

Employee Engagement-Meaningfulness of work and the impact of right commitment on employees

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ABSTRACT:

Employee Engagement has emerged as a popular organizational concept in recent years. Employee Engagement refers to the extent to which employees are committed and involved towards their organization and its values. It refers to the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work.

Engagement comes about when maximum employees care about what the organization is trying to achieve and how it goes to implement it. This care taking attitude and behavior only comes when employees get satisfaction from the jobs. They do believe that the concern organization supports them and work with an effective leader or HR-Manager.

In this paper main focus given on **CARE Model** and a literature review from various research finding, using a descriptive study technique. It projects the impact of employee engagement on organizations productivity.

Key words: Employee Engagement, organization, performance, CARE, Productivity.

I. INTRODUCTON:

Employee Engagement has become an essential concern for every organization. It is based on trust, integrity, commitment and good communication between organization and its employees. **According to Pamela Stroko, (Talent management expert-)** “people want to know they matter and they want to be treated as people...” Employee Engagement mainly involves the following aspects.

- Firstly, the nature of the job itself.
- Whether the employee feels happy and tension free while doing the job.
- The ability of an employee to judge how their own effort and work contributes to the overall company performance.
- The level of trust, commitment and communication between employees and the management.
- And the opportunity of Growth within the organization.

The emotional connection of an employee towards the organization leads to influence the level of his /her efforts in work related activities. That means the more engagement an employee has with his or her company, the more effort they put forth.

This study is an effort to discuss and focus some light on employee engagement strategies development for organizational effectiveness. The CARE Model of our study will be utmost importance for this purpose.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The objective is to understand the relevance of employee engagement and to provide suggestion for improvement if there might be need.

Main focus is on C.A.R.E.

- C = Connect
- A = Authentic
- R = Recognition
- E = Engage.

CONNECT:

Connection is an important factor of employee engagement. In fact, it is the central key of it. Here we have to find out how well are employees connected to the other activities of ranging from their organization to genuine happiness? Whether the communication is clear between employees and management?

AUTHENTIC:

Employee Engagement must be authentic. Authenticity is the A of CARE. We must transcend happiness towards engagement that is heartfelt. All superficial relationships or community must be transcend towards engagement. Because, powerful engagement is real and reality leads to success and happiness.

RECOGNITION:

Potent employee engagement requires powerful recognition. Here we have to find out;

- ❖ Are maximum employees fully acknowledged?
- ❖ Do employees find the importance of what they are doing and how their work connects to company performance and results?
- ❖ Thus the R in the core of CARE is recognition.

ENGAGE:

Engage focuses on the actions of engagement. Engagement is not a onetime survey measure. To engage is to fully experience and contribute to the dynamic elements of work. Engaged employees are people who put additional effort into their work and beyond what is considered enough. They have the desire and commitment to do the best they can.

Research has proven that wholly engaged employees exhibit:

- ✓ Higher self motivation.
- ✓ Higher levels of customer approval and service quality.
- ✓ Confidence to express new ideas.
- ✓ Higher productivity.
- ✓ Organizational loyalty, less employee turnover, and lower absenteeism.
- ✓ A fully engaged employee is intellectually and emotionally connect with the organization. Gives 100 percent about its goals and is committed to live by its values.
- ✓ This employee goes beyond the basic job responsibility and drive the business forward.
- ✓ Thus CARE ends with the E of engage.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

Let us know the literature review of employee engagement conducted by Gallup (“Gallup G 12 Survey”,n.d.). According to this survey, the percentages of employees that fall into one of the three groups: 1. Engaged, 2. Not engaged, 3. And actively disengaged.

1. **ENGAGED:** The group of “engaged” employees are highly committed to the organization, show a passion and drive in their work (Sorenson & Garman, 2013).

2. **NOT ENGAGED:** The groups of “not engaged” employees are just going through the motions at work. Overall, they lack a drive and passion for the work they do (Sorenson & Garman, 2013). Employees who are not engaged focus on the tasks given to them instead of the mission of the organization (Anitha, 2014).

