

## ISSUES ON PROFESSIONALISM AMONG EMPLOYEES AS ENCOUNTERED BY HR MANAGERS AND ITS EFFECTS TO WORKPLACE DYNAMICS

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### Abstract

This study examines the different issues related to employee professionalism that HR managers face and its effects on workplace dynamics. It uses a multiple case study design under the qualitative approach. The population of this study includes five (5) human resource managers from medium-large private companies in the First District of Batangas, with a work period of more than five years. The sampling method of this study is purposive or judgmental sampling, and a semi-structured interview is used as a tool for data collection. The data were analyzed using cross-case analysis. The results of this study indicate that issues on professionalism among employees often lead to employee disengagement, a toxic working environment, and mental health issues that hinder employee performance and productivity. In addition, unprofessional behaviors also affect team performance and efficiency. It puts the company at risk by damaging its reputation, which could lead to a loss of business. Furthermore, the study's findings show that these issues can be improved and maintained through several strategies. Finally, the results of this study suggest that HR managers must solve this problem with regards to employee professionalism by implementing strategies that cultivate collaboration, unity, and an environment that fosters a culture of accountability and respect.

**Keywords:** *Struggling readers, classroom experiences, locus of control*

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## INTRODUCTION

Professionalism among employees was crucial in maintaining a healthy workplace environment. It encompassed how individuals presented or carried themselves in front of others, especially customers or clients, the attitude they possessed while performing assigned tasks, and the way they interacted with their co-employees in the workplace. Being professional helped employees make a positive first impression, develop strong connections with one another, and establish a solid reputation within the company and industry. It enabled individuals to build lasting relationships, earn the trust of others, and navigate conflicts with grace and integrity.

Numerous studies stated that high levels of professionalism among employees had a significant impact on their performance (Mokosolang et al., 2021; Arlan, 2022; Akmad, 2016; Wenyan et al., 2022; Yansheng et al., 2018; and Wang et al., 2020). Additionally, a positive working environment built by highly professional individuals was said to promote employees' well-being, leading to better teamwork, enhanced productivity, and increased employee retention (Damianus & Gladys, 2018).

Conversely, unprofessionalism had the opposite effect. As stated by Gillet (2017), unprofessionalism included traits such as chronic tardiness, excessive negativity, overconfidence, the use of inappropriate language, and discussing personal matters at work. This unprofessional conduct in the workplace could create a hostile work atmosphere, hinder collaboration, and erode trust among employees. It could also lead to increased employee turnover and difficulties in recruiting top talent for the organization.

Unprofessionalism remained one of the persistent workplace dilemmas. The 2023-2024 SHRM State of the Workplace report highlighted ongoing challenges with professionalism, noting that many employees continued to witness unprofessional behavior, particularly in communication and ethical practices. According to Morgan (2020), this issue was particularly prevalent among younger workers.

This lack of professionalism posed significant challenges for HR managers, as it not only disrupted employee relationships but also hampered overall team performance and productivity. Furthermore, unprofessional behaviors, including harassment, could entangle an institution in legal issues. HR managers, therefore, needed to address these problems effectively. They had to foster a professional work culture where respect, accountability, and inclusivity were upheld.

Additionally, certain areas of research regarding unprofessionalism remained underexplored. One example was the generational differences (i.e., between younger and older workers) in the perception of professionalism and how these differences impacted workplace performance and dynamics. Furthermore, while many studies examined overt forms of unprofessionalism, subtle behaviors such as passive-aggressiveness and microaggressions were often overlooked.

Therefore, the researchers in the present study aimed to fill these gaps in the literature. Through analyzing the effects of unprofessional behavior on workplace dynamics, particularly employee performance and productivity, the study could aid HR managers in fostering a positive and professional work environment.

## Objectives

The researchers aimed to explore the issues of professionalism among employees as experienced by HR managers in large private companies located in the first district of Batangas. This study seeks to understand how a lack of professionalism impacts workplace dynamics, including employee performance and productivity.

1. What specific issues related to a lack of professionalism do HR managers encounter, and how do these issues impact employee performance and productivity?
2. In what ways does unprofessional behavior specifically affect employee performance and productivity within the workplace?
3. What best practices and strategies do HR managers use to address and mitigate issues arising from unprofessionalism in the workplace?
4. Based on the findings, what strategic plan can be developed and implemented by HR managers to address and mitigate issues of unprofessionalism among employees?

## **METHODS**

### **Research Methodology and Design**

A multiple case study design under the qualitative method was particularly well-suited for this research, as it aimed to identify the commonalities and differences in issues related to employee professionalism in contemporary workplaces. This approach allowed researchers to contrast individual cases, reflect on a variety of features and extremes to build depth, and comprehend a broad phenomenon without losing the originality of the case studies. Through focusing on specific cases, such as medium- to large-sized private companies in the 1st District of Batangas, this study captured a diverse range of perspectives from HR managers through in-depth interviews.

The research involved selecting a sample of organizations based on criteria such as industry type and size, ensuring a representative analysis of professionalism issues. Data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, discrepancies, and emerging trends. This methodology helped bridge the research gap by validating whether recent findings on employee professionalism remained relevant and pervasive in contemporary work environments.

However, it was important to acknowledge that while case studies provided deep insights, they did not always offer generalizable results across all settings. The subjective nature of qualitative data and the focus on specific cases may have limited the broader applicability of the findings. Despite these limitations, the multiple case study design was invaluable for understanding the complex dynamics of professionalism in the workplace.

### **Population and Sampling**

The researchers used a purposive/judgmental sampling method under the non-probability technique to select qualified individuals who met the criteria for participation in this study. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling, is a strategy that relies on the researcher's judgment to identify and select individuals, cases, or events that provided the most relevant information to meet the study's objectives (Nikolopoulou, 2023). Therefore, the researchers employed this method to ensure that the selected participants met the study's criteria and contributed valuable insights.

