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Research on the incentive of knowledge workers in private SMEs

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Abstract

Private enterprises occupy the vast majority of China's enterprises and has made a great contribution for China's economic development. General Secretary Xi Jinping has pointed out that the private economy is an inherent element of China's economic system, private enterprises and private entrepreneurs are our own people. Therefore, the employee incentive problem of private enterprises, especially the incentive of knowledge workers has been widely concerned by all sectors of society. This paper comprehensively analyzes the problems of knowledge workers incentive in private SMEs, and on the basis of in-depth analysis of the causes of the problems, puts forward a series of targeted incentive measures to promote private SMEs to encourage knowledge workers more scientific and effective, improve employee efficiency, and achieve sustainable development of the organization

Keywords: Private SMEs; Incentives; Knowledge workers

1.Introduction

Today's world is in a period of great development and adjustment, the international environment is complex and changeable, the downward pressure on China's economic development is increasing, and the difficulties encountered by private enterprises in the development of business are relatively more prominent. General Secretary Xi Jinping made it clear at the symposium that to strongly support the development and growth of private enterprises, China's private economy can only grow, not weaken, not only leaving the scene, but also to a broader stage ^[1]. In this development background, private enterprises need to find ways to let talent play the greatest role to better development. On the path of corporate development, the issue of employee motivation often becomes a roadblock to its development. Therefore, private SMEs need to combine their own actual situation, correctly deal with the emergence of various incentive problems, in order to help enterprises, win the market and further develop, also conducive to better development of employees in a good incentive environment, to achieve a win-win situation.

2 Definition of knowledge workers

2.1 The meaning of knowledge workers

Peter Drucker, an American scholar and master of management, first proposed the concept of knowledge workers, he defined knowledge workers were able to work with knowledge or information ^[2]. Knowledge workers are those who master and use symbols and concepts and use knowledge or information to work together. At present, due to the increasing competition between enterprises, enterprises need to achieve effective value-added through the rational allocation and utilization of resources, which requires the pay of knowledge workers to achieve. Knowledge workers pay more attention to autonomy and creativity, so the incentive of knowledge workers is particularly important for enterprise development.

2.2 Characteristics of knowledge workers

Knowledge workers occupy an important position in the enterprise, they are the shortage of talents. The features are as follows:

2.2.1 Stronger creativity: In the enterprise, the working environment of knowledge workers

is not fixed, the work content is more complex. In such cases, it is all the more important to use their creativity to cope with the various situations and outcomes that may arise. Unlike other types of employees in the enterprise, knowledge workers increase knowledge capital by exploring new knowledge for creative work, generating ideas that create new things, and further promoting the upgrading of production technologies and products.

2.2.2 Stronger self-sense : Knowledge workers' self-motivation and work initiative are generally higher than about general employees. As a result, they are more likely to adjust their work ideas and methods in a positive manner to achieve their desired goals.

2.2.3 Stronger independent : Typically, the higher a people level of knowledge and competence, the greater his independence, and the more he or she expects to complete an activity independently. Knowledge workers prefer to work in a relatively independent system because they have the knowledge and special skills necessary for production and development, rather than being held back by others, and more emphasis is placed on self-directed work.

2.2.4 Higher psychological expectations : Enterprise knowledge workers have high expectations of compensation and achievement. Because of the high level of education, in the process of acquiring knowledge and ability, knowledge workers pay more compensation, so the salary requirements are high. In addition, the knowledge workers have a deep understanding of their own abilities, the level of demand is usually relatively high, and they have a strong motivation to achieve their own value, keen on relatively challenging tasks. They usually want to be rewarded with material rewards, respect, organizational recognition, and personal prestige^[3].

3 Incentives and related theories

3.1 The meaning of motivation

Incentive research has always been a more cutting-edge and hotter topic in human resources. In management theory, Psychologists believe that all human actions are caused by motivation, motivation is a human state of mind, and it plays a role in stimulating, promoting and strengthening human action, so it is called motivation^[4]. Motivation generally consists of three elements: excitation, retention, and orientation. Motivation is the total amount of effort, retention is the degree of sustained effort, and orientation is the direction of effort.

The effective way to motivate employees is to give them different degrees of satisfaction, to stimulate their needs, motivations and desires, so that employees maintain a full work spirit, in order to achieve their own and the company's desired goals.

