

MANAGING PEOPLE

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Introduction

Talent minded organisations recognise the fact that people are the greatest lever of their business success. As a result, these organisations put a lot of emphasis on their human resource management strategies and procedures. Organisations adopt people's management strategies that ensure employees stay engaged and committed to the achievement of its objectives. Employee engagement is a significant aspect that highly contributes to the creation of a productive and highly performing workforce. As depicted by statistics, 92% of company executives believe that high employee engagement levels lead to better productivity and performance. And so, an organisation that upholds high levels of employee engagement experiences higher employee retention levels since employee's efforts are highly recognised thus making the employees to feel valuable and have a high sense of belonging. Correspondingly, higher retention levels are also espoused by the ability of the employees to understand and partake in all the organisational changes introduced within the company. Besides, employee engagement increases employee commitment to their roles and responsibilities increasing their productivity and performance. Furthermore, better employee engagement levels augment the employee satisfaction levels contributing to the employee's high level of motivation. In light to the Covid-19 pandemic it is important for every company to constantly measure and monitor its employee engagement due to increasing new working environment and structures. For that reason, this assignment seeks to review the concept and drivers of employee engagement within Morrison. Congruently, the assignment highlights and assesses the diagnostic tools that can be used to measure employee engagement. To conclude, it develops an employee value proposition incorporating the various strategies Morrison can assume to improve its employee engagement levels. Morrison is the fourth largest chain of supermarkets headquartered in Bradford, United Kingdom. Morrison has approximately 494 stores deploying over 100,000 employees.

Concept and drivers of employee engagement

Bach and Edwards (2013) denote employee engagement denotes long-term mental and emotional connection of employees to their teams and company objectives that drives high levels of commitments in the dispensation of their roles and responsibilities. Employee engagement is termed to be a personified drive and commitment for employees to give their best to an

organisation. Desirable employee engagement levels emanates from the ability of a company to create favourable conditions that prompt employees to offer more of their capability and potential. According to Mello (2014) employee engagement positively contributes to the welfare of the company and the wellbeing of the employee as an individual. For instance, high levels of employee engagement increase employee job satisfaction and personal knowledge thus making them to exhibit high levels of performance. Comparatively, high employee engagement strengthens the brand reputation and the client satisfaction levels of a company. For example, highly engaged employees have favourable opinions about their workplaces and positively speak about the brand of their company. Correspondingly, they are able to offer quality services to the company's clients thus enhancing company's client satisfaction (Torrington, 2011).

Cappelli (2012) outlines that successful employee engagement strategy has to incorporate cognitive, physical and emotional engagement aspects. Cognitive engagement entails sharing the vision, mission and objective of the organisations of employees and their subsequent contribution to their achievement. It is important to note that employees fully commit and stay engaged when they clearly understand the vision of an organisation (Beardwell and Thompson, 2017). Correspondingly; an organisation needs to consider physical and emotional engagement within its employee engagement strategy. This involves ensuring that employees are physically and mentally healthy to perform their roles and responsibilities. For example, physical engagement entails the creation of feasible and flexible work structures that do not overwork or emotionally stress employees.

Drivers of employee engagement

According to Torrington (2011) employee engagement is influenced by many imminent factors within an organisation. And so, for the human resource manager to foster employee engagement, it has to identify the proactive policies and procedures that attract and retain talents within organisation. The key drivers of employee engagement within an organisation include:

Leadership and management: Employee engagement increases drastically when employees positively relate with their leaders and managers at work. Leaders improve engagement by defining and communicating the vision and objectives of an organisation to employees.

Harmoniously, the management creates team activities that are aligned with the organisation's vision guiding the employees when performing their roles and responsibilities (Mello, 2014).

Moreover, effectual leaders and managers enhance the trust and commitment of employees in the organisation enhancing employee engagement. Likewise, managers give clear directions ensuring that each employee is aware of what is expected of them. Furthermore, when employees enjoy a positive relationship with their managers they develop a culture of open communication improving information flow increasing employee engagement and productivity (Bratton and Gold, 2012).

Organisational culture: Bach and Edwards (2013) opines that organisational culture has a great impact on the employee engagement within an organisation. Organisational culture incorporates various values and behaviours that exemplify how organisational processes and activities are carried out. Positive culture promotes great communication and employee relations which greatly enhance employee engagement. For example, when an organisation upholds communal organisational culture it breeds better employee to employee as well as employee coordination and communication increasing their level of engagement. Moreover, an organisational culture that promotes sense of integrity and trust contributes vastly to high employee engagement levels (Mello, 2014).