The participants consisted of five (5) HR managers working in medium- to large-sized private companies within the banking industry in selected municipalities of the first district of Batangas. These managers had served in their respective companies for at least 5–10 years and had encountered professionalism-related challenges. The researchers established these criteria to ensure that the selected participants had sufficient experience regarding employee professionalism issues.

### **Participants of the Study**

The study's participants included five (5) HR managers from medium- to large-sized private companies in the banking industry within selected municipalities of the first district of Batangas. These participants had at least 5–10 years of experience in their respective companies and had encountered challenges related to employee professionalism. The researchers used a purposive or judgmental sampling method to select participants who could provide valuable insights into the study.

### **Research Instruments**

The study employed a semi-structured interview approach, divided into five distinct sections, to explore the multifaceted issue of employee professionalism.

1. The first section gathered demographic data from participants, including age, gender, educational background, job title, and years of experience in human resources.
2. The second section explored specific challenges and issues HR managers encountered regarding employee professionalism, inviting participants to share concrete examples and elaborate on the frequency and severity of these issues.
3. The third section examined the perceived impact of unprofessional behavior on individual employees, teams, and overall organizational performance.
4. The fourth section analyzed the organizational strategies in place to address professionalism issues.
5. The final section encouraged participants to discuss effective strategies and best practices that HR managers could implement to mitigate issues arising from unprofessional conduct.

### **Validation of the Instruments**

To ensure the validity of the research instruments, the researchers presented them to their research instructor and consultant, who were professionals aligned with the Business Administration program (BSBA). Additionally, three (3) research validators, who were licensed professional teachers (LPT) and holders of a Master of Business Administration (MBA), confirmed the validity of the instruments. The validators applied face and content validation to assess the reliability and accuracy of the research instruments.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researchers followed a systematic procedure to achieve the study's objectives. First, they prepared a consent letter and sent it to their research adviser for review before obtaining approval from the school's director. After receiving approval, the researchers submitted a formal request to the selected municipalities within the 1st District of Batangas to obtain a list of medium- to large-sized private companies. They also sought official certification granting them permission to conduct interviews with HR managers from these companies.

Upon receiving approval, the researchers personally visited the selected companies to request consent from HR managers willing to participate in the study. Before conducting the interviews, they established clear communication with participants to schedule sessions at mutually convenient times. The researchers also explained the study's objectives and assured participants of confidentiality by adhering to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which protects personal information.

After conducting the interviews, the researchers analyzed and interpreted the gathered data and developed a strategic action plan based on the recommendations provided by participants. Finally, they ensured that the study's findings were reported back to the participants, allowing them to understand how their contributions helped shape the research outcomes.

### **Data Analysis**

In conducting a cross-case analysis of interview data on employee professionalism, the researchers began by thoroughly reviewing and familiarizing themselves with the data collected from each case study. This process involved transcribing interviews, organizing notes, and identifying key themes and patterns.

Next, the researchers developed a framework for comparison by creating matrices or tables to systematically analyze findings across cases. They focused on key variables such as perceptions of professionalism, observed behaviors, and reported impacts on workplace dynamics. The researchers also identified emerging patterns and divergent perspectives across different cases.

As they analyzed the data, they continuously refined their framework and coding scheme to accurately capture the nuances of the findings. This iterative process involved revisiting earlier cases to ensure consistency in coding and interpretation.

Finally, the researchers synthesized the findings, identifying common themes, variations, and key insights that emerged from the cross-case comparison. This synthesis highlighted overarching trends and contrasting perspectives, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of employee professionalism in diverse workplace settings. The researchers also discussed the implications of their findings for both theory and practice and provided recommendations for promoting professionalism in the workplace.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Before conducting the interviews, the researchers prepared a consent letter, which was reviewed by their research adviser and approved by the school's director. Once approved, the letter was submitted to the selected companies to obtain consent from HR managers willing to participate in the study.

Prior to each interview, the researchers explained the study's objectives and clarified that all questions were designed to respect the privacy of the company and its employees. They assured participants that the collected data would remain confidential and be used solely for research purposes.

Furthermore, the researchers ensured that the rights and privacy of each participant were upheld by utilizing alphanumeric designations (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.) to maintain anonymity. This strategy adhered to the provisions of the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which safeguards personal information and privacy rights. Through implementing these ethical measures, the research team maintained the integrity of the study while protecting participants' identities and ensuring compliance with ethical standards.

## **RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

### **Issues Related to a Lack of Professionalism Faced by HR Managers**

Participants discussed various issues of professionalism they face in their roles as HR managers, highlighting different areas of concern:

1. Negative Attitudes and Behavioral Issues (Participant 1, Participant 3)
2. Attendance and Punctuality Problems (Participant 1, Participant 2)

3. Failure to Adhere to Company Policies (Participant 2)
4. Difficulty Establishing Professional Boundaries (Participant 4)
5. Employee Demotivation and Mental Health Challenges (Participant 5)

### **1. Negative Attitudes and Behavioral Issues (Participant 1, Participant 3)**

One of the key challenges that HR managers face is the presence of negative attitudes and unprofessional behavior among employees. As stated by Vicmnergeria (2021), negative attitudes in the workplace can significantly impact a project and an organization's productivity; negative attitudes not only damage unity but also decrease innovation and performance. In addition, Das & Haider (2021) stated that negative employee behavior and attitude can greatly affect worker productivity and performance in the workplace. Participants in the study identified several instances where these behaviors have disrupted the work environment, making it difficult to maintain professionalism and team cohesion.

For instance, Participant 1 specifically mentioned dealing with "sarcastic or bad attitudes" in the workplace. This often leads to "misunderstanding towards employees that leads to arguments." Such behaviors create a toxic environment where open communication and collaboration become strained. When employees resort to sarcasm or display bad attitudes, it fosters a culture of disrespect, which can escalate into conflicts and disrupt the smooth functioning of teams.

