

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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CONFERENCE PAPERS

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INNOVATIVE HR PRACTICES IN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement, also called as worker engagement can be referred to as the binding of organizational members' selves to their job roles. In today's, globalized economy organizations had become more dependent on technologies. The concentration of organizations on employees is becoming less. This arises a greater need to connect and engage employees with the work and to provide them organizational identity. Employee engagement plays a major role in the present era, where each and every contribution of employees is counted. Employee engagement programs will be yet another stepping-stone of success for the organizations. Employee engagement is all about creating a positive feel among employees towards organizational goals. Employees should feel satisfied and also proud to work in such an organization. The engagement programs will abet the organization to align the human activities to the organizations strategy. It is not just a process of engaging the employees productively. It also floors the way to ensure that the employees are motivated to put in their best efforts in achieving the organizational goals. The objective behind the current study is to explore and analyze the various employee engagement policies implemented by top companies around the world. The research also aims to give factors measuring employee engagement and suggestions to make an effective employment engagement programs.

KEYWORDS

HR practices, employee engagement.

INTRODUCTION

In today's, globalized economy organizations had become more dependent on technologies. The concentration of organizations on employees is becoming less. This arises a greater need to connect and engage employees with the work and to provide them organizational identity. Employee engagement, also called as worker engagement can be referred to as the binding of organizational members' selves to their job roles.

According to Scarlett, "Employee Engagement is a measurable degree of an employee's positive or negative emotional attachment to their job, colleagues and organization that profoundly influences their willingness to learn and perform at work". Therefore, employee engagement is different from job satisfaction, motivation and organizational culture. Employee engagement plays a major role in the present era, where each and every contribution of employees is counted. The engagement programs will be yet another stepping-stone of success for the organizations. According to Schmidt's influential definition of engagement was "an employee's involvement with commitment to, and satisfaction with work. Employee engagement is a part of employee retention". For an organization hiring an effective employee is important, but retaining the employee with organization is very important. Employee engagement is a part of employee retention. This will integrate the job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Harter and Schmidt's (2003) had done a meta analysis to understand the effect of the employee engagement. Disengaged employees can be called as zombie employees (Tolan Josh (2011)). The disengaged employees will have a low morale and interest towards the organization.

OBJECTIVES

Employee engagement is all about creating a positive feel among employees towards organizational goals. Employees should feel satisfied and also proud to work in such an organization. Employee engagement programs will abet the organization to align the human activities to the organizations strategy. It is not just a process of engaging the employees productively. It also floors the way to ensure that the employees are motivated to put in their best efforts in achieving the organizational goals. The objective behind the current study is

- To explore and analyze the various employee engagement policies implemented by top companies around the world.
- The research also aims to give factors measuring employee engagement and suggestions to make an effective employment engagement programs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will be partly descriptive and partly diagnostic in nature. The research relies upon the secondary source of information such as books periodicals and web source for the purpose of understanding the key concepts relating to the current field of study and also to explore the various innovative Human resource practices followed by top companies around the world.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Employee engagement is one of the most effective tools for achieving long-term success and shared value. The employee engagement has profound impact on the work performance. Work performance will have a direct impact on success of the organization. The study unravels the prevailing innovative practices for employee engagement followed by the companies. Also the analysis will bring out the best practices and the areas of improvement. By implementing the best policies, the companies can reduce the rate of employee turnover, absenteeism and can increase the job performance of the employees. Hence, this complete study will enable the companies to formulate policies that can improve the quality of work life balance of employees.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS ORGANISED BY VARIOUS TOP COMPANIES AROUND THE WORLD

Companies are trying hard to encourage their employees to be zealous about what they do and focused on achieving organization's mission and ambitions. This can be achieved by positive employee engagement with the organization. Employee engagement can be described as the level of brainy and sensitive commitment an employee has for completing the work, mission and vision of the organization. Positive employee engagements will lead to success of the organization, whereas disengagements may lead to failure of the organization. Hence, all the companies were striving hard to implement various strategies to keep the employees engaged with the organization.

BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

Fortune had published an annual ranking of the top 100 Best companies to work for. Boston consulting group is one of best among top fortune's 2011 best companies. The top list had established that the companies had equally concentration on employees and what a company can do for such employee's success. These companies have found that organizations get benefited only when employer and employee are engaged. Boston consulting group comprehends that; employees are their greatest assets. As a commitment to their employees, the firm had employed extensive efforts to retain and add employees with the organization. BCG apart from generous compensation and benefit system, paid sabbaticals and unprecedented flexibility to facilitate work life balance, is striving hard for the commitment to its employees and improving top talented engaged employees.