3.2 Incentive principles

3.2.1 The principle of combining goals with reality

The enterprise's goal should be combined with the actual situation, comprehensive analysis of the current situation of the enterprise and the individual situation of employees, so that the goal of setting can not only achieve organizational goals but also meet the needs of private enterprises. Therefore, private enterprises should be based on the company's knowledge workers' jobs and nature and the business objectives of enterprises, to develop monthly, quarterly and annual work objectives, so that enterprises and employees' interests are linked, so that knowledge

workers realize their own sense of existence, enhance the sense of ownership and responsibility of knowledge workers, thus creating a huge incentive role^[5].

3.2.2 The principle of combining material and spiritual motivation

Material motivation is the foundation, spiritual motivation is the fundamental. According to Maslow's demand theory, we can clearly understand that with the improvement and development of people's living standard and status level, people's demand for motivation gradually translates into the requirement of motivation at the spiritual level. Enterprises should also change their ideas, pay attention to the combination of the two, and achieve the best results for employee incentives.

3.2.3 The principle of combining positive incentive with negative incentive

Positive motivation refers to motivation through reward, praise, promotion and so on; Negative incentive refers to incentive through punishment, punishment, demotion and so on. In terms of positive and negative incentives, enterprises should fairly reward the company's employees to do in line with the company's strategic objectives, but also to punish the company's employees to do contrary to the company's strategic objectives, fair and just, awards and penalties, for the company to achieve "abandonment". That is, enterprises should continue to carry forward the ideal behavior, reduce or eliminate undesirable behavior, drive the company's employees to work better and more efficiently.

3.2.4 The principle of combining rationality with timeliness Enterprises in the implementation of incentives, the intensity should be moderate and proportionate. In the process of reward and punishment enterprises should pay attention to be fair and just. First of all, enterprises in the implementation of incentives to grasp the balance, seek truth from facts, combined with the actual situation to make appropriate incentives, will have a positive role ; Secondly, in the incentive process and results, enterprises should be fair and just, rewards and punishments clearly, in this environment employees will be more diligent and upward, for the enterprise's goals and struggle. But it is not enough to focus on scientific rationality in motivation, but also to pay attention to timeliness. Both forward and late incentives deviate from what companies want to achieve. To this end, enterprises should grasp the opportunity of incentives, timely and effective incentives, mobilize the high enthusiasm of employees, for the continued development of enterprises to contribute.

4 The problems and reasons for the incentive of knowledge workers of private SMEs

Most of the private small and medium-sized enterprises are more typical family-owned enterprises, and the turnover rate of enterprise employees is relatively high, enterprises generally difficult to retain talent. Therefore, private SMEs in the staff incentive, especially knowledge workers incentives have more problems.

4.1 The problems for the incentive of knowledge workers of private SMEs

4.1.1 Blindly follow the trend, the incentive system is not perfect, and lack of fairness

First of all, private SMEs lack a formal staff management system. In other words, most private SMEs do not have institutions that specialize in human resources management

knowledge. As for human resources-related this part of the work is basically by the private small and medium-sized enterprises integrated office staff or general manager's office staff, leisure time to deal with. This make these employees' work-load increase invisibly, and they are not human resources management professionals, their main energy is still focused on their own work, so that there is no time to take into account human resources management, let alone knowledge workers incentive work.

Secondly, the employee incentive system is not perfect and strong randomness. Most incentive decisions of private SMEs are mainly decided by the experience and subjective will of the operators, and lack of scientific. Such as compensation management, when the enterprise benefits are good this year it will pay bonuses, as for the amount of the bonus, it is also the leader patted his head to finalize. The lack of division according to individual contribution and individual ability seriously ignores the individual differences of employees and greatly discourages the enthusiasm of excellent employees.

Finally, private SMEs in the incentive does not combine the actual situation of enterprises and the personal characteristics of knowledge workers, but blindly learn from the incentive methods of large enterprises, ignoring the differences between enterprises, thinking that the successful incentive method is applicable to any enterprise, simple copying and resulting in poor incentive effect.

4.1.2 Paying attention to material motivation and neglect spiritual motivation

At present, many private SMEs generally adopt the incentive mode of material incentive, in the implementation of material incentives for knowledge workers, although the cost is very large, but do not achieve the desired goal, knowledge workers initiative and creativity has not been really stimulated and improved. In the process of material incentive, private SMEs neglect the spiritual needs of knowledge workers and fail to communicate properly with knowledge workers, which lacks the necessary flexibility and innovation. Therefore, it leads to the monetization of incentive mode, and finally makes the incentive effect deviate from the original intention, and the great potential of knowledge workers is not fully realized.