Similarly, Participant 3 highlighted issues with employees' "attitude and behavior like being impolite to clients." This reflects a lack of basic courtesy and professionalism, which can have a negative impact not only within the company but also in its external dealings with clients. Being impolite to clients not only damages the company's reputation but can also lead to a loss of trust and potential business opportunities. This kind of unprofessional behavior requires HR managers to intervene swiftly to mitigate the damage and reinforce the standards of appropriate conduct.

In both cases, the negative attitudes and behaviors exhibited by employees create challenges for HR managers who must navigate interpersonal conflicts and prevent further harm to both internal relationships and external business dealings. Addressing these issues is critical to maintaining a professional and respectful work environment, ensuring that employees align with the company's values and expectations.

### **2. Attendance and Punctuality Problems (Participant 1, Participant 2)**

Attendance and punctuality issues have emerged as significant challenges for HR managers, as highlighted by participants in the study. These problems not only affect individual employee performance but also disrupt overall team dynamics and organizational productivity. As mentioned by Vaid (2023), A negative work atmosphere can result in higher rates of both absenteeism and turnover. Companies must be proactive in implementing measures to cultivate a positive and healthy work environment for their employees.

Participant 1 noted concerns regarding employees who exhibit "Leaving without prior notice and unscheduled leave." This behavior indicates a lack of commitment to their responsibilities and can create instability within teams, especially when other employees must pick up the slack in their absence. Such unscheduled absences can lead to project delays, increased workload for remaining staff, and heightened frustration among team members, all of which contribute to a negative work environment.

In addition, Participant 2 pointed out that new employees often struggle with maintaining proper behavior at work, particularly regarding punctuality. They mentioned, "There are times they forget to maintain proper behavior at work, and some do not follow the company's rules about being punctual." This lack of adherence to punctuality standards underscores a broader issue of professionalism among employees, particularly those who are new to the organization. When employees fail to arrive on time, it not only disrupts the flow of work but also sets a poor example for others, potentially leading to a culture where tardiness becomes acceptable.

These attendance and punctuality problems create a cascading effect within organizations, making it essential for HR managers to implement effective policies and practices to encourage accountability. Addressing these issues promptly is crucial to fostering a culture of professionalism and ensuring that all employees understand the importance of commitment to their roles and responsibilities. Tackling attendance and punctuality problems, HR managers can help maintain operational efficiency and enhance overall workplace morale.

### **3. Failure to Adhere to Company Policies (Participant 2)**

A significant challenge faced by HR managers is employees' failure to adhere to company policies, particularly regarding workplace conduct and professional standards. This theme was articulated by Participant 2, who noted that "some employees do not follow the company rules regarding punctuality, such as always being early, wearing the proper dress code, or corporate attire required when on duty."

This lack of compliance with established policies can have serious implications for the organization. When employees do not adhere to punctuality guidelines, it disrupts workflow and can lead to inefficiencies in team operations. Additionally, failing to follow dress code policies can undermine the company's professional image and brand identity. The way employees present themselves directly reflects on the organization, and when standards are not met, it can create a perception of disorganization or lack of professionalism.

Moreover, Participant 2's insights suggest that these issues are particularly prevalent among newer employees, who may still be acclimating to the company culture and expectations. Their disregard for these policies can signal a need for more effective onboarding and training processes to ensure that all employees fully understand and appreciate the importance of adhering to company rules from the outset.

Overall, the failure to adhere to company policies highlights a broader concern about professionalism within the workforce. HR managers must actively address these issues through clear communication of expectations, training, and enforcement of policies. Doing so, they can promote a culture of accountability and professionalism, which is vital for maintaining a productive and cohesive work environment.

### **4. Difficulty Establishing Professional Boundaries (Participant 4)**

Establishing professional boundaries in the workplace is a critical issue faced by HR managers, as highlighted by Participant 4. They emphasized that "it can be challenging to establish boundaries in personal relationships" and noted the importance of maintaining these boundaries to ensure professionalism. This difficulty often arises from the interplay between personal relationships and professional interactions, where the lines can become blurred.

When employees develop close personal relationships with colleagues, it can lead to challenges in maintaining appropriate professional conduct. For instance, familiarity can result in a lack of respect for hierarchical structures, reduced accountability, and a tendency for informal behavior that may not align with the organization's standards. This situation can create an environment where professionalism is compromised, leading to misunderstandings and conflicts.

Moreover, Participant 4 pointed out that “professional behavior helps separate business from personal matters.” This separation is crucial for fostering a respectful and effective workplace culture. When employees struggle to establish and maintain these boundaries, it can lead to issues such as favoritism, gossip, and a lack of focus on work responsibilities.

The challenge of setting professional boundaries often requires proactive measures from HR managers, including providing training on interpersonal dynamics and promoting a culture of professionalism. Encouraging employees to recognize the importance of maintaining boundaries can help mitigate conflicts and enhance overall workplace harmony. Addressing this challenge, HR managers can help create a more structured environment where employees can thrive professionally while still enjoying positive working relationships.

#### **5. Employee Demotivation and Mental Health Challenges (Participant 5)**

Employee demotivation and mental health challenges have become increasingly prominent issues for HR managers, as noted by Participant 5. They stated that “Unmotivated employees, stress, anxiety, and personal depression are some of the issues they encounter in their role.” This theme reflects a broader concern about the well-being of employees and its impact on organizational performance.

Demotivation among employees can stem from various factors, including job dissatisfaction, lack of recognition, and overwhelming workloads. According to Grissinger (2017), unprofessional behavior causes individuals to experience fear, loneliness, self-doubt, sadness, and a variety of physical symptoms such as depression, tiredness, nausea, and hypertension. When employees feel undervalued or unsupported, their motivation to perform diminishes, leading to decreased productivity and engagement. Participant 5’s mention of “stress, anxiety, and personal depression” indicates that these issues often extend beyond the workplace, affecting employees’ overall mental health and well-being. Mental health challenges can result in increased absenteeism, lower job performance, and a higher likelihood of conflict among team members.

