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## **Introduction**

In the situation of COVID-19, the entire business world has been in a disrupting situation. The new business models, technological advancements, ways of working in the organization and regulations of the organization are also constantly changing (Byrne, 2015). COVID-19 has changed the employee engagement of Lidl also. The situation has accelerated the situation and has brought sustainable change in the behavioural, cultural and organization level of the organization. Although COVID-19 has so many negative effects, it has taught a lot of lessons.

The new way of functioning in the business has brought some of the valuable lessons for which the employee engagement procedure has been changed a lot. The employee engagement mainly deals with the emotional commitment of an employee that he or she has with the organization and other employees. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the employee meeting and greeting inside the organization and closeness of them working has come under some huge restrictions (Hodges, 2020). Like other organizations Lidl has also been following these lately.

## **Concept and Drivers of employee engagement**

From the scenario of the environment of Lidl, the employee engagement has always been a major issue for any organization over the years. Recently the COVID-19 issue has changed the situation forever and some major changes has been brought in this regard. There is belief in the organizations that the success of the organization most of the time depends on the engagement of people. The COVID-19 situation has brought about some major changes in this matter also (Kelleher, 2017). There are several concepts and drivers of employee engagement in the organization that has always been determining the key factors of the employee engagement. During the time of COVID-19 crisis, the Lidl need to be candid about the things going on in their organization and become visible and in touch of their employees. The concern about job security and the perfect environment of job has become a major issue among them. There are four drivers of employee engagement that can described the situation of Lidl best, they are described below:

The very first thing is connection, it describes the how far the employees of Lidl will identify themselves in the organization and will take pride in being a student of the organization (Truss et al., 2016). The emergence of the COVID-19 problem will put this situation into a major a test. The situation has seen that they are sending their employees into the furloughs and working from home. It has led them to thinking about career priorities and finding new ways for job. The leaders of the organization can play a major role in this regard by helping them to understand the current situation and how they will be able to contribute for their organization.

The second driver is the support the employees of Lidl get from their leaders and managers. In this process the employees feel their value and worth for setting up the success of the job. In times of uncertainty the managers of the organization set up an important role in eradicating the anxiety the employees are feeling during the time of crisis (Truss et al., 2016). This helps them to get a different level of psychological safety. The managers who appreciate the effort and contribution of the employees should be involved more in the situation. The employees should be treated individually and ensure that the work is organized effectively and efficiently. Discussing the matters of worries and demonstrating the empathy to the people and showing concern for them is some kind of support the employees of the Lidl can be provided during this tough time.



Source: (Strategic Employee Surveys, 2016)

The third driver in the employee engagement is counting the voices of the employees greatly. Though it may cause a tempting situation in the midst of a crisis (Kelleher, 2017). The leaders of Lidl may put emphasis on their two-way communication for increasing trust and harnessing the employees. The employees who feel like they can pitch their ideas and their ideas will be listened to, can feel safe about raising their voices. During this tough time, the situation might come to a change when the organization will consider cut off their employees and the possibility of them raising voices might be reduced due to the changed situation.

The fourth and final factor of employee engagement is scope. It gives the employees to have personal growth, reducing organizational autonomy and providing help to the people who needs motivation in their workplace (Albrecht, 2016). The working from home situation inside Lidl has gained popularity among the employees as it is providing them more freedom and flexibility but the practice needs to build up trust among the people and mutual cooperation among them. The crisis of COVID-19 has forced Lidl to be agile and more looking at the redesigning of jobs and work processes.

## **Evaluation of diagnostic tools to measure engagement**

Today's business world is multi-dimensional and rapid changing. And for that reason, the business leaders are facing challenges in building up their working force in the organization and driving company to the success. If we look at the scenario of Lidl, the organization is facing big challenges due to the employee engagement procedures of the organization. Employee engagement inside the organization is rated as key factor (Garber, 2014). In the organizational structure of Lidl, it is seen that the employee engagement is regarded as an individual and organizational performance that draws on culture, values and behaviors. It is believed that, if employees inside an organization are engaged, their creativity level increases and business will see top and bottom-line benefits. Keeping the future success in mind, the management of Lidl should find several ways to monitor and measure the engagement levels of the employees in their firm. These are described below:

### **Good Job design:**

A good job design will assign the works for the employees properly. The employees of Lidl will have more engagement in their work and will have more opportunities in front of them (Garber, 2014). The new normal situation in the COVID-19 crisis allows them to implement the work from home and flexible working time. That means that the employees will have a new job design in their workplace and will be engaged in a different manner than before.