4.1.3 Incentives are single and untargeted

The starting point of motivation is to meet the needs of employees. Maslow's hierarchy theory of needs tells us that if companies simply use money and similar forms of material incentives, they cannot meet the spiritual needs of their employees. Private SME's operators on the knowledge workers incentives have certain misunderstandings, incentives are too single, exaggerated money and other economic means to improve the enthusiasm of knowledge workers, lack of emotional exchanges with them, unable to understand the real needs of knowledge workers. Private SMEs seriously ignore the spiritual level of knowledge worker's incentives, accidental efforts are also floating on the surface, flowing in form. Incentives and their real needs there is a certain gap, lost the meaning of incentives themselves, cannot play the effectiveness of incentives. Therefore, if the private SMEs are not for the different needs of knowledge workers to investigate and scientific incentive design, but simply take a simple incentive measure, will inevitably lead to a reduction in knowledge-based employee satisfaction, cannot achieve effective incentive purposes.

4.1.4 Paying attention to short-term incentives and ignoring long-term incentives

The operation of private SMEs is family-run, management model lags behind and pay too much attention to the immediate interests of enterprises, lack of long-term strategic vision, lack of understanding of long-term incentives, not from the enterprise strategy to attach great importance to long-term incentives and rational planning for them, not long-term incentives and the long-term development of enterprises linked, resulting in enterprise incentives more short-term incentives. Private SMEs in the way of employee incentives more choice the commission reward, year-end bonus, followed by language praise, job promotion, tourism and so on. For employee training this kind of long-term investment, in the short term not achieving immediate results of the incentive method is rarely used, let alone innovative equity incentive and employee shareholding and other long-term incentive methods. Therefore, private SMEs operators are more reluctant to invest too much in long-term incentives, in the long run, resulting in private SMEs into the recruitment, use, loss of strange circle, naturally unable to retain talent.

4.1.5 Ignoring the personal development of knowledge workers, no scientific career planning system

First of all, because the size of private SMEs is not large, the company's organizational structure is relatively simple, the responsibilities and division of labor of employees is not clear enough, an employee is usually responsible for a number of matters. Therefore, private SMEs employees can not clear their career specific development direction, while private SMEs also do not provide a clear career growth path, for knowledge-based employees with high self-realization needs is unacceptable.

Secondly, private SMEs in the recruitment of knowledge workers, usually corresponding to the candidates have work experience priority requirements, hope to recruit with a certain work experience and can immediately play a role in the talent. They do not want to invest in training costs. Even training is usually only a simple pre-entry training, and when employee growth and development need to update and improve knowledge and skills, neglect the training of employees, resulting in talent development lags behind the development needs of enterprises, there is no establishment of a training system that matches the development strategy of enterprises. Therefore, the employees of private SMEs do not feel that the enterprise reasonable planning, training and use, the future development space is greatly limited, and eventually choose to leave.

4.2 The reason for the problem of incentive for knowledge workers of private SMEs

4.2.1 The disadvantages of the property rights structure

In the property right structure, the private SMEs are the family structure, that is, the ownership and management rights of the enterprise is unified, the enterprise is managed by the owner, the individual interests of the business owner and the operating efficiency of the enterprise is highly related. This property rights structure to the operator itself can be said to have no constraints, the operator can rely on their own intention to deal with the company's management. The disadvantages of this property right structure lead to the operators in the management is full of randomness and subjectivity, decision-making is not scientific enough, there will be a authoritarian situation.

And in the course of business the operators focus on immediate interests, pay too much attention to the performance and efficiency of employees, in the company's work atmosphere employees form unknowingly a potential depression, as well as the situation of resistance to work, easy to produce internal contradictions within the organization, reduce cohesion within the enterprise.

4.2.2 The disadvantages of family management

Most of the private SMEs are family-style management, enterprises are mainly controlled by family members in a senior position, enterprise "internal reproduction" phenomenon is serious, and management power is basically the transmission of close relatives do not pass on the sages, the transmission of insiders do not pass on outsiders. The problem with this management model is that the family members' own education level is uneven, and because of a certain degree of xenophobia, their selection of outstanding talents mainly from within the family, the conditions for external talents to enter the strict conditions, after entering the enterprise to the family outside the staff authorization is insufficient, resulting in outstanding talents difficult to integrate into it, participate in enterprise decision-making, talent cannot be played, self-worth cannot be realized, it is difficult to form a sense of belonging to the enterprise, identity and loyalty. Therefore, the private SMEs will inevitably appear unable to retain talent phenomenon, so that the brain drain rate remains high.

4.2.3 The disadvantages of the management structure

First of all, the management structure of private SMEs is not clear, and the organizational structure is relatively unscientific. Private SMEs in the initial, the internal structure is simple, highly centralized, there is no chairman and general manager, and management personnel are relatively few. The phenomenon of overstepping the authority management and double-headed leadership is widespread. And with the continuous development of private SMEs, the scale of business enterprises has also expanded, management is also increasing, but this phenomenon has not been timely revised. In this chaotic management style, knowledge workers are caught in the middle, two heads in a dilemma.

Secondly, the enterprise management of today's society should gradually move towards the democratic management, however, in the private SMEs are still the implementation of patriarchal management, family interests first, in corporate governance still adhere to the main "people rule", and "law rule" only occupies an auxiliary position. The management of private SMEs does not consider from the enterprise development strategy and corporate culture, and lacks the democratic decision-making mechanism of major problems. There is a lack of communication between business operators and knowledge workers, and operators ignore the positive and reasonable suggestions of knowledge workers. All of this makes knowledge workers feel that it is difficult to provide the right advice for enterprise management, feel that their self-worth is difficult to achieve, thus undermining the enthusiasm of knowledge workers.

4.2.4 Operators lack a sense of strategy

If the operators have strategic consciousness and overall view, pay attention to the long-term development of enterprises and the construction of corporate culture, and can combine the incentive theory to implement incentives into practice, it will greatly enhance the enterprise's central

strength and cohesion, promote the long-term development of enterprises. However, private SMEs operators lack the ability to look at the problem from the perspective of enterprise strategy, cannot combine strategic decision-making with the long-term development of enterprises, but simply focus on short-term interests. On the issue of knowledge workers motivation, knowledge workers are not regarded as intangible assets of enterprises, and the advanced management concept of "people-oriented" management is not established, which leads to the lack of attention to the personal development of knowledge workers within the enterprise, which seriously affects the enthusiasm and satisfaction of knowledge workers.

4.2.5 Insufficient investment and development of talent capital

The starting point and destination of scientific corporate governance are peoples, so the right thing for private SMEs should be to do their best to enhance the attractiveness of enterprises to talents, and then develop and cultivate them according to different talent characteristics, and give full play to their enthusiasm to create value for enterprises. The current competitive environment potentially requires private SMEs to continuously improve the quality of knowledge workers, to increase the capital investment of enterprise knowledge workers, to continuously train and develop them. However, the funds of private SMEs are mainly used in the production, marketing and procurement of raw materials, lack of investment in talent capital. Due to the limitation of funds, private SMEs pay less attention to the long-term investment of knowledge workers, do not develop and train talent resources as much as possible, which leads to the enthusiasm of knowledge workers to a certain extent.

5 Countermeasures to the problem of incentive for knowledge workers of private SMEs

5.1 Combined with the current situation of private SMEs, the establishment of a suitable incentive system

First of all, private small and medium-sized enterprises to establish a formal staff management system, that is, enterprises should set up a special human resources department, the hiring of human resources management professionals, dedicated to human resources work.

Secondly, the decision-making level of private SMEs should actively learn how to establish a scientific and applicable incentive system for the development of enterprises themselves, actively do a good job of communication and feedback, and listen to the suggestions of enterprise knowledge workers, so that knowledge workers deeply feel their participation in management; The introduction of a series of knowledge workers recognized and clear incentive system, to achieve open fairness and fairness, so that each employee has a stable expectation of their own behavior, the private SMEs can really experience the effect of incentives, really play the role of stimulating the potential of enterprise knowledge workers, and can also enhance the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of them, so as to maximize the incentive results, to achieve them incentive norms.

5.2 Combined material and spiritual motivation to implement differential incentives

In today's increasingly diversified demand for employees, a single material incentive has not been applicable to private SMEs, because material incentives can play a certain

degree of positive role at the beginning, but if private SMEs have been relying on material incentives, will cause employees to material reward expectations are getting higher and higher, once the expectations are not met, employees will quickly reduce their enthusiasm for work. Therefore, after summing up the past experience and lessons, private SMEs should adjust the original incentive strategy, focus more on the needs of knowledge workers, combined with the characteristics of knowledge workers demand for incentives, and material and spiritual incentives unified, and strive to diversify the way of incentives, to achieve incentives work effectively.