Moreover, the interplay between demotivation and mental health is critical for HR managers to address. When employees experience high levels of stress and anxiety, their ability to concentrate and perform their tasks effectively is compromised. This, in turn, can create a cycle of demotivation, further exacerbating mental health issues and contributing to a negative work environment.

HR managers play a vital role in creating a supportive atmosphere that prioritizes employee well-being. Implementing initiatives such as mental health resources, stress management programs, and recognition of employee achievements, organizations can help mitigate demotivation and promote a healthier work environment. Recognizing and addressing these challenges not only enhances employee satisfaction but also fosters a more productive and cohesive workforce.

#### **Issues Related to Unprofessional Behavior Affecting Employee Performance**

Participants discussed various ways unprofessional behavior affects employee performance within the organization, highlighting different areas of concern:

1. Impaired Team Dynamics (Participant 1, Participant 2)
2. Reduced Task Efficiency (Participant 2, Participant 5)
3. Decreased Focus and Concentration (Participant 3)

4. Lowered Morale and Motivation (Participant 4)
5. Negative Influence on Productivity (Participant 5)
6. Organizational Reputation Damage (Participant 2, Participant 5)
7. Toxic Work Environment (Participant 1, Participant 4)

### **1. Impaired Team Dynamics (Participant 1, Participant 2)**

Participants highlighted that unprofessional behavior significantly disrupts team dynamics within the organization, leading to a range of negative consequences. Participant 1 stated, "It can affect the relationship between employees," emphasizing that when unprofessionalism is present, the bonds between team members weaken. This breakdown in relationships fosters an environment where collaboration is hindered, making it challenging for employees to work together effectively.

Building on this point, Participant 2 noted, "This affects how employees interact with one another." This disruption in interpersonal communication creates a sense of disconnection among team members. When employees do not feel comfortable communicating or collaborating with each other, it can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts that detract from overall team cohesion.

Furthermore, Participant 3 remarked, "Sometimes the tension affects how employees work." This statement underscores how the interpersonal conflicts stemming from unprofessional behavior can create an atmosphere of tension, which distracts employees from their tasks and responsibilities. When team members are preoccupied with conflict, their focus on work diminishes, leading to decreased productivity and efficiency.

Overall, the impact of impaired team dynamics extends beyond individual interactions; it influences the entire workplace culture. As Participant 4 pointed out, "It can lead to a toxic environment." In such a toxic atmosphere, employees may feel unsupported and demoralized, resulting in a reluctance to engage with their colleagues. Consequently, the cycle of unprofessionalism can lead to disengagement, further eroding team dynamics and diminishing the organization's ability to achieve its goals.

In summary, unprofessional behavior severely impairs team dynamics by disrupting relationships, increasing tension, and fostering a toxic environment. Addressing these issues is crucial for creating a collaborative and productive workplace, as healthy team dynamics are essential for individual and organizational success.

### **2. Reduced Task Efficiency (Participant 2, Participant 5)**

Participants identified reduced task efficiency as a significant consequence of unprofessional behavior within the organization, highlighting its detrimental effects on both individual and team performance. Participant 2 emphasized, "It affects the way they handle their tasks and duties." Also, "It affects how they handle their tasks and duties. They also cannot handle their clients properly." This statement illustrates how unprofessional conduct can hinder employees' ability to perform their responsibilities effectively. When employees are distracted or engaged in unprofessional behavior, their focus shifts away from essential tasks, leading to mistakes and inefficiencies.

Building on this point, Participant 5 stated, "Unprofessional behavior such as low motivation, absenteeism, and poor work quality negatively impacts productivity by hindering task commitment and overall performance in the

workplace.” This statement encapsulates the broader implications of unprofessionalism on task efficiency. When employees exhibit low motivation or are frequently absent due to a toxic work environment, it becomes increasingly difficult for teams to meet deadlines and maintain high-quality standards. Poor work quality, stemming from a lack of commitment, can result in missed opportunities and damaged relationships with clients and stakeholders.

Moreover, the inability to effectively manage client interactions, as noted by Participant 2, can lead to dissatisfaction and loss of business. Employees who are preoccupied with unprofessionalism may struggle to communicate effectively with clients, resulting in misunderstandings and unmet expectations. This not only affects immediate task efficiency but also jeopardizes the organization’s reputation and long-term success.

In conclusion, reduced task efficiency is a critical issue stemming from unprofessional behavior. It manifests through diminished focus on responsibilities, low motivation, and poor quality of work, ultimately impacting productivity and client relations. To enhance task efficiency, organizations must address the root causes of unprofessional behavior and foster a culture of professionalism and accountability.

### **3. Decreased Focus and Concentration (Participant 3)**

Participants underscored decreased focus and concentration as a significant impact of unprofessional behavior within the workplace, leading to negative repercussions for employee performance. Participant 3 remarked, “Employees can get distracted and lose focus, which may lead to a decline in their performance.” This statement highlights how unprofessional conduct, such as negative attitudes or disruptive behavior, creates distractions that hinder employees from concentrating on their tasks.

When employees are exposed to unprofessionalism, whether it’s through conflicts with colleagues or an overall toxic atmosphere, their ability to focus diminishes. Participant 3’s observation suggests that distractions can come from both interpersonal dynamics and the general environment, making it difficult for individuals to engage fully in their work. The constant awareness of unresolved tensions or negative behaviors can lead employees to become preoccupied with these issues rather than focusing on their responsibilities.

