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# **Employee Engagement of Generation Z throughout the Employee Lifecycle**

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# **Essay on "Employee Engagement of Generation Z throughout the Employee Lifecycle"**

The human resource is an important part of every business. It is concerned with planning, recruiting, selecting, training, developing, motivating, and retaining employees. The objectives of human resources are to ensure the organisation with talented and capable employees, and their engagement with the organisation (Armstrong, 2020). It improves the performance of the organisation and helps to achieve the organisational goals and objectives. This essay has focused on the employees of Gen Z and their engagement with the organisation using the employee lifecycle. The employee lifecycle has six stages: attraction, recruitment, onboarding, development, retention, and separation. The various types of strategies for employee engagement specific to Gen Z that can be applied in each stage of the lifecycle are described. For evaluating and increasing employee engagement in big hotels, the Gallup Q12 model is explained. Companies can use the survey questionnaire to have a solid understanding of their employee engagement. The term employee engagement shows how attached the employees are to the organisation. To provide examples Hotel Marriott was chosen. Hotel Marriott is a brand of Marriott International which has operations globally, the headquarters of which is based in the USA (Marriott International, 2023).

Employees show different attitudes and behaviour in the organisation (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022). If their generation is considered, it will be evident that their behaviours and attitudes are mostly influenced by their generation. To increase employee engagement within the workplace, it is important to focus on any particular generation of people. For this essay, generation Z is to be focused. Generation Y and Generation Z are two different groups of people. These people have different characteristics and behaviours because the time they were born is entirely different. Generation Z is characterised by the period of people's birth (De Witte, 2022). People who were born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s are Generation Z. Generation Z is the first generation of history who gets to use the internet, smartphones, social media, and other technologies. The people of this generation are more used to the latest technologies. All the new inventions have shaped their behaviours and attitudes (Eldridge, 2022). In comparison to Gen Y, Gen Z is more inclusive and socially

conscious. The people of this generation are also known as Zoomers, iGen, and Centennial. In organisational settings, people of this generation are highly collaborative. They appreciate teamwork, seek mentorship from the seniors, and value feedback (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022). Such attitudes enable them to learn new things within a short time and ensure continuous improvements. They have become more self-reliant and pragmatic than people of other generations because they have witnessed the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic (McKinsey, 2023). All such global crises have transformed them to be highly adaptable and resilient to any challenges in the workplace.

The employee lifecycle (ELC) is a popular model that is used to understand the process and stages an employee goes through within the organisation (Marinakou, E. and Giousmpasoglou, 2019). Hotel Marriott is a large organisation and the employees of this organisation, particularly Generation Z, go through various stages of the lifecycle. The stages are Attraction, Recruitment, Onboarding, Development, Retention, and Separation (Cattermole, 2019). The first stage of the lifecycle is Attraction (Armstrong, 2020). At this stage, the potential employees have no idea or knowledge about Hotel Marriott's organisational cultures and practices. To attract talent to the company, Hotel Marriott sells positive stories to Gen Z using various social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram (eBloom, 2023). The company also showcases how inclusive the diverse their workplace is (Hollander, 2020). The second stage of ELC is Recruitment. This stage is concerned with the selection of suitable candidates for the organisation and hiring them. It is important to have a smooth and effective recruitment process and policies because talented employees can be hired only when the organisation can effectively select them out of thousands of candidates. The most common practices that can be seen in most organisations to recruit employees for a specific job role are internal promotion, referrals, hiring from external sources using online assessment of the applications, and interviews (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019). Hotel Marriott has introduced a global workforce planning tool to recruit employees of different age groups (eBloom, 2023).

The third stage of the lifecycle is Onboarding. After recruiting the new employees, the organisation needs to introduce new culture, practices, rules, and regulations of the company to the new employees. At this stage, it becomes a crucial responsibility for the HR manager to increase engagement with them. If there is no effort from the HR

management for employee engagement, their performance and productivity will not be achieved as expected due to a lack of understanding of the environment and motivation (Cattermole, 2019). During that time, the new employees get to know about their job roles and requirements. They receive feedback on their performance and based on that make improvements. Hotel Marriott does various onboarding activities for the recruits (Marriott International, 2023). The company offers flexible work arrangements for them so that they can find their work environment favourable and aligned with their career goals and objectives. The company offers training and support to increase their morale and motivation in the new work arrangement (Torrington et al., 2020).

The fourth stage of the cycle is "Development". The development program is a continuous process. The development activities such as coaching, mentoring, feedback, and recognition provide opportunities for the employees to be more capable of doing their jobs and improve their current skills. If they encounter any weaknesses from feedback, they can work on them to progress (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019). Hotel Marriott and other hotels in the hospitality industry apply similar strategies for their development programs (Friedman, 2019). Gen Z are more willing to receive feedback and they work on the feedback to develop their skills and expertise (Barhate and Dirani, 2021). The fifth stage of the lifecycle is Retention. It is concerned with retaining the existing employees by creating loyalty among them. The hospitality industry in the UK faces a high level of employee turnover compared to other industries (Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou, 2019). The reasons for the low level of retention are lack of career advancement, dissatisfaction with the workplace culture, benefits and pay. Hotel Marriott faces challenges to increase the employee retention rate (Marriott International, 2023). The company offers Gen Z a flexible work environment so that they can have a work-life balance. It promotes inclusive and diverse workplace cultures that are preferred by Gen Z. The competitive pay and benefits are also used as a tool to increase the retention rate. Various studies have been conducted on employee retention that show that there is a positive and strong relationship between increased employee retention and organisational performance (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019). So, organisations must improve their employee retention to achieve their goals and objectives. The sixth and last stage of the employee lifecycle is the Separation. Employees are not always supposed to stay in the organisation. They can