Therefore, when the private SMEs in the incentive, in terms of material incentives, should be based on the different levels of employees, different abilities, different contributions to design reasonable and effective compensation and incentives; In addition, in the implementation of private SMEs to combine the two incentives, do not ignore the personalized needs of employees. Effective motivation must take the needs of knowledge workers as the starting point, taking into account the commonality of knowledge workers but also to meet individual differences. Strive to achieve suit one's methods to the situation, to meet the needs of different employees, different periods, different areas, so that incentives really achieve the desired effect.

5.3 The combination of short-term incentives and long-term incentives

Private SMEs should jump out of the family management model, actively learn advanced enterprise management experience, will look at the long-term, not only look at the immediate interests, try to re-view the long-term incentives from the height of organizational strategy and rational planning for them. Private SMEs should link long-term incentives with the long-term development of enterprises, and continuously increase the capital investment of long-term incentives. There is no denying that short-term incentives have some flexibility, can achieve immediate results, has its own unique advantages, but long-term incentives also have the advantages of stability and persistence. Therefore, private SMEs can not only see the strengths or weaknesses of one of the two, should combine short-term incentives and long-term incentives to play their respective strengths, mutual assistance, so that private SMEs employee incentives to achieve the best results. In the process of incentive, the self-interest of knowledge workers and the long-term interests of the development of private SMEs organic combination, thereby greatly enhance the degree of loyalty of employees to private SMEs, enhance the satisfaction of knowledge workers with incentives, to maximize the retention of talent.

5.4 Establish an effective information communication and feedback mechanism

Private SMEs leaders should change their attitude, pay attention to emotional communication with knowledge workers, try to understand real needs of their knowledge workers through various communication channels. Private SMEs can get to know their knowledge workers through formal channels, as well as informal channels. According to different scenarios, choose the appropriate communication channels, so that the senior management of private SMEs really understand the inner thinking of knowledge workers. Private SMEs knowledge workers want to know whether their understanding of the content of the work is correct,

whether they really understand the intention of leadership, whether the way to deal with the work is appropriate, whether the leadership of their own work recognition and so on. If this information is not answered for a long time, they will become confused and even doubt the meaning of their work, which will affect the motivation of the work. Therefore, private SMEs should actively establish effective information feedback channels to enhance mutual understanding between managers and knowledge workers, which is conducive to private SMEs to unite employees, but also conducive to internal unity.

5.5 Pay attention to the growth of employees themselves, develop standardized career planning

First of all, private SMEs should clarify the specific responsibilities and division of labor of each knowledge worker in the enterprise, but also to provide them with a clear direction for career development, provide a clear career growth path, and make scientific career planning. The development of knowledge workers' career planning of private SMEs should be combined with the development goals of enterprises, according to the different needs of knowledge workers at different levels of different positions, to develop personalized career planning, and to provide them with a variety of choices, to play their own will to choose the most suitable career direction, so that private SMEs can feel the real sense of participation, enhance their sense of achievement, so that they actively achieve their common goals with enterprises in their work.

Secondly, private SMEs should pay attention to the knowledge workers training investment. To make scientific and targeted research, based on detailed findings, assess and analyze all aspects of training needs, while actively communicating with knowledge workers, timely listen to their feedback, and finally choose the most reasonable training and training program. The training of knowledge workers by private SMEs is both an investment and an incentive. In short, private SMEs should as soon as possible to identify and correct their own knowledge workers training problems, reasonable use of training this incentive way, and constantly improve the personal satisfaction of knowledge workers.

6 Conclusions

In the process of value creation of private SMEs, there is always the 2-8 principle. That is, 20 percent of people create 80 percent of their wealth, and these 20 percent of employees are usually knowledge workers, which is the core employee of private SMEs. How to retain this part of the staff and stimulate their potential, to play their talents, this is not only the private SMEs incentives, but also private SMEs focus on the issue in the development strategy, organizational culture construction. Therefore, the private SMEs should combine the specific environment of enterprises, flexible use of material incentives and spiritual incentives; Management should actively communicate with knowledge workers to better understand what they are thinking and take appropriate incentives; Develop a scientific incentive system, innovative career planning, build a corporate culture with the characteristics of the enterprise and other measures, really stimulate knowledge workers enthusiasm for work, enhance their cohesion and loyalty, tap their potential to ensure the sustained and healthy development of private SMEs.

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