Furthermore, the lack of concentration not only affects the quality of work but also impacts decision-making and problem-solving abilities. When employees struggle to concentrate, they are more likely to make errors or overlook important details, leading to a decrease in overall productivity. This cycle of distraction and inefficiency can also result in increased stress levels, as employees may feel overwhelmed by their inability to meet expectations or complete tasks effectively.

In summary, decreased focus and concentration due to unprofessional behavior can significantly undermine employee performance. The distractions caused by negative dynamics and a toxic work environment prevent employees from engaging fully in their work, leading to a decline in productivity and quality. To mitigate these effects, organizations must prioritize creating a professional and supportive atmosphere that fosters concentration and effective collaboration.

### **4. Lowered Morale and Motivation (Participant 4)**

Participants highlighted the connection between unprofessional behavior and its detrimental effects on employee morale and motivation within the organization. Participant 4 noted, “It can have negative feedback on productivity and morale,” indicating that unprofessionalism not only impacts immediate task performance but also has a broader influence on employees’ overall motivation and engagement at work.

According to Vaid (2023), A negative work environment can greatly reduce employee motivation and productivity. Workers in this kind of setting are prone to experiencing diminished morale, burnout, and decreased productivity. When unprofessional behavior occurs, it creates an environment where employees may feel undervalued or disrespected. This feeling can lead to diminished morale, as individuals become disillusioned with their work and the organization. Participant 4's statement suggests that when employees witness or experience unprofessional conduct—whether it's through poor communication, lack of accountability, or interpersonal conflicts—they may start to question their commitment to the organization.

Moreover, lowered morale often translates into decreased motivation. As employees become disengaged, they may lose the drive to contribute meaningfully to their tasks or collaborate effectively with their colleagues. The sense of teamwork and camaraderie that is essential for a positive workplace culture can erode, leading to a cycle of negativity that further exacerbates the issue. Participant 4's emphasis on "negative feedback" suggests that unprofessional behavior creates a ripple effect, where the initial issues lead to broader discontent among employees.

In conclusion, unprofessional behavior can significantly lower morale and motivation within an organization. The impact on productivity and overall engagement highlights the importance of fostering a professional and respectful work environment. Addressing unprofessional conduct and promoting a culture of support and recognition, organizations can enhance employee morale and motivation, ultimately leading to improved performance and job satisfaction.

### **5. Negative Influence on Productivity (Participant 5)**

Participants underscored the significant negative influence of unprofessional behavior on overall productivity within the organization. Participant 5 articulated, "Unprofessional behavior might lead to failure in the organization in meeting the vision and mission of the organization." This statement reflects how unprofessionalism not only affects individual performance but can also have far-reaching consequences for the organization's ability to achieve its strategic goals.

When employees engage in unprofessional behavior whether through lack of commitment, poor communication, or conflicts with colleagues their ability to perform tasks effectively is compromised. As mentioned by Freedman (2023), unprofessional employee behavior has far-reaching negative effects, including decreased productivity. Participant 5's observation suggests that such behaviors can derail projects and hinder progress, making it challenging for teams to meet deadlines and deliver high-quality work. As a result, the organization's productivity diminishes, impacting its competitiveness in the market and its capacity to fulfill its mission.

Furthermore, the failure to uphold professional standards can lead to a cascading effect on team dynamics and morale, further exacerbating productivity issues. For example, if employees feel demotivated due to witnessing unprofessional conduct, their engagement levels drop, leading to decreased output and quality of work. This cycle of unprofessionalism and declining productivity creates an environment where meeting organizational objectives becomes increasingly difficult.

In summary, unprofessional behavior has a profound negative influence on productivity by hindering individual performance and affecting the collective output of teams. Addressing unprofessional conduct is crucial for ensuring that organizations can meet their vision and mission, maintain competitiveness, and foster an environment where employees can thrive and contribute effectively. Promoting professionalism and accountability, organizations can enhance overall productivity and achieve their strategic goals.

## 6. Organizational Reputation Damage (Participant 2, Participant 5)

Participants emphasized the potential for unprofessional behavior to damage an organization's reputation, highlighting its far-reaching implications. Participant 2 stated, "And this is bad because it can cause a bad reputation for the company." This statement underscores the critical importance of professionalism in maintaining a positive public image. When employees engage in unprofessional conduct, it can lead to negative perceptions from clients, partners, and the broader community, ultimately harming the organization's credibility and trustworthiness.

Participant 5 further elaborated, indicating that unprofessional behavior can impede the organization's ability to meet its vision and mission, suggesting that such failures can contribute to a tarnished reputation. When teams do not adhere to professional standards, the quality of their work may suffer, leading to dissatisfaction among clients and stakeholders. If clients perceive that the organization does not uphold its values or deliver quality service, they may choose to disengage, leading to a loss of business and damaging the organization's standing in the industry.

Moreover, the impact on reputation can be self-reinforcing; a damaged reputation can result in increased scrutiny, making it more challenging for the organization to attract top talent and foster valuable partnerships. As potential employees and partners evaluate the organization's culture and values, unprofessional behavior may deter them from engaging with the company, further exacerbating issues related to performance and productivity.

In summary, unprofessional behavior poses a significant risk to an organization's reputation, leading to negative perceptions and potentially lost business opportunities. To safeguard their reputation, organizations must prioritize professionalism and foster a culture that encourages ethical conduct and high standards of performance. Addressing unprofessional behavior and promoting a positive work environment, organizations can enhance their reputation and build lasting relationships with clients, partners, and employees.

## 7. Toxic Work Environment (Participant 1, Participant 4)

Participants highlighted how unprofessional behavior can create a toxic work environment, adversely affecting employee well-being and overall workplace culture. Participant 4 pointed out, "It can lead to a toxic environment. It is only difficult to work with a toxic employee, but in control on how you respond to them." This comment suggests that unprofessional behavior can breed negativity, making the workplace difficult to navigate. A toxic environment often results from unresolved interpersonal conflicts, lack of respect among colleagues, and poor communication, which can cause stress and frustration among employees.

