

The 8 Components of Employee Engagement

Effective employee engagement builds a culture of trust, loyalty and improved work ethics. It is defined by how actively involved an employee is to her organisation's success.

To achieve high levels of engagement in your organisation, you can follow these 8 key components of employee engagement-

Strengthen Communication

To make employees feel as part of the organisation, you need to give them the space to formulate their own ideas and make their own decisions. This will only happen when they can interact freely with their peers as well as leaders. Robust communication gives employees the sense of being in a community and this interaction gives meaning to their work. It also builds trust and strengthens relationships among workers and especially with leaders.

HOW TO DO IT

- A widely-used way to encourage employees to communicate freely with leaders is the open-door policy. This shows that you, their leader, are always available and open to listen to their ideas as well as concerns.
- Figure out the difference between talking to them and listening to them. Keep a healthy balance of the two so that you don't take decisions and give opinions based on the limited information you receive.
- Encouraging peer to peer communication is another way to improve employee engagement. Team projects, working with diverse sets of employees helps resolve miscommunication and builds trust among peers. It also improves internal communication.

Be A Leader

Research by Gallup shows that managers account for 70 percent of difference in employee engagement scores. So, business leaders play a huge role when it comes to making employees feel inclusive and loyal to their organisation.

HOW TO BE A GOOD LEADER

- A leader should be able to communicate well and communicate often. Employees should feel free to voice their opinions or question their leaders. Survey by OfficeTeam found that out of 2800 employees, 37% see their bosses as mentors and 34% consider their boss a friend.
- Being responsible and taking accountability for their actions is another trait good leaders possess. A good leader tries to get to the bottom of why something isn't working out and tries to find the solution to it. As a result, team members start mirroring these traits which leads to greater accountability.
- Most importantly, a good leader knows how to motivate. Keeping employees motivated for a long time is hard. Gamifying incentives, supporting their ideas, providing work-life balance are effective ways to motivate employees.

Appreciate Employees

All employees desire to feel valued and appreciated. When you recognize employees for their efforts, they'll feel motivated to work harder and achieve their goals. Recognition refers to the acknowledgement of an individual's behavior, hard work and accomplishments, which supports the organisation's goals and values.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES

- Because every company has a different culture, it is important to develop a culture-specific recognition program which matches your organisation's culture, values and beliefs.

- It is of utmost importance that you recognize both individuals as well as teams. Sometimes, an individual's achievements might get overshadowed by a team. It is important that you acknowledge the importance of every individual.
- Encourage a culture of peer-to-peer recognition. When peers recognize each other, it helps build cooperation and teamwork among employees. Moreover, employees who don't work directly with each other come to know about their achievements and feats.
- An effective method of recognizing employees is to practice year round recognition and not just once or twice a year.

In our organisation, we have a social platform which enables leaders and peers to recognize and appreciate great work instantly. Whenever someone gets recognized, it shows on our social feed.

(Related-25 Rewards and Recognition Ideas to Boost Employee Recognition)

Provide Workplace Wellness

Since employees spend the majority of their day at their job, it so happens that their health and well being is affected by the huge amount of stress and fatigue they undergo. Physical as well as mental illnesses are unavoidable. Employees suffer from stress, anxiety, depression, back aches, muscle pain and so on. Therefore, it is the organisation's responsibility to provide a healthcare system that looks into the complete well-being of an employee.

HOW TO ENSURE WELLNESS

- Companies have now taken the help of technology to make fitness and wellbeing fun and interesting. Wellness initiatives in the form of fitness apps have made tracking physical and mental fatigue easier. Jogging apps, heart rate counters, calorie counters, etc have helped individuals quantify and analyse their health conditions.
- Employees achieve more when working together. Either together in teams or even when competing. Thus, having a community driven approach can help employees take up fitness faster. Team activities and group events motivