

1. On the Job Training.

Meet with your line manager or other relevant person to thoroughly understand your organisation's approach to employee engagement. If possible, attend an internal employee communications briefing/ employee representative meeting.

OR

If you are already familiar with its approach, evaluate whether or not your organisation's approach needs a review, based on your reading of current trends.

I met with my line manager to discuss my organisations approach to employee engagement. It was identified through our discussion that at present employee engagement practices within the organisation are limited but are in the process of being developed. During the COVID-19 pandemic employee engagement practices were identified as being poor, especially as a lot of office-based staff had to work from home and line managers were not equipped or trained to manage their staff virtually. At present employee engagement practices are undertaken in the form of 6-8 weekly 1:1 supervision meetings. Managers follow pre-set questions to initiate an open and honest conversation in order to have an understanding of how employees are feeling, and the meetings allows the employees to discuss training and progression needs, it also enables employees to set objectives in line with the organisational aims and objectives. During the pandemic it was identified that the supervision forms were not fit for purpose, and so they were reviewed and updated to include questions that would create more of an organic conversation between the supervisor and employee around their wellbeing. Irrespective of how effective this strategy may be for some employees, not all employees will want to be honest with their line supervisors for fear of repercussions.

My line manager and I have recently been working on a project with the Head of Learning and Development to create meetings between new employees and the HR department. During their 6-month probationary period, the meetings will be utilised to create ties between the HR department and new employees. The meetings will be held on a bi-monthly basis and will be used to discuss their progress and any issues that they may have encountered. This will not only allow the employee to develop a relationship with HR, but it will also ensure that the employee is engaged from the start, allowing HR to act as a mediator between the employee and the manager if any issues arise, as well as assisting and advising the manager on any development or training that the employee may require.

The Chief Executive Office of the organisation holds an informal meeting on a monthly basis with groups of staff members each from different departments. The meetings are called "Coffee with Paul" and enables employees to discuss with the CEO what they perceive as working and not working within the organisation in an open and honest forum. It also allows staff members to put forward any ideas that they may have in relation to learning and development ideas. The CEO uses the feedback to make any necessary amendments and will update the relevant staff members that changes have been made. This in affect has had a positive impact on current staff members as they feel listened to and are able to witness the changes that are made from a top-down approach. I recently attended a "Coffee with Paul" meeting and witnessed that every staff member in attendance was given a chance to put their point across, and after the meeting key messages were shared with the wider organisation. During the meeting, the group was informed that the Director of People and Engagement was planning to launch a meeting on a regular basis to meet with different

staff members from across the organisation to discuss culture and the ways that the organisation communicates.

A Senior Engagement and Communication officer was recently appointed and has increased the amount of communication that is being provided to employees. The newly appointed Senior Engagement and Communication Officer will be sharing organisational updates on a regular basis and is looking to introduce an organisational mobile app to ensure that organisational information is more easily accessible and to provide a better understanding, as it has become known that not all staff are accessing their organisational emails.

Due to the recent pandemic employee wellbeing has become the top priority of many organisations and employee engagement practices within my organisation have taken this into consideration and have started to include this into its methods. With the introduction of hybrid contracts and flexible working contracts this has increased job satisfaction through healthy work-life balance. According to data gathered from exit interviews completed by departing employees, this was one of the leading causes of resignation during the pandemic. According to (Kropp and McRae, 2022) employee satisfaction and engagement will not be the only indicators that organisations will need to understand their employees in the future; new measures will be required to analyse their mental, physical, and financial health, which will properly forecast future employee performance and retention.

References

Kropp, B. and McRae, E., 2022. *11 Trends that Will Shape Work in 2022 and beyond*. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: <<https://hbr.org/2022/01/11-trends-that-will-shape-work-in-2022-and-beyond>> [Accessed 25 February 2022].

2. On the Job Training

Examine the employee handbook and any internal staff bulletins within your organisation and make some notes as to whether you think the content engages employees on topics that matter to them.