Similarly, Participant 1 emphasized the broader impact of such an environment, stating, "This has a significant impact because the company cannot operate smoothly." As mentioned by StanMack (2019), negative attitudes at work, such as laziness, lack of communication, spreading rumors, and other attitudes that cause problems at work, are a major problem for organizations that must be addressed immediately because a single person's negative attitude can have a negative impact on a business' operations.

A toxic work environment disrupts the normal flow of operations, leading to inefficiencies in teamwork and overall organizational performance. Employees in such environments may feel unmotivated, stressed, or disengaged, which not only affects their individual productivity but also hampers collaboration across teams.

Moreover, the toxicity in the workplace can create a cycle of negativity, where employees who feel unsupported or undervalued may begin to mirror unprofessional behaviors, further exacerbating the issue. This can lead to widespread dissatisfaction, high turnover rates, and challenges in fostering a positive work culture.

In conclusion, unprofessional behavior contributes to a toxic work environment, which negatively impacts employee morale, well-being, and overall company efficiency. Addressing the root causes of this behavior and creating a culture of respect and professionalism is essential for preventing the escalation of toxicity and ensuring a healthy, productive work environment.

### **Strategies or Policies Implemented to Manage and Improve Professionalism in the Workplace**

Participants highlighted various strategies and policies their companies have implemented to manage and improve professionalism:

1. Team Building to Foster Collaboration and Unity (Participant 1)
2. Comprehensive Employee Training for Skill and Knowledge Development (Participant 2)
3. Reinforcement of Core Values and Ethical Standards (Participant 3)
4. Daily Morning Briefings to Promote Professional Behavior and Conduct (Participants 1, 4)
5. Accessible Systems for Policy and Regulation Awareness (Participant 5)

#### **1. Team Building to Foster Collaboration and Unity (Participant 1)**

One of the key strategies for improving professionalism in the workplace is the use of team-building activities. As noted by Participant 1, "Annual Team Building to develop a good relationship with the team and unity" is implemented as a strategy to strengthen relationships among employees and foster a sense of togetherness. These activities are not just a social exercise but a deliberate strategy to promote collaboration and cohesiveness within the team.

Bringing employees together in a setting that encourages teamwork, companies aim to break down silos and enhance interpersonal communication. Team-building activities help employees better understand each other's strengths and areas for improvement, leading to more effective collaboration in daily tasks. They also provide a platform for addressing and resolving existing conflicts, thereby fostering a more harmonious and professional work environment.

Moreover, as Participant 1 emphasized, these events contribute to the development of "unity" among team members. This sense of unity encourages a collective mindset where employees feel they are part of a larger group with shared goals. As a result, they are more likely to support and respect one another, enhancing professional behavior. Employees who experience a strong sense of belonging and teamwork are often more motivated to act professionally and contribute positively to the organization's success.

In summary, team-building initiatives serve as a critical foundation for fostering both collaboration and unity, which are key components of professionalism in the workplace.

#### **2. Comprehensive Employee Training for Skill and Knowledge Development (Participant 2)**

A fundamental strategy for enhancing professionalism within the workplace is the implementation of comprehensive employee training programs. As explained by (Tricco et al., 2018) These programs primarily targeted individuals, employing methods like in-person training, workshops, and online modules. Participant 2 emphasized the importance of this approach by stating, "All employees are first taught everything they need to learn for their work."

This proactive stance ensures that employees are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge before they fully engage in their roles.

Such training programs are designed to cover a wide range of competencies, including job-specific skills, company policies, and ethical standards. Investing in thorough training, organizations aim to empower their employees to perform their duties effectively and confidently. This empowerment not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to a culture of professionalism, where employees understand the expectations and responsibilities associated with their positions.

Furthermore, comprehensive training serves as a foundation for ongoing professional development. It allows employees to stay updated on industry trends, new technologies, and best practices, which are crucial for maintaining professionalism in a constantly evolving work environment. The knowledge gained from these training programs can also lead to increased job satisfaction, as employees feel more competent and valued in their roles.

In addition, when employees are well-trained, they are less likely to encounter challenges related to professionalism, such as misunderstandings of company policies or ethical dilemmas. This clarity contributes to a more cohesive workplace culture, where individuals are aligned with the organization's values and goals. Overall, comprehensive employee training is a vital strategy for fostering professionalism, equipping employees with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in their careers.

### **3. Reinforcement of Core Values and Ethical Standards (Participant 3)**

The reinforcement of core values and ethical standards is a pivotal strategy for managing professionalism in the workplace. As stated by Verasai (2023), employees who follow professional standards are more likely to fulfill deadlines, produce high-quality work, and stay productive. This helps the organization achieve its ultimate goals.

As highlighted by Participant 3, organizations emphasize the importance of these foundational principles to guide employee behavior and decision-making. Participant 3 noted the implementation of "Pitch values, Core values, Sanctions in the past," indicating a structured approach to embedding these values within the organizational culture.

Core values serve as the guiding principles that shape the organization's identity and culture. Clearly defining these values, companies communicate their expectations regarding professional conduct and ethical behavior. When employees understand and embrace these values, they are more likely to align their actions with the organization's mission, leading to a cohesive work environment where professionalism is upheld.

Moreover, the inclusion of ethical standards further enhances this framework. Ethical standards outline acceptable behaviors and practices, helping employees navigate complex situations they may encounter in their roles. Reinforcing these standards, organizations create a culture of accountability, where employees are encouraged to act with integrity and make decisions that reflect the company's values.

The mention of "sanctions" also underscores the importance of accountability in maintaining professionalism. Establishing consequences for unethical behavior or failure to adhere to core values serves as a deterrent against unprofessional conduct. This structured approach not only emphasizes the significance of professionalism but also promotes a sense of responsibility among employees.

