



Retaining Happy, Productive Workers
Plaza for Ready-made Garments success story



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Eman Galal, Supervisor



Plaza for Ready-made Garments, located in Suez, is a factory that specialises in outerwear and focuses on exporting its productions to Germany, the UK and the USA. Plaza had a major problem. Its worker retention rates were extremely low (between 90-100 workers were leaving every month) mainly due to bad relationships with superiors.

Such as the case with many factories, the prevailing culture is that a supervisor's job entailed shouting at their staff to keep their production line in check and to ensure their staff are producing at full capacity. However, this wasn't working neither in terms of production rates nor worker retention.

Some supervisors in Plaza attended the Supervisory Skills Training provided through KHATWA 'for improving job quality' which is implemented under the umbrella of the Federation for Economic Development Associations (FEDA) and supported by GIZ-Labour Market Access Project (LMAP) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

This is when they found some unexpected developments.

“These supervisors had workers from their line complaining every second day,” Nasser Khan, Plaza’s General Manager says. “After this training, I cannot believe they are the same supervisors. Before the training we were losing a lot of workers, but in the last four months we’ve had much fewer people leave.”

Safaa Attia, Plaza’s Human Resources Manager, confirms that in December, merely six months after the training, they had only 29 workers leave in comparison to more than 100 at the start.

Eman Galal, was one of the supervisors at Plaza who took part in the training. She’s responsible for a production line that follows steps from cutting materials to delivering the pieces ready for quality control, she supervises 75 female workers. “I’ve been a supervisor for ten years but I feel like I knew nothing about being a supervisor,” Eman says. “I used to have a really short temper. In the training I learned how to control my anger, how to deal with the workers. The training gave me the tools to communicate with the managers and workers. I even applied what I learned at home.” For her, the most valuable aspect was learning how to deal with different types of people and how to create a positive work environment. “The trainers would never tell us what is right and wrong, we were to understand that from the games and discussions,” she adds.

Kalthum, one of the workers who has been working at Plaza for four years confirms seeing a difference in Eman’s management skills. “Eman used to take decisions on a whim without consulting anyone. Now she consults the managers and us to solve problems in a positive way,” she says.

“If our relationships are good amongst ourselves, and with the supervisors and managers then we’ll all care more about work and want to achieve better results,” Kalthum adds.

And that they did.

“My line was collapsing, but now my line is stable and our production numbers grew from 1,050 pieces per day to 1,250,” Eman says. “The spirit in the team became better too. We’re all friends. We share our problems with each other and support one another.”

The Supervisory Skills Training is provided through KHATWA for improving job quality. KHATWA aims at raising the awareness about the importance of job quality and at paving the way for SMEs to do so. Its success lies in establishing close networks with SMEs nationwide, thereby significantly influencing employment potentials.

KHATWA’s endeavors are piloted under the umbrella of the Federation for Economic Development Associations (FEDA) and supported by the Labour Market Access Project (LMAP), implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Suez



Kalthum Mohamed

Worker, Plaza for Ready-made Garments

“ If our relationships are good amongst ourselves and with the supervisors and managers then we'll all care more about work and we'll achieve better results. ”

Kalthum works on all the different aspects of the production line. She's been in the company for four years and in the garment industry for ten years.

“It's important for me to have a good relationship with my supervisor and for her to know my skills and strengths so that she's able to best manage the production. Eman, my Supervisor, used to take decisions without consulting anyone. Now she consults the managers and consults us to solve problems in a positive way.”

“If our relationships are good amongst ourselves and with the supervisors and managers then we'll all care more about work and we'll achieve better results.”



The Supervisory Skills Training (SST) aims at improving workplace communication, dialogue and organizational behaviour by offering an action-based learning space for the development of supervisors. The SST is provided through KHATWA for improving job quality.

Suez



Nasser Khan

General Manager, Plaza for Ready-made Garments

“When workers are satisfied mentally, you can get a lot more work done.”

“After the first Supervisory Skills Training (SST) I was already seeing changes. How to retain workers, for example, is especially important. I've had many issues with some supervisors who were driving workers away and I tried to deal with them but with no avail. After the SST, I was surprised to see a big change in these three or four supervisors.

“When workers are satisfied mentally, you can get a lot more work done.”

“Before the training we were losing a lot of workers, in the last four months we've had much fewer people leave. I would strongly recommend that other people in other factories take this training. I'm sure many will benefit from it. Workers and supervisors are generally coming from economically challenged backgrounds, they have a lot of stress and problems at home. Then there is a lot of target and added pressure at work. This training helps. I also think this training is important for workers, not just supervisors.”



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Suez



Safaa Attia

HR manager for Plaza and ToT
participant in KHATWA

The whole training is built around listening, and helping people find the solutions to the problems themselves. As a trainer, I felt a responsibility to have an impact on the people I was training.

As well as attending the SST, Safaa went on to attend the SST-Training of Trainers (TOT).

“The whole training is built around listening, and helping people find the solutions to the problems themselves. As a trainer, I felt a responsibility to have an impact on the people I was training.”

“We have a very destructive impression of what being a good supervisor entails; yelling and keeping everyone in check. Even when we select workers to be promoted to a supervisor, we would pick the strong, loud ones and discard qualified workers just because they're not able to yell. The supervisor needs to be utilised properly and supported in developing his/her ability to really manage a worker from the moment they are welcomed and integrated in the production line. Workers used to leave due to their relationships with supervisors. The culture of a supervisor yelling to get things done is almost obsolete in our production lines now; our worker retention rates have significantly increased. We used to have 90 - 100 workers leaving every month, last month we only had 29 leave.”



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Eman Galal

Supervisor, Plaza for Ready-made Garments

“ My production line was collapsing, but now my line is stable and our production numbers grew from 1,050 pieces per day to 1,250 (almost 20% better). The training helped me find each of my team's strengths and how best to utilise this and to understand that people are different and respond to different approaches. ”

Eman is responsible for a production line from cutting, to delivering, to quality control. She started her career as a seamstress and has been a supervisor for the last 10 years. Eman now supervises 75 girls.

“I've been a supervisor for 10 years but I feel like I knew nothing about being a supervisor. I used to have a really short temper. In the training I learned how to control my anger and how to deal with the workers. The training gave me the tools to communicate with both managers and workers. I even applied what I learned in my own home.

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