quit the job voluntarily or involuntarily. Whatever the exit mode is, it is important to ensure a smooth process for the separation. The employees should have a good experience while leaving the workplace. Large hotels, particularly Hotel Marriott take exit interviews for their employees (Marriott International, 2023). It provides them with the necessary information about the reasons employees are leaving. Then they can take the necessary steps to address the issues regarding their exit (Romero and Lado, 2021). They provide news and updates about the company to the alumni network and keep them engaged with the organisational activities. Sometimes these companies accept the referrals of their former employees during the recruitment process (Torrington et al., 2020).

Hotel companies in the hospitality industry adopt different types of strategies for engaging with the employees of Gen Z. Within the six stages of the employee lifecycle, the strategies differ. Gen Z can be attracted by showcasing strong brand recognition (Goh and Okumus, 2020). Hotel Marriott showcases its brand as ethical to attract new talents of Gen Z. The people of that generation prefer to be employed in a workplace that offers competitive compensation and benefits. The unique organisational culture and locations play an important role in the Attraction stage (Fernandez, Lee and Landis, 2023). In the recruitment stage, they can be recruited using online platforms as the people are used to the technologies. They prefer to be evaluated based on their abilities. Hence, organisations have to conduct fair and consistent assessments and interviews to identify the best candidates who have the capabilities to perform the job more efficiently. They appreciate transparency in the organisation's process which necessitates transparency in the recruitment process (Betterworks, 2018). Hotel companies have to provide feedback for upholding transparency in the process. Personalised emails are used by most of the companies in the hospitality industry for providing the feedback. To increase engagement, a comprehensive onboarding program is necessary. Clear orientation and training give the roadmap for the job responsibility. Support from the mentor can be effective in the onboarding stage. Gen Z finds mentorship as a sense of belonging and connection with the workplace (Pingboard, 2019). Strategies in the development stage require applying coaching, mentoring, and recognition programs. They can be rewarded for increasing their motivation and appreciating their efforts. Organisations should also ensure that there is a clear career progression opportunity for them. Strategies in the Retention stage

include providing an inclusive and diverse workforce culture, promoting work-life balance, and providing opportunities to participate in the decision-making process (Nguyen Ngoc et al., 2022). Finally, strategies in the separation stage are exit interviews, providing support and assistance to the former employees for the transition of their future careers and jobs (Schroth, 2019). All these strategies are important for ensuring effective engagement with Gen Z employees.

Employee engagement refers to the extent to which employees are determined, motivated, inspired, and devoted to their job responsibilities (Armstrong, 2020). In the hotel industry, employee engagement is crucial to customer service, organisational performance and productivity. A highly engaged workplace can be a competitive advantage to the company because it ensures a memorable guest experience which is paramount for the hotel business (Park, Johnson and Chaudhuri, 2019). One of the most popular for employee engagement is the Gallup Q12 model. The model is based on 12 questions and these questions are structured in such a way that they measure employee engagement. The questions focus on the key points which are the expectations of the work, the availability of the equipment and materials for doing the assigned job, having the opportunity to perform the desired role, recognition for achievements, a sense of belonging, encouragement for career development, caring employee opinions, the mission/purpose of the company, commitment of other employees for quality work, having a best friend in the workplace, evaluation of the progress within the last 6 months, the opportunity to learn and grow in the last year (Inc, 2023). By focusing on these aspects of the questions, hotel companies can improve their employee engagement. The implementation of the model in hotel settings like Hotel Marriot would require undertaking various activities. It has to clarify the employee's job and responsibilities. They should know properly what is expected from them. The employees should be equipped with the required resources to perform their roles. They need to be recognised and rewarded for their accomplishments (Gupta and Sharma, 2016). All employees are to be considered as a person and managers should care for their subordinates. Their opinions can be taken in the decision-making (Torrington et al., 2020). The workplace should have an environment for collaboration and support. Everyone can grow in their job role and have the opportunity for career advancement (Guest, 2014). By implementation of the model will ensure that the company has a highly engaged workforce.

Generation Z refers to the group of people who were born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s. They are different from other generations because the people of this generation have faced rapid technological breakthroughs, smartphones, and the internet. In the workplace, creating employee engagements requires the management to apply different strategies that are particularly aimed at the people of Generation Z. The employee lifecycle shows the journey of an employee within the workplace. To attract Gen Z, online platforms are suitable as they are more influenced by the online activities of the company. They prefer to have a transparent recruitment process and to be valued for their capabilities (Armstrong, 2020). By introducing the policies and culture and supporting them with hands-on experience, the onboarding can be made smoother. Organisations have to provide career development opportunities based on their expectations. Competitive salaries, rewards, and recognition are needed to retain them (Friedman, 2019). At the time of exit, the organisation must ensure a positive experience. Good employee engagement is necessary for improving the performance of the company and achieving its organisational goals and objectives (Armstrong, 2020).

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