting to note that the first group consciously prefers values such as love, sex, joy, reward, harmony, and happiness, and does not omit ideals, represented here by the ideal woman. The conscious evaluation also reflects that which is societally approved, which people strive for, which is in short supply, and which arouses the envy of others.
On the unconscious level, the group prefers happiness, education, and existence. According to the unconscious side, they relate education to themselves and to happiness at 100 percent (evaluation by association).
Consciously, the first group places death lowest of all (32nd out of 36 possible places), and only illness and death are common terms with the lowest-ranking terms of the hierarchy of values. A term less readily respected in the unconscious than death is the term solitude with regards to this group. In the unconscious self, the terms row and costs also gain significance.
It is interesting to note that while the group tries consciously to perceive life holistically in the conscious hierarchy of values, they place terms on a spectrum ranging between the 7th and the 28th places, and the members of the group attempt to experience a full range of emotions. The unconscious hierarchy lacks this breadth of emotional experience (8th/9th to 23rd places).
The second group consciously places highest the terms home and family, which is corroborated by the highest unconscious evaluation of these terms. The same preferred terms of the conscious evaluation are also contained in the unconscious evaluation. The terms at the end of the conscious hierarchy are also identical with the terms at the end of the unconscious hierarchy.
The unconscious hierarchy entirely omits the terms row, death, and war. War is a term which stands out as being newly excluded in this way and is associated at 100 percent with pain and
anxiety, at approximately 70 percent with the terms solitude, to attack, death, illness, lover, obligations, superior, rape, and interest. The spread of unconscious experience (extending across $7^{th}/8^{th}$ places to $20^{th}$ place in the hierarchy) is also narrowed, but the extreme values at the top and the end of the hierarchy of values are relatively identical. This goes for both the conscious and the unconscious evaluations.

**Summary**

The values prioritised by the first group did not show considerable differences with regards to the conscious and the unconscious levels. The key terms – reward, happiness, home, and future, signalise a desire and a wilful endeavour towards securing a living environment for the future. The group is well aware of the necessity of economic security. They all know full well why they go to work.

In their unconscious self, existence is firmly linked to education. This is one of the most strongly preferred unconscious connections and it confirms the generally known fact of reality that insufficient education is the cause of a decreased professional and societal participation of an individual.

A similar case is found at the end of the conscious and unconscious hierarchies of values in the case of this group. Illness and death are terms which the group could do without. On the unconscious side, they also added to these the terms solitude and brawl.

The second group prefers 9 shared conscious and unconscious values at the highest ranks of the hierarchy of values. Home, family, fun, life, love, children, joy, spouse, and reward. In the space of two years and two months, a sharp rise had occurred in the unconscious positive attitude of the group towards the Czech Republic, the importance of friendly ties, and the necessity to stay informed.

The end of the hierarchy of values saw the occurrence of key terms which were common to both the conscious and the unconscious levels. War, death, unemployed, to attack, solitude, pain, loan.

The group would like consciously to omit the terms rape, poverty, and price increases. On the unconscious level, these values are accentuated at the end of the hierarchy – anxiety, boredom, illness, politics, fear, crisis, imperiousness, to move house, law, punishment, the European Union.

While the value priorities had not changed much in the space of two years and two months, we did detect a particular orientation towards the family and the fatherland as well as a reinforcement of friendly ties.

On the other hand, there was a reinforcement of values which the group would rather leave out of their lives – war, row, anxiety, politics, crisis, to move house, imperiousness, law, punishment, and the European Union.

**The Utilisation of the Results Obtained at the Company being Analysed**

The company can rightly expect that its employees will gladly accept further new forms of education and betterment of oneself. There is a higher probability that the employees will be able to withstand a higher workload. And thanks to the more strongly experienced friendly ties, they will be more resilient against stress. At the same time, it is necessary to point out the employees’ very low tolerance towards important information being withheld from them. The employees realise well that they work for money, and it is therefore important to set tasks in a precise manner and to require that they be carried out under predefined terms in order for them to deserve their money.

A company which wishes to develop must find new ways towards efficiency.

**References**