The top companies in the list according to Fortune were following the below practices for an effective employee engagement.

- Fitness promotion. The corporate companies had offered a subsidized gym facility to its employees. This is on an assumption that healthy employees are happy employees.

- Telecommuting. The companies were offering telecommuting option to the employees. The study had found that 72 percent of employees are making choice of job based on the flexibility available. This option of work from home will definitely induce employee to be loyal and committed towards the organization.
 - Paid sabbaticals. This is common practice, which many companies have. Paying for employee sabbaticals will give an opportunity to employees to recharge themselves, develop creative ideas, skills etc. BCG is one of the best companies, which offers sabbaticals at best possible moment.
 - Creative bonuses. The incentive programs offered by the company will also keeps the employees engaged with company. The periodical bonuses given to employees either on yearly or five year once etc., will retain the employee with organization for a long period.
 - Support for diversity. An overwhelming majority of these Best Companies offer healthcare benefits for their employees and their families.
- These do not encompass some of the areas most critical to employee engagement, but the list provides some interesting insights into common best-practice threads in some of these great organizations.

WIPRO

Wipro Ltd is a global information technology, consulting and outsourcing company with 140,000 employees serving over 900 clients in 57 countries. Wipro is well positioned to be a partner and co-innovator to businesses in their transformation journey, identify new growth opportunities and facilitate their incursion into new sectors and markets. Spirit of Wipro Run is the largest employee engagement activity run universally at Wipro involves a massive interaction in terms of online applications, which test fitness levels to lung power and encourages people to share updates before and on the day of the run.

Wipro Cares engages with communities in nearby locations. The primary objectives of Wipro Cares are to support the developmental needs of marginalized communities in cities and towns where Wipro has a large presence. Employee engagement is an integral part of Wipro Cares where it encourage employees to acquaint with our partners, acting thus as catalysts in bringing about positive change.

Music directly touches the souls and keeps the mind engaged and this is core reason why, music can be the best option for employee engagement. Many companies have music tutorial sessions for the employees to keep the employees engaged. Wipro also does that. Not only Wipro, HSBC, Just dial, L&T insurance, M Phasis, Reliance etc, were also engaged in same kind of employee engagement program.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Southwest Airlines to empower their employees had framed rigid work rules and job descriptions so that their employees could assume ownership to get the job done. This will enable the employees to get their planes go on time. The southwest Airlines also gives employees the flexibility to bend company policy according to the interest of the customer. This kind of flexibility gives a sense of empowerment to the employees and allows them to go above and beyond their ability. This will also create a challenging environment where employees are allowed to make decisions. It is all about training, trusting and empowering the employees.

INTEL CORPORATION

Intel, an innovative high-tech company, undertook a comprehensive review of its engagement programs to understand the company's strengths and opportunities to improve the employee engagement. Intel hired BSR to do a benchmarking of leading engagement practices. Several new initiatives were propelled based on the following three primary strategies.

- Raising awareness. Intel believed that awareness among employees about company's CSR practices would increase the employees' pride and loyalty. Hence Intel decided to develop a platform to support communications from CSR to employees and to inform them about the company's strategies and activities.
- Expanding opportunities for involvement. Intel established several programs to engage employees in meeting the company's CSR goals. The teams give employees from all parts of the business a chance to learn about environmental issues, keep current on Intel's practices, and identify opportunities to support the company's goals.
- Setting goal and aligning incentives. Intel believed that setting goals for engagement and giving incentives to the employees could provide motivation for engagement. Another strategy implemented by Intel is calculating employees' annual bonus according to the sustainability results.

ALSTOM INDIA PVT LTD.

Alstom India private Ltd had introduced many new activities to promote employee engagement in the company. Like, Sports and cultural events to reduce the stress level of the employees, annual family day out for the employees, sponsoring for higher education of employees, half yearly performance appraisal of employees. Apart from these things, the company is also concentrating to frame improvement plans for employees who perform less, overall employee development and career planning.

GMR HYDRO INDIA PVT LTD.

GMR Hydro India private Ltd is also working lot to engage employee effectively with the organization. To make the employees involved and engaged with the company, the company will organize various cultural and sports events. As a part of engagement programs, the company used to celebrate the birthdays of employees, provides free lunch and breakfast coupons also. The employees are given with various awards for best performance like, Employer of mouth and outstanding employees etc. The company also provides balance scorecards to the employees, help employees to know what exactly the job expects from him or her. Job satisfaction survey is also done annually to know the needs of the employees and satisfy them in best possible manner.

