

A Study on the Conceptual framework of Employee Engagement

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Abstract

Employee Engagement has become a hot topic in the world of human resource management. One of the most important asset that differentiate two organizations is its human resources, each a unique combination of skill and abilities. It is very important to utilize these talents in the best possible way to gain competitive over others. Only motivation does not work here, it is very important to inculcate a sense of oneness among the employee for the organization mission and vision. This can be possible only when their efforts are successfully converted into commitment. Hence, the need for employee engagement in the organization.

The study seeks to understand aspects such as meaningfulness of tasks within the role, aspects of feelings towards the role, individual perceived performance levels, the amount of effort given by employees and the level of employee satisfaction with aspects such as working environment, co-workers and management. It aims to measure engagement and look at the areas where management interventions can be implemented to increase the overall level of employee engagement.

Key Words: Employee – Employee Engagement - Components - Employee Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

Employee engagement has been described as a key to an organization success and competitiveness. Both practitioners and academics tend to agree that the consequences of employee engagement are positive. Employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement of an employee towards the organization and values.

From a HR perspective today, engagement continues to be an important consideration. Due to the challenging economic climate, organisations now more than ever are deciding to restructure and resize, which has resulted in organisations investigating new approaches to maintain and increase engagement. Organisations fight to recruit and train their talent, so they need to do their best to keep hold of it. Organisations need to strike the right balance between fostering and enhancing employee engagement levels while at the same time not compromising their competitive position.

Gallup Consulting identifies different types of peoples. The “Engaged” employees are builders. They want to know the desired expectation for their role which they meet and also desire to exceed them. The “Unengaged” employees tend to concentrate on tasks rather than on the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. Their role is to finish their work. They are neither worried about improvements in their job.

ENGAGEMENT – DEFINITION

Kahn (1990) was credited with conceptualizing the term personal engagement which he defines as “the harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances”.

The cognitive aspect of employee engagement deals with the employees beliefs about organization factors such as, how it is led, by whom and the working conditions which exist within the

organization. The emotional element deals with how the employee feels about each of the three aforementioned factors and if they possess a positive or negative attitude towards the organization and its leader(s). The physical aspect of Kahn's definition relates to the physical energies employed by individuals in order to carry out their organizational role(s).

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT COMPONENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS

ENGAGEMENT COMPONENTS	DESCRIPTIONS
Cognitive Engagement	Main focus on the work, not thinking about other things while performing the tasks.
Emotional Engagement	Having an emotional connection with your firms.
Physical engagement	Willing and able to display discretionary behavior , to go the "extra mile "and work beyond your contract terms

1. KEY ASPECTS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

❖ *Lower Attrition Rate*

An engaged work force is less likely to leave the organization at any cost. Organizations are today facing a high attrition rate, whereby there is a loss of huge amount of talent that can be well groomed and retained.

❖ *Better Productivity*

It is the quality of the work that has relevance in an organization, rather than quantity. A workforce that is engaged has an understanding of what is expected of them and goes on to do its best in the company.

❖ *Enhanced Profitability*

The ability of any company to earn profit is its profitability. Due to a complete sense of dedication and work commitment, an engaged manpower helps in increasing the profitability of the organization as a whole.

III.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As a concept, work engagement is rather new concept and it reflects the recent trend towards positive psychology, where the concern is positive aspects of employees' behaviour. According to Maslach and Leiter (1997), when there is a person – job match,

employees experience engagement with their work, characterized by energy, involvement, and positive efficacy.

As per Schaufeli et al. (2002), employee engagement is a positive, work-related state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption. In this regard, attention is paid to human strengths, optimal functioning, and positive experiences at work (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Saks (2006) argues that one way for individuals to repay their organisation is through their level of engagement. In other words, employees will choose to engage themselves to varying degrees and in response to the resources they receive from their organisation. Bringing oneself more fully into one's work roles and devoting greater amounts of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources is a very profound way for individuals to respond to an organisation's actions, as suggested earlier by the work of Kahn (1990). Thus, employees are more likely to exchange their engagement for resources and benefits provided by their organisation.

Mallikarjuna K.(2008) states that employee engagement is the emotional bond between the employer and the employee, along with the common financial incentives like increments bonus and other prerequisites, a conducive atmosphere in the organisation also raises the employee to the level of engaged employee.