Empowerment of employee voice: Empowerment of an employee's voice is key driver of employee engagement. Employees become highly committed and engaged when their opinions and views are highly regarded by the management and visibly acted upon (Cappelli, 2012). Correspondingly, employees stay committed to the achievement of organisational objectives when they are actively involved in the overall decision making of the company. For that reason, the creation of avenues where employee's voices are heard and addressed appropriately vastly contributes to better employee engagement levels.

Evaluation of diagnostic tools used to measure employee engagement

Bach and Edwards (2013) reiterate that for an organisation to understand the level of employee engagement it experiences it has to incorporate various diagnostic tools that continuously measure employee engagement throughout their employment cycle. These diagnostic tools assist Morrison to uncover employee experiences as well as identify the different engagement opportunities it can utilise to enhance employee engagement. Also, these diagnostic tools provide important data insights that facilitate better decision making within the organisation. Moreover, diagnostic tools are geared at spurring meaningful conversations between the employer and

employees strengthening a positive relationship between them (Torrington, 2011). Furthermore, employee engagement diagnostic tools assist an organisation to understand employee behavioural trends to ascertain the roots behind their given engagement and productivity levels. Morrison adopts the following diagnostic tools to measure employee engagement:

Employee engagement survey: According to Cappelli (2012a) a well-designed employee survey is instrumental in providing important insights on the employee perceptions towards organisational activities. When an organisation conducts employee surveys, it is a positive gesture to employees since they feel that their opinions and views are highly valued by an organisation. Moreover, employee engagement surveys are useful in enlightening the management on employee sentiments and satisfaction relating to organisational policies and procedures. To effectively assess employee engagement using employee surveys an organisation should objectively structure its survey questions as well as maintain anonymity of employees for them to feel free to provide both negative and positive feedback. Or rather, a company can use third party administrators to conduct and evaluate the survey to avoid managerial prejudice and biasness (Beard and Thompson, 2017). Additionally, organisations can easily use digital and social media tools to analyse and evaluate the response rates on surveys thus ascertaining if they have attained their desirable level of engagement. However, for employee engagement surveys to remain useful, they must be done consistently. The organisation should conduct these surveys on regular basis to ensure they address employee engagement issues at a timely manner (Torrington, 2011).

Employee suggestion schemes: Employees suggestion schemes seek to solicit constructive opinions and view that assist in the achievement of organisational goals and objectives. Employee suggestion schemes are significant in assisting employees find their jobs more meaningful and interesting (Bach and Edwards, 2013). Through the use employee suggestion schemes, the management is able to understand the various innovative ideas or opinions concerning the various processes and procedures undertaken by an organisation. Employee suggestion schemes can be used to evaluate the satisfaction of employees with the current operational strategies used within an organisation. Likewise, employee suggestion schemes can be used to inculcate a culture of open communication and employee feedback. Conversely, the method remains effectual only when employees are able to visibly see the implementation of

their suggested ideas and opinions (Mello, 2014). And so, if the management fails to consider prior employee suggestions, the excitement to participate in suggestion schemes wanes.

Work committees and meetings: Bratton and Gold (2012) believe that work committees and meetings remain useful in assisting the management ascertain the level of employee engagement within an organisation. Work meetings and committees stimulate important conversations revolving around employee commitment and engagement issues. Through these discussions the management is able to identify the key factors that motivating or demotivating employee engagement within an organisation (Mello, 2014). Work meetings and committees useful in increasing employee trust, accountability and feedback thus enhancing employee performance in the long run. Furthermore these work committees and meetings are useful in assisting an organisation document employee based strategies it can adopt afterwards to address engagement issues. However, since work committees and meetings involve open and direct communication with the management, employees may refrain from expressing their negative sentiments in fear of authority and reiteration (Torrington, 2011). For that reason, the management must first build trust and transparency with its employees and employee representatives to gather both negative and positive opinions regarding their operations.