### **Employee surveys:**

One of the most commonly used tools for getting employee feedback is the surveys about how the employees feel and what is their attitude toward the organization. Lidl have anonymous surveys in their organization that can increase the participation rate of the employees and it may allow them to get more honest responses from the employees. A good survey will be helpful for understanding the motivations, passions, job satisfaction levels and quality of work relationship among the employees.



Source: (Elliott and Corey, 2018)

### **HR Software:**

Surveying the employees for once or twice a year is a good thing to find out the original feedback from them (Dickson, 2017). But there is a problem that, the employees don't provide real time or ongoing feedback. For that reason, Lidl has brought the idea of periodic surveys with versatile software programs for gathering and tracking employee engagement. For the modern-day HR platforms who provide tools for getting feedback and measuring the satisfaction level of employees, the practice allows them to manage and measure employee engagement level.

### **Social Media:**

Now a days, the social media has become a bigger platform in the business world (Dickson, 2017). The Lidl management is implementing this platform for ensuring employee engagement especially in the time of COVID-19 crisis. According to the reports, an internal social media network will help the company for getting the chance to get employee ideas and having conversations that can be useful in the work from home situation. The managers will get opportunities to develop the understanding and engagement of the employees in organizational work.

## **Constructs an employee value proposition from the ideas and analysis previously covered, including strategies to raise levels of engagement**

The value proposition of an employee can be defined as how the employees might perceive the values by gaining the experience from working in the organization. The branding is built around in both the internal and external feedback. To the management of Lidl, EVP can work as a crucial way for making the right candidates for the organization who are interested (Whittington, Meskelis, Asare and Beldona, 2016). Those who are the existing employees of the organization, EVP ensures them they have aligned interests, motivated and have high percentage of job retention. It is significant matter that the employee value propositions of Lidl should be based on their uniqueness. The problem needs unique solutions, do build up a successful EVP. There are four different ways of creating employee value proposition in an organization. These are described below:

### **Offering Career development and new opportunities**

Lidl provides their employees with the room for advancement thus empowers them to challenge themselves and rewarding for their efforts. The reports say that, most of the employees in the organization value the learning and personal development process (Thornton, Mansi, Carramenha and Cappellano, 2019). Providing new training opportunities, stipends and new experience for new roles are some of the measurements they can take. Flexibility is another important aspect that will help Lidl to offer their employees to work from home in the current situation. The workers having more flexibility in their work responds with greater job satisfaction and considers to stay with Lidl.

### **Focusing on Employee Engagement**

It is believed that, most of the employees of Lidl who are engaged with the organization have put their trust on their managers and with the company as they have high EVP balanced teamwork and benefits. The employee engagement is mainly focused on the individual advancement of them (Finnegan, 2012). Because the management of Lidl believes that, happy individuals creates more cohesive team value with same thing. Several surveys have found out that the increase in employee recommending a company when they have successful EVP.

### **Generous Rewards Package design**

Rewards are not the wages of the employees. Rewards can come in the form of benefits, vacations and other various facilities (Byrne, 2015). EVP for Lidl can create a perfect balance for the challenges ahead when they are mixed with the other strategies. The strategy has proven out to be a stronger bottom-line for the employee engagements. The loyalty of the customers also depends on the attitude of the employees and the experiences they gather. The happy and contented employees of the organization will work as the brand ambassadors for them and will help to candidates get attracted naturally towards the organization.

### **Aligning Organizational Culture**

A good EVP of the organization aligns with the vision, mission, values and responsibilities of them (Thornton, Mansi, Carramenha and Cappellano, 2019). In Lidl, the culture goes hand in hand with their EVP and brand images for creating a powerful interlinking between the people and form a shape of the organization. Culture plays an important role in improving the value creation of the organization. The culture plays as an important factor in researching and designing the EVP of the organization and their employee engagement process.

## **Conclusion**

At the end of the discussion, it is a very important thing for an organization to ensure the employee engagement in their organization. Lidl is multinational company and they are also very conscious about the employee engagement in their organization. In the above discussion, we have described some of the important elements of the employee engagement in the midst of a crisis situation of COVID-19. The drivers of the employee engagement ensure factors that drives the employees to engage in the organization. Another factor described is the tools that can measure the employee engagement process in Lidl and lastly creating a value proposition idea of the employees that creates employee values.

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