At the start of employee lifecycle, employees are required to complete an induction booklet which provides the new employee with key information that will help them to gain essential knowledge around the organisation. The induction workbook outlines the roles, responsibilities and work priorities and provides an opportunity for new staff members to think of personal objectives in line with the organisational aims and objectives. It also defines the services that are offered by the organisation and allows the employee to demonstrate that they have embedded the organisational values into their everyday tasks.

Due to the recent appointment of a Senior Marketing and Communications Officer, communication within the organisation has increased and organisational information is now also shared with employees via email on a regular basis. As identified by (Maxwell, 2021) employee communication is a key element of both the organisation and HR's role. Internal communication is critical for building trust inside an organisation and has a substantial impact on employee engagement, company culture, and, ultimately, productivity. A quarterly staff newsletter was recently introduced which is used to inform employees of Leadership updates and relevant organisational information. Within the recent newsletter the newly updated organisational values and core strategies were shared with the wider organisation in preparation for them to be discussed between employees and their line managers with their 1:1 supervision meetings. Currently, the newsletter keeps employees informed about current events and gives them the opportunity to request information that they will deem as relevant. The newsletter also includes a page dedicated to the Chief Executive Officer to share organisational updates and plans for the upcoming year. Line managers are encouraged to print the newsletters and post them on employee notice boards so that all employees can access them. Employees are asked to submit any ideas for what they would want to see in the newsletter, allowing them to help define the newsletter's future.

Employees also have access to the organisation's intranet, where they are able to access the organisational values and strategic priorities. The intranet enables employees to access vital information from different departments and important announcements from leadership. It promotes a collaborative approach to content sharing and management by providing employees with self-service access to all of the information they require at any time. The intranet page also shows the results of the quarterly staff awards, as well as information on how to nominate appropriate employees and the rewards that the winners will receive. The staff award winners' names are also displayed on the intranet, which has proven to have a good effect and stimulates employee recognition, which in turn supports organisational productivity and high-performance working. Training information is also displayed on the intranet through the Learning and Development tab, the organisation feels that investing in employee training and development should be a top priority and all employees are required to attend training offered by the organisation. The organisation is looking to introduce an organisational app that will be accessible to all employees and will provide all of the latest organisational information at the press of a button. Employees will also be able to access the training platform through the app and request and suggest training opportunities.

References

Maxwell, D., 2021. *Employee Communication | Factsheets | CIPD*. [online] CIPD. Available at: <<https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/communication/factsheet#ref>> [Accessed 26 February 2022].

3. On the Job Training

Discuss your development needs with your line manager as a result of the above activities, using the CIPD Profession Map as a basis for your discussion. Consider whether or not your skills in this area require improvement.

My line manager and I met to discuss my goals and objectives regarding my skills and development within employee engagement practices, in line with the CIPD profession map. Employee experience and people analytics are specialist knowledge areas on the map but can apply to all HR professionals at all levels. From looking at the standards of both specialist areas it was discussed that I would be just moving into the associate level due to my experience with employee engagement practices. As previously mentioned, I am in the process of creating bi-monthly meetings with new employees to identify any issues or good practices that the employee has experienced during their probation period. I will then use this feedback to advise the manager of how to build positive relationships going forward. I also analyse exit interview data and provide the information to the organisations HR Business Partners, as part of my development I have asked to attend project groups to discuss improvements that can be made regarding employee engagement practices.

My line manager and I currently hold fortnightly meetings with the operations Locality Managers and have recently started to hold talk shops with the managers on different HR topics. My line manager and I discussed development ideas and agreed that I will be able to hold a talk shop on employee engagement at the next HR and Operations meeting, in order to supply a better understanding to managers of how to drive employee engagement and how to best measure the tactics required for continuous improvement. Also, as there is currently no employee engagement policy in place, I will be looking at developing and implementing a policy to build on current practice and to help foster increased levels of engagement.

My development needs have been documented in my development plan as part of my objectives, and my line manager and I will continue to discuss them regularly in my supervision meetings.

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Date: 26.02.2022