Employee value proposition of Morrison

Employee value propositions are fundamental in luring employees to exhibit high levels of commitment as well as maximise their capabilities and potential in implementing organisational objectives (Mello, 2014). Employee value proposition postulates monetary and non-monetary benefits an organisation offer employees in exchange of their skills, capabilities and effort they make in achieving organisational goals (Torrington, 2011). Employee value propositions are critical in enhancing an organisation's brand hence increasing their chances of attracting and retaining the best talents within the industry. According to statistics, businesses that effectively deliver on their EVP can decrease their annual employee turnover by 70% while increasing their new hire commitment by 30%. Morrison's employee value proposition has incorporated five major elements to sufficiently increase its employee engagement and motivation level as illustrated below:

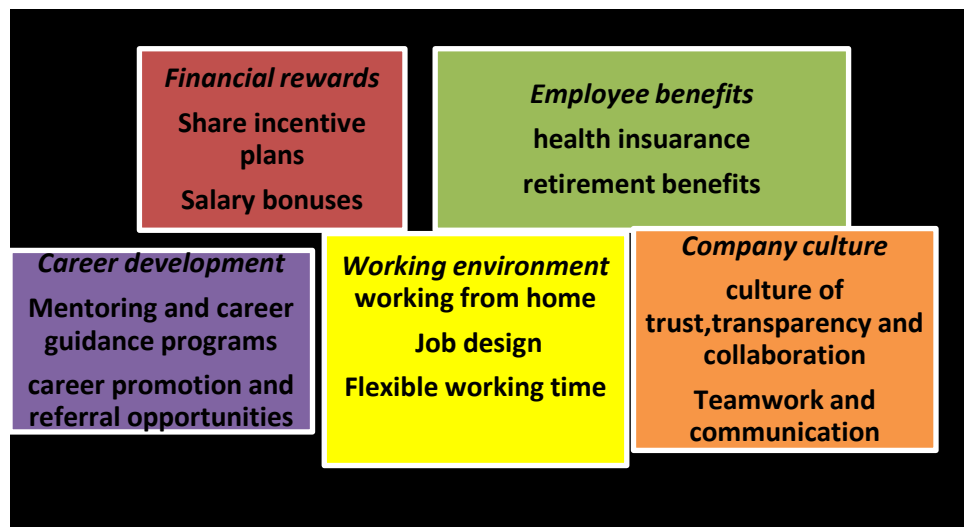


Figure 1

As illustrated by figure 1 above, Morrison's employee value proposition incorporates financial rewards, employee benefits, career development opportunities, working environment and company culture aspects (Bratton and Gold, 2012). Financial rewards are the monetary value attached to employee's roles and responsibilities towards the achievement of organisational objectives. And so, the company offers share incentive plans that its employees can invest in and get desirable returns on investment. Also, employees are offered salary bonuses especially when they achieve organisational targets and objectives. These financial rewards are critical since they make employees feel valued and appreciated. To complement the monetary rewards, Morrison has provided its employees with a flexible working environment where they are allowed to work from home and have flexible working schedules as well as constantly restructure their roles and responsibilities. These working conditions are created to assist employees attain optimum work and life balance (Beardwell and Thompson, 2017).

Furthermore, according to Cappelli (2012a) Morrison's culture is focused at maintaining positive relationships within the organisation. The culture of trust and transparency between its employees and employers enables the company to get employee feedback concerning its operational strategies enhancing its decision making process. Congruently, a culture of teamwork and commitment facilitates the creation of communal culture where employees can have a sense of belonging thus performing better. Career development opportunities are mainly used to assist individual attain both their personal and career goals (Bratton and Gold, 2012). Employees are

interested in being hired as well as work longer in organisations that enable them to maximise their career and personal goals. Lastly, employee benefits such as health insurance and retirement benefits are used to provide employees with future financial and health security.

Strategies Morrison can use to raise its levels of engagement

According to Bach and Edwards (2013) contemporary employee engagement is highly dependent on the ability of a company to source and value employee feedback. Employee become more engaged when the management of an organisation ardently addresses their concerns and opinions. Also, within the employee value proposition, the organisation should incorporate more training and development programs in its employee development programs. This is to ensure that the skills and competencies of its individual employees are continuously developed to ensure that they stay relevant as well as meaningfully contribute to the achievement of organisational goals and objectives (Mello, 2014).

Conclusion

Employee engagement has a significant impact on the overall performance and productivity of an organisation. However, employee engagement is espoused by the working environmental conditions that an employee is exposed to within an organisation. Healthy and effectual leadership and management, organisational culture and empowerment of employee voices are identified as key drivers of employee engagement within an organisational. An organisation that adopts effectual leadership and management styles complemented by a positive organisational culture that empowers its employee voices is depicted to have high levels of employee engagement levels. Moreover, it is important for an organisation to incorporate various employee engagement diagnostic tools to ensure that it can keep track and maintains the optimum employee engagement levels. Examples of these diagnostic tools include employee surveys, employee suggestion schemes and work committees and meetings. Furthermore, the creation of an employee value proposition greatly contributes to the better employee engagement levels since their efforts and contributions are greatly valued and optimally rewarded.

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