I. EVOLUTION OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Engagement has its roots in motivational theory, which was first propositioned by Elton Mayo's motivation experiments in Cicero, Chicago, 1927-1932. These experiments resulted in the proposal that workers are motivated by *emotional* rather than *economic* factors. So an employee will place more importance on being involved and feeling important than by an improvement in workplace conditions. Mayo set down the groundwork on which later theorists, such as Herzberg, Maslow and McGregor would build their theories. However, academics such as Roethlisberger and Dickinson (1939) have critiqued the validity of Mayo's study and come to the conclusion that under the umbrella of the classic unitary stance, it is individual relations and thus communication which act as the determinant of workers behaviour, not the structural characteristics of employment in a capitalist society.

From 1927 to now, theories have moved through various reassertions from industrial psychology to total quality management, to organizational development. Pfeffer (1998) established the link between the effective management of human capital resulting in successful business performance. Engagement is now being considered as an aspect which the Human Capital Management theorists are beginning to formulate metrics on. Also the interventions to facilitate and generate increased engagement are being developed to foster increased performance levels and their measurable impact on the bottom line of an organization.

II. KEY DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employees feel engaged when they get an efficient work environment, a clear cut direction as to what they need to work on and performance accountability. Also, employees feel highly engaged when they experience empowerment, see opportunities for growth in the organization and are able to make a unique contribution. Working in a safe and cooperative environment adds to the engagement level of any employee. Some of the key drivers that keep employees engaged are as follows:

A. *Growth opportunities*

People join organizations to have a good career growth, not only in the organization but also in the overall career. Thus, ample opportunities should be given to the work force so that they can make best use of their talents.

B. *Encouraging Employee Participation*

Encouraging the employees to participate in decision making and other organizational tasks is an important facet every organization needs to build. Employee participation ensures a high degree of connectivity to the organization, this connectivity is employee engagement.

C. *Employee Motivation*

Creation of an environment which consists of a hassle-free working environment, excellent cross-cultural relations and friendly employee and employer relations is highly recommended as such an environment can motivate the employees to a great deal thus resulting in improvement in performance.

C. *Allow Free Flow Of Information*

Top management needs to allow free flow of information such as industry updates, sectoral

updates, product updates, quality issues and compliances, employee development updates etc.

D. *Encourage Team work*

Encouraging teams to work has its own advantages. Normally teams know how to complete the work within a stipulated interval of time limited resources.

E. *Adaptable to Changes*

Due to the advent of globalization, industry, organizations and its people are facing the need to change constantly. Top management should be propelling techniques such as change management to ensure that its employees to a great deal thus resulting in improvement in performance.

F. *Type and Nature Of Job*

The job should be challenging and should motivate them to work well, along with a self-driven interest to outperform in their respective areas of work.

G. *Appraisal, Praise or Recognition*

If the organizations need a workforce that is engaged, organization should recognize their efforts by praising them occasionally. This can boost their morale towards the work and organization.

H. Confidence

Installing a sense of confidence is what is required from the management. it will increase the efficiency of employees in their respective jobs.

I. Employees to Face Challenges

Encourage employee to face new challenges, handle new challenging tasks, adapt to new situations. To handle challenging situations employees need to be engaged to their jobs., to their organizations.

J. Stress Free Environment

A stress free environment means that employees can put their best efforts, they can innovate and be creative for ensuring optimum output.

K. Financial Incentives

Financial incentives like wages and salary, bonuses, leave with pay, medical reimbursement, etc, are increase the level of engagement by the employees in the organization. A good incentive plan made them feel that their efforts are considered well by the management.

III. BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- Engaged employees care about and are loyal to the future of the organization.
- They are willing to put extra effort to ensure that the organization is led growth and development.
- It helps the organizations from the unexpected loss of quality staffer.
- Engaged employees have desire to make things better.
- It is only an engaged employee who is intellectually and emotionally bound with the organization.

CONCLUSION

Employee engagement emphasizes the importance of employees on the success of business. An organization should realize the importance of employees, they are the most powerful contributors to an organizations competitive position. Providing a great infrastructure, a great office, an inspiring leader, monetary benefits' and a challenging job is just not enough to make any employee engagement. Organizations have to give their employees, the freedom to make their work exciting and an environment having an engaging work life. With increase in responsibilities at home and a desire to excel in their careers, employees often get distracted from their work which need to be well taken care off.

Employees are the more valuable assets of any organizations and if they are not given a space whereby they can make a perfect blend of both work and fun, optimum performance from them may be difficult.

In order to sustain in the competitive business world every organizations need employee engagement.

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