In summary, the reinforcement of core values and ethical standards is essential for cultivating a professional workplace culture. Embedding these principles into the organizational framework, companies empower employees to

make ethical decisions, align their actions with the organization's values, and ultimately contribute to a professional environment that fosters trust, collaboration, and success.

#### **4. Daily Morning Briefings to Promote Professional Behavior and Conduct (Participants 1, 4)**

Daily morning briefings have emerged as a critical strategy for promoting professionalism and ensuring that employees are aligned with organizational expectations. As noted by Participants 1 and 4, these briefings serve as an essential touchpoint for reinforcing professional behavior and conduct at the start of each workday.

Participant 1 mentioned that morning briefings help to “develop a good relationship with the team and unity,” while Participant 4 elaborated that these meetings ensure “every employee is aware of the proper behaviors that they need to possess when facing clients.” This dual focus not only enhances team cohesion but also emphasizes the importance of professional conduct in client interactions.

The daily briefings provide a structured environment where employees can discuss objectives, share updates, and align on priorities for the day. This practice fosters open communication and encourages team members to support one another, ultimately leading to stronger working relationships. Additionally, these briefings serve as a platform for discussing any concerns or challenges that may arise, allowing for immediate resolution and promoting a culture of collaboration.

Moreover, these morning sessions focus on reinforcing the expected professional behaviors. Participants are reminded of the importance of maintaining a positive attitude, demonstrating respect in interactions, and embodying the organization's core values. Consistently addressing these topics, companies can create a routine that instills professionalism as a fundamental aspect of their culture.

In conclusion, daily morning briefings are an effective tool for promoting professional behavior and conduct. Fostering open communication and reiterating expectations, organizations can cultivate a work environment where professionalism is valued and consistently practiced, leading to improved team dynamics and enhanced overall performance.

#### **5. Accessible Systems for Policy and Regulation Awareness (Participant 5)**

The establishment of accessible systems for policy and regulation awareness plays a vital role in fostering professionalism within the workplace. Developing and implementing fair policies ensures a work environment where employees feel valued and motivated. As mentioned by Navin Sah (2022) successful HR management leads to enhanced employee satisfaction and participation, contributing to increased productivity and performance. Therefore, participant 5 emphasized the importance of this approach by stating that the bank has “8 systems which is accessible by all employees to make all employees fully aware on policies, issues, updated regulations and any other posts.” This commitment to transparency ensures that employees are well-informed about the expectations and guidelines that govern their conduct.

Having accessible systems in place allows employees to easily access crucial information related to company policies and regulatory requirements. This level of accessibility empowers employees to take ownership of their professional responsibilities, as they can refer to these resources whenever needed. When employees understand the policies and regulations that impact their roles, they are better equipped to act in accordance with organizational standards, thereby enhancing professionalism in their day-to-day activities.

Furthermore, the continuous updates provided through these systems help employees stay informed about any changes or developments that may affect their work. This proactive communication fosters a culture of transparency, where employees feel valued and engaged with the organization. It also minimizes the risk of misunderstandings or unintentional violations of company policies, as employees have the resources they need to make informed decisions.

In addition, the emphasis on accessibility underscores the organization’s commitment to inclusivity and employee involvement. When all employees have equal access to information, it promotes a sense of belonging and responsibility, encouraging them to uphold professionalism and contribute positively to the workplace culture.

In summary, accessible systems for policy and regulation awareness are essential for managing professionalism in the workplace. Providing employees with the tools and information they need to understand and adhere to organizational standards, companies can cultivate a culture of accountability, transparency, and respect that ultimately enhances overall workplace professionalism.

**“EPIP”**

Employee Professionalism Improvement Plan

Objective	Initiative	Action Steps	Expected Outcomes	Implementation Timeline	Evaluation Metrics	Persons Involved	Success Indicators
Enhance employee professionalism	<b>Recognition and Employee Engagement with regard to their performance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop criteria for promotions based on performance and professionalism.</li> <li>- Organize monthly bonding activities (team building, social gatherings).</li> <li>- Schedule unwinding sessions after work hours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved employee morale and job satisfaction.</li> <li>- Enhanced teamwork and collaboration.</li> </ul>	Months 1-2	- Employee satisfaction surveys on recognition initiatives.	HR Manager, Team Leaders, Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 75% of employees report feeling recognized.</li> <li>- 80% participation in bonding activities.</li> </ul>
	<b>Effective Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement daily/weekly email reminders for updates and policies.</li> <li>- Create an internal communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased awareness of policies among employees.</li> <li>- Culture of transparency and continuous feedback.</li> </ul>	Months 1-2	- Feedback on communication effectiveness from employees.	HR Manager, IT Department, Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 90% of employees report understanding company policies.</li> <li>- 70% participation in feedback initiatives.</li> </ul>

		platform for sharing best practices. - Encourage 360-degree feedback.					
	<b>Ethical Conduct and Professional Standards</b>	- Conduct training sessions on ethical standards and integrity. - Develop a code of conduct. - Introduce an ethics hotline for reporting concerns.	- Enhanced professionalism and accountability. - Safe reporting environment for unethical conduct.	Months 3-4	- Number of ethical conduct incidents reported.	HR Manager, Ethics Committee, Employees	- Reduction in reported ethical incidents by 50%. - 85% employee participation in ethics training.
	<b>Performance Review and Development</b>	- Schedule regular performance reviews (quarterly/bi-annually). - Develop a performance evaluation framework (self-assessments, peer reviews). - Provide development opportunities based on reviews.	- Increased accountability and motivation. - Targeted development initiatives for employees.	Months 3-4	- Analysis of performance review outcomes.	HR Manager, Team Leaders, Employees	- 90% completion rate of performance reviews. - 75% of employees report receiving actionable feedback.

