

Employee Engagement

¹Gowri Shankar.N & ²Dhanushya.J Balan

¹Department of commerce/Sri Krishna Adithya College of Arts and Science / Bharathiar University (India)

²Department of commerce/Sri Krishna Adithya College of Arts and Science / Bharathiar University (India)

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 03 Oct 2018

Keywords

Fundamental concept, Engaged Employee, Distracted and Disengaged at work

ABSTRACT

Employee Engagement is a fundamental concept in the effort to understand and describe, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the nature of the relationship between an organization and its employees. An "engaged employee" is defined as one who is fully absorbed by and enthusiastic about their work and so takes positive action to further the organization's reputation and interests. An engaged employee has a positive attitude towards the organization and its values. An organization with "high" employee engagement might therefore be expected to outperform those with "low" employee engagement. Employee engagement first appeared as a concept in management theory in the 1990s, becoming widespread in management practice in the 2000s, but it remains contested. It stands in an unspecified relationship to earlier construct such as morale and job satisfaction. Despite academic critiques, employee-engagement practices are well established in the management of human resources and of internal communications. Employee engagement today has become synonymous with terms like 'employee experience' and 'employee satisfaction'. The relevance is much more due to the vast majority of new generation professionals in the work force who have a higher propensity to be 'distracted' and 'disengaged' at work. A recent statistic by Inspire One suggests that employees today are more likely (83%) to be involved in an employee listening program than ever before.

1. Introduction

Employee Engagement is a workplace approach resulting in the right conditions for all members of an organization to give their best each day. Employee Engagement is based on trust, integrity, a two-way commitment and communication between an organization and its members. It is an approach that increases the chances of business success, contributing to organizational and individual performance, productivity and well-being.

From an employer's point of view, employee engagement is concerned with using new measures and initiatives to increase the positive emotional attachment felt and therefore productivity and overall business success. An engaged workforce produces better business results, does not hop jobs and more importantly, is an ambassador of the organization at all points of time.

Engaged employees are perceived to form a part of an organization's brand and an engaged, happy workforce can have a knock-on effect on customer retention, recruitment of key talent and the ability to attract new customers in a world where a company's values are crucial to the consumers.

The definitions, as seen, focus on the employer as well as the employee. Today's millennial workforce is more informed, connected, willing to work given learning opportunities. Personal growth, opportunities to learn and explore is becoming a primary driver. Equity more than pay is a driving force. Catering to the changing needs to foster engaged employees is the need of the hour.

2. Employee Engagement

Critics question whether employee engagement is compatible with the naturally competitive business environment, whether positive emotional attachments result in increased productivity and whether there is sufficient ROI on employee engagement initiatives to make them worthwhile.

Employee engagement involves the following aspects –

- The nature of the job itself.
- Whether the employee feels mentally stimulated.
- The trust and communication between the employees and the management.
- The ability of an employee to see how their own work contributes to the overall company performance.
- The opportunity of growth within the organization.
- The level of pride an employee has about working or being associated with the company.

The emotional connection of an employee toward the organization tends to influence his or her behaviors and the level of effort in work related activities. The more engagement an employee has with his or her company, the more effort they put forth.

3. Importance

As a manager, keeping your employees engaged is perhaps the biggest challenge you face. It is also a huge opportunity to gain long term commitment and discretionary effort from your team. That effort will ultimately lead to higher sales and fewer mistakes. There is more and more convincing evidence that improving employee engagement can

significantly improve the company's performance across several key areas, such as;

- Profitability
- Productivity
- Customer Satisfaction
- Innovation
- Health and Safety
- Sickness and Absence
- Turnover and Wellbeing

But, to achieve that, your engagement efforts should be aligned with your overall business strategy. Implementing unplanned ideas and activities that you think might help, without monitoring or measuring their impact, is a waste of time and resources.

4. Scope

This sector providing more opportunities for job enhancement but retaining employee are one of the most challenging issues for the retail industry, because of high turnover and low performance. Understanding what drives employee engagement illuminates the path leaders can take to enhance employee retention, performance and motivation in their organizations

5. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as the extent to which employees like their work. Based on perceptions, an employee develops a positive or negative attitude towards their job and environment. (Ellickson, M, 2002). The more a person's work environment fulfills his or her needs, values or personal characteristics, the greater the degree of job satisfaction.

6. Need for the Study

In the present competitive world, an employee's level of engagement and his quality of work are important to growth. So managers are always concerned with identifying ways to boost

morale, increase productivity and gain competitive advantage. To support this view, Towers Perrin has found that companies with engaged employees boosted operating income by 19%. Watson Wyatt reported that companies with highly engaged employees experienced 26% higher employee productivity, lower turnover risk, greater ability to attract top talent, and 13% higher total returns to shareholders over the last five years. In the light of the above findings the management of the Private Insurance Company (the study organization) wanted to know the level of satisfaction among their employees and the extent of engagement among them so that further improvements could be made to the existing HR activities.

7. Conclusion

Employee engagement is attracting a great deal of interest from employers across numerous sectors. In some respects it is a very old aspiration – the desire by employers to find ways to increase employee motivation and to win more commitment to the job and the organisation. In some ways it is 'new' in that the context within which engagement is being sought is different. One aspect of this difference is the greater penalty to be paid if workers are less engaged than the employees of competitors, given the state of international competition and the raising of the bar on efficiency standards. A second aspect is that the whole nature of the meaning of work and the ground rules for employment relations have shifted and there is an open space concerning the character of the relationship to work and to organisation which employers sense can be filled with more sophisticated approaches. But there is reason to worry about the lack of rigor that has, to date, often characterised much work in employee engagement. If we continue to refer to 'engagement' without understanding the potential negative consequences, the core requirements of success, and the processes through which it must be implemented, and if we cannot agree even to a clear definition of what people are supposed to be engaged in doing differently at work (the engaged 'in what' question), then engagement may just be one more 'HR thing' that is only here for a short time. On a positive note, there is now a wider array of measurement techniques with which to assess trends in engagement and an associated array of approaches to effect some change. Thus, aspiration can more feasibly be translated into action.