3. **ACTIVELY DISENGAGED:** These employees are not just unhappy at work; they are acting out in ways that show their unhappiness (Sorenson & Garman, 2013). They tend to demotivate other employees in the organization who might fall in the engaged category (Anitha, 2014).

The survey data collected by Gallup during 2014 of US companies showed that 31% of employees were “engaged”, 51.0% were “not engaged”, and 17.5% were “actively disengaged”(Adkins, 2015). Nearly 70% of all employees are not committed to the organization and they lack a level of enthusiasm for work.

IMPROVING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT:

- Yes we want to help each employee to become a star performer to benefit customers, the organization and themselves. But for this we should find – do employees feel that they are a part of the organization or apart from the organization?
- Are they proud to work for their organization?

Career growth:

Research suggests that training and career development are more important for employee engagement. Training directly improves job performance, which leads to the employee having more confidence in their ability.

Karatepe (2013) suggests that training and empowerment lead to high performance work practices through greater employee engagement.

The development of an employee’s career also improves their engagement (Anitha, 2014).

Compensation:

Organizations typically have financial rewards available to employees but research has shown that it is also important to offer psychological rewards such as encouragement and recognition, or customer feedback on a

frequent basis as well. Recognition and rewards increase job satisfaction and engagement (Hofmans, Gieter, & Pepermans, 2013).

According to Simon Sinek, “ when people are financially invested, they want a return. When people are emotionally invested, they want to contribute.”

Leadership:

Most employees want to be engaged at work and It is the leaders responsibility to assist the employee in doing so. Wallace and Trinka (2009) identified leadership activities such as coaching, career development, and effective communication, naturally resulted in greater employee engagement.

Research has also suggested that leaders can enhance the employee engagement by talking to their employees about their needs. When this was done at one company, the leaders were then able to adjust schedules to match their employees needs and as a result increased engagement (Schneider, Vacey, & Barbers, 2009).

Wellbeing:

Individuals with a higher level of wellbeing not only benefits the organizational performance but those employees behave differently which lead to a higher level of engagement.

Research done by Robertson and Cooper (Robertson & Cooper, 2010) indicated a positive link between employee engagement and psychological wellbeing.

Spirituality:

Research conducted by Roof (2015) on the relationship between spirituality and engagement showed that spirituality had both a positive and significant correlation with engagement. Spirituality is positively related to the factors of dedication towards work.

Relationships:

Recently research done on the effects of positive relationships at work confirmed that there is a strong correlation on employee satisfaction and engagement with employees who have positive relationships in the work place (Glinkska-Newes, 2014).

The researcher found that employees with positive relationship with their workmates “demonstrate higher performance, commitment and satisfaction” (Glinkska-Newes, 2014,p.641).

Organizational structure:

Policies and practices of an organization, especially those that promote flexibility in work-life arrangements, benefit employee engagement (Anitha, 2014).

According to AbuKhalifeh and Som (2013), the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development survey indicates that both upward communication and knowledge of the organizational changes are key factors in engagement.

Work environment:

The researchers stated that employees may put in higher level of effort and energy when the congruence of the individual and organizations values are greater (Unal&Turgut, 2015). In this way, various studies have looked at how the overall work environment and the employees perception or organizational support impacts engagement (Anitha, 2014)

Practical Implications:

The researchers suggest several steps to take when undergoing an organizational change to improve performance.

General guideline:

According to Wollard and Shuck (2011) the first step is to get knowledge about the antecedents of engagement to separate fact from opinion. Proper knowledge will allow the organization to be more effective. The organization would then take this knowledge and assess the individuals in the organization to drive further conversations about engagement.

The next step would involve assessing the organizational antecedents and focus on what the organization does well to continue to develop the engagement conversation. Finally, the researchers proposed that each engagement intervention is to be customized to fit the specific needs of an organization.