TECH MAHINDRA LTD.

Tech Mahindra limited encourages the employees by taking them for team outings, like trips, CSR activities etc. The company also celebrates various festivals inside the organization like Diwali, Christmas, and Dandiya once in a year. It also celebrates employee's birthday, family day etc. To encourage employees, quarterly and annual rewards and recognitions are given to the employees. Some awards given by the company are Best support group of the year, five year association award, Ten year fellowship award, star performer, rising star, best manager, best team award, pat on back, valuable team player, cookies (spot award for small and significant contribution by the employees).

LARSEN AND TURBO LTD.

The employee engagement practice followed by the Larsen and turbo ltd is different. The company believes on flexible timings, career planning employee development plan, out door training for understanding the management practices etc. To reduce the workplace stress among employees the company is organizing the out door training. Additional incentive, sponsor for higher education, training for corporate ethics, personality development are some additional programs on employee engagement. One Friday of the month employee related program is conducted to award the high performer in the company. This company also celebrates the employee's birthday, family day, will hold cultural and sports activities to encourage employees. Employee satisfaction survey is conducted to measure the needs and satisfaction of the employees and to take necessary step to improve.

GOOGLE

Google is also one of best company among top ten fortune's 2011 best companies. To encourage employee involvement, programs should be portioned into easy step that will let employees to participate. For effective employee engagement, Google established a "people analytics team" to figure out what makes

their employees happy now and tomorrow. The answer from the employees may change according to the business environment, the economy and according to the employees in the organization. It is a program and not an event. Later they will create the programs according to the needs of the employees. NY Times had published an article on Google's OXYGEN project, which explains how managers play a key role in employee engagement. It had found eight top behaviors of managers in order to enhance employee engagement. Like,

- Being a good coach
- Should avoid micromanage
- Express interest on team member's success
- Should be a good communicator
- Should help employees with career development
- Should be productive and result oriented
- Should poses key technical skill so as to advice and help the team
- Should have clear vision and strategy for the team.

EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEE DISENGAGEMENT

The engaged employees feels not only supported through his or her position and salary, but also with the company's way thinking and acting. If an employee is engaged he or she will feel sense of belonging with the company, feel proud about the company, morale and loyalty towards the company will increase. All these facts will help the company to retain the employees with the company for a long time. But in case if the employees are disengaged their it will lead to lot of adverse effect towards the company.

- A disengaged employee may take more leave and go late for work.
- The production from disengaged employees will be less.
- The employees will start complaining about other engaged employees.
- Such employees may loose the interest on company and miss deadlines.
- A talented employee but disengaged may even quit the company and join any other company.

To avoid all the above said consequences, companies has to take necessary step to improve employee engagement programs in the organization.

RECENT TECHNIQUES USED BY THE CORPORATE ORGANIZATIONS FOR EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- Arranging CSR activities
- Organizing music classes for the employees.
- Organizing team outs and family day outs.
- Sabbatical arrangement.
- Providing medical and children's educational benefits.
- Giving Annual Bonus according to the term of completion of service.
- Fitness programs- Gym facilities
- Sports day and cultural day at inter corporate level
- Giving best employee award based on the achievements of the employee.
- Opportunity to grow and establish – chance to attend conferences at national and international level
- Celebrating employee birthdays, family day, festivals like Diwali, Dhandia, and Christmas etc.
- Conducting job satisfaction survey.
- Bus facilities & Cab facilities at late hours.
- Training & Development- Professional training & training on soft skills.
- Work from home.
- Meals coupon.
- Gift vouchers.
- Joining Bonus for talented employees.

CONCLUSION

Employee engagement concept is a measurable construct. There are various employee engagement surveys that are used currently by the HR departments of organization to measure the engagement levels of employees in the companies. Many consultancy organizations are also conducting various surveys to measure the employee engagement level. Many top companies in India are following different strategies to engage the employees. The strategies used by various companies may be same, but the instruments used to measure will differ according to the nature and behavior of the employees in the organizations. Generally, an organization can measure the employee engagement by preparing a questionnaire covering various aspects like, employee's expectation from the work, the basic requirements to accomplish the work, opinions of employees, quality of work life, employer and employee relationship, opportunity to grow and learn, recognition for the progress at work place, optimum utilization of talents in the organization, motivational force at work, commitment of employees towards the organizations goal and mission etc. To conclude, the level of trust within the organization, honesty of the superiors with the employees, clear communication of vision to the employees, strong motivation will raise the employee engagement. It will directly increase the productivity and profitability of the organization regardless of the size of your business.

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