**Conclusions**

Through a comprehensive analysis, the findings underscored the importance of fostering a professional work environment through clear policies, training, and effective management strategies.

**Theme 1. Issues Related to a Lack of Professionalism Faced by HR Managers**

The analysis indicated that HR managers encountered multiple challenges related to a lack of professionalism, including negative attitudes, behavioral issues, attendance and punctuality problems, non-compliance with policies, difficulties in setting boundaries, and employee demotivation, which sometimes led to mental health concerns. These challenges affected organizational culture, employee interactions, and overall productivity. Through implementing effective management strategies, enforcing policies, and prioritizing employee well-being, HR managers were able to

create a positive work environment that promoted professionalism, collaboration, and success. Addressing these challenges was essential for fostering a productive and supportive workplace where employees could thrive and contribute positively to the organization's goals and values.

### **Theme 2. Issues Related to Unprofessional Behavior Affecting Employee Performance and Productivity**

The study highlighted the adverse effects of unprofessional behavior on employee performance and workplace dynamics. Issues such as impaired teamwork, reduced efficiency, decreased focus, diminished morale, and lower motivation negatively impacted productivity. Furthermore, unprofessional behavior risked harming the company's reputation, which could lead to financial losses. Toxic work environments also contributed to increased stress levels among employees, further reducing overall company effectiveness. Addressing these concerns was crucial in maintaining a professional, collaborative, and high-performing workplace.

### **Theme 3. Strategies and Policies Implemented to Manage and Improve Professionalism in the Workplace**

The findings indicated that implementing strategies and policies to enhance professionalism played a vital role in fostering a positive company culture and improving employee performance. Team-building activities strengthened communication and workplace relationships, while comprehensive training ensured employees had the necessary skills and knowledge before fully engaging in their roles. Reinforcing core values and ethical decision-making empowered employees to align their actions with the organization's principles, contributing to a respectful and trust-based environment. Daily morning briefings promoted collaboration, increased productivity, and enhanced employee engagement, leading to a more positive workplace culture. Moreover, accessible systems for policy awareness encouraged employees to uphold professionalism and adhere to company standards. These strategies were essential in promoting collaboration, skill development, ethical decision-making, and overall professionalism within organizations. Prioritizing these initiatives helped strengthen team relationships, encourage professional conduct, and ultimately improve workplace performance and organizational success.

## **Recommendations**

### **Implementing an Effective Collaborative Activities**

To ensure strong unity and positive connections between employees in the workplace, HR managers should plan and implement a variety of collaborative activities that promote cooperation and open communication. These activities might involve providing group projects that allow employees to collaborate on common goals, encouraging them to share their abilities while gaining knowledge through one another. Additionally, event planning such as team-building exercises and workshops can also help to strengthen bonds and build trust among teammates. Informal gatherings, like throughout the company occasions for socializing, can help to strengthen connections by creating a relaxed setting in which workers may connect on an individual basis. Through providing these collaborative opportunities, HR managers can maintain solid relationships with employees, which are essential for building a feeling of unity and shared purpose as the business grows.

### **Promoting Daily Individual Monitoring**

To promote a positive workplace and maintain professional standards, this paper suggests that HR managers should promote everyday individual monitoring systems. Through encouraging daily monitoring of employees' behavior

and actions in which employees will monitor each other. HR will be able to monitor that all workers are following company rules and policies. This type of routine monitoring facilitates the detection of deviations or misconduct early on. Furthermore, it contributes to an environment of transparency and accountability in which employees become aware that their actions and conduct are always examined, which can lead to increased productivity and compliance with ethical and legal standards inside the company. Through implementing this approach, HR managers may better maintain the company's image, prevent risks, and build an open and transparent environment between employees.

### **Evaluation Strategy Improvement**

In the previous interview, one of the participants stated that evaluation of employees is essential since it allows HR managers to check the overall performance of every worker, monitor their progress, and check whether any issues that could possibly influence their jobs have arisen. Despite its importance, there are still some insufficiencies with the implemented evaluation strategy of some companies. An example of this is the lack of mental health and well-being evaluation for every employee. Furthermore, evaluation of employees only takes place annually. Therefore, the researchers recommend improving the evaluation strategy by adding some elements like mental health and well-being checking to monitor the status of their mental health while working. In addition, the evaluation of employees must take place every 3 months to ensure its effectivity.

### **Implementing A 360 Degree Feedback Strategy**

The 360-feedback strategy is a strategy that HR managers can use to improve the overall performance, behavior, and the way of working of every individual in the workplace. This will be a good help for HR Managers to maintain a balanced working environment that promotes transparency and avoids the promotion of biases. This strategy allows everyone in the workplace to receive transparent review, observation and feedback from their own colleagues. This way, the unprofessional behaviors or attitudes being displayed by the employees at work can be addressed and corrected. HR managers should implement a transparent feedback system that encourages transparency and trust. This feedback enables employees to comprehend the consequences of their behavior and suggest opportunities for improvements. Analyzing feedback allows for the establishment of personal growth plans that focus on improving certain skills. Adopting a 360-degree feedback technique can help individuals realize their strengths and limitations, resulting in improved performance and a more satisfied work atmosphere. HR managers are recommended to look into this method for optimal employee development and team effectiveness.

### **Workplace Policy Improvement**

The study's findings show that one of the participants emphasized the relevance of workplace policies in giving clear direction, ensuring consistency, and fostering legal adherence. Clearly defined policies allow employees to understand what is required of them, which leads to an equitable and controlled workplace. Given this, HR managers must constantly develop and update workplace policies to meet any arising difficulties detected during regular employee evaluations. Through aligning policy with those challenges or concerns identified during these evaluations, HR can assure that the guidelines and regulations properly support the workforce's needs, encourage a positive atmosphere at work, and limit the risk of legal or functional problems.

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