Development:

Halbesleben (2010) suggests this can be developed by 1. Giving employees tasks which provide them challenges, 2. Recognize and share occurrences of employees who are successful, 3. Encourage and support the employees, and 4. Reduce the focus on competition.

Markos and Sridevi (2010) state as a result of employees knowing more about their job they build confidence which in turn drives self-efficacy thereby increasing engagement. One goal in employee development should be to drive the employee towards self-efficacy (Halbesleben, 2010, Markos&Sridevi, 2010).

Communication:

Managers need to focus on developing two-way communication to enhance engagement. It is important to make sure that progress reports on engagement are shared with both the top levels of leadership as well as the managers closer to the employees. The information is important for the process of strategic planning as well as effective feedback for managers to enhance the work life of the people that work under them (Leiter&Maslach, 2010).

Perceived organizational support:

Perceived organizational support can be increased by making sure to take actions that communicate the organizations desire to support the employee and that they are valued (Hansen, Byrne, &Kiersch, 2014).

Another way perceived organizational support is increased is through developmental feedback of the employee. By engaging in training and performance, management could foster an increase in perceptions that the organization supports the employees (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010). Organizations desiring to increase employee engagement should focus on the organizational support perceived by employees (Kataria, Rastogi, &Garg, 2013).

Burnout:

Demerouti and Cropanzano (2010) makes the suggestion that organizations “try to reduce or optimize job demands such that they do not have undesirable effects on employees health” (p. 159). Organizations need to put practices in place that reduce burnout in addition to focusing on engagement (Demerouti&Cropanzano, 2010).

Ultimately work should contribute to employee well being. An organizations results are dependent upon the health and productivity of individual employees.

Work should offer benefits back to employees. Employees should experience both personal and professional development through work.

Key Benefits of Employee Engagement:

Some of the advantages of employee engagement are:

- Employee engagement builds commitment with the organizations strategies and goals.
- It increases employees trust in the organization.
- It creates a sense of loyalty in a competitive environment.
- Employees form an emotional connection with the company. This impacts their attitude towards the company’s client, and there by improves customer’s satisfaction and service levels.
- Thus boosts business growth.
- Employee engagement makes the employees effective brand ambassadors for the company.
- Engaged employees will stay with the company.

III. SUGGESTIONS:

Some secrets to increase employee engagement are:

- Encourage flexibility.
- Volunteer as a team.
- Always be authentic.
- Promote taking breaks.
- Asking for feedback.
- Hold regular social gatherings.
- Clarify goals.
- Provide a nice environment.

IV. LIMITATIONS:

There is presence of few limitations for this study like time constraints, insufficiency of data collection, lack of interests of the employees to talk to the researcher as this is of no gain to them, uncertainty of the sample matching with the entire population, proper analysis of data.

These limitations are present because of which the flawless standard that we are striving for seems somewhat unrealistic.

V. CONCLUSION:

We have seen that Employee engagement is an important concept to organizational leaders and employees alike. Moreover, effective commitment acts as a mediator on the relationship between meaningfulness of work and employee engagement. Engagement is not something we can expect to happen automatically.

The main purpose of this research was to study the relationship between meaningfulness of work, employee engagement and effective commitment. Hence, the **C.A.R.E. Model** provides enough background to rethink regarding employee engagement strategies. Major areas that should be focused are that the employee's needs and requirements should be taken care of by the organization.

Employee Engagement is a moral and ethical concept. What we mean to say is, the concept should be taken in a moral way, following its ethical values. If we understand and implement methods of employee engagement its purest way, that will lead to better results.

Generally most of the business firms consider the concept of employee engagement for getting maximum profits. If this will be the motto of the business man, then the concept of employee engagement may be a successful step in its initial stage but this will be no more long lasting success.

The point of success lies in both the factors. One- the methods of employee engagement should be implemented effectively and the other which is most important, that is employees should feel happy while working in the organization. They should work joyfully and work lovingly.

If people or employees do things joyfully, it feels like they haven't done anything at all. After all, if we want to be happy with our work, we must also place our efforts towards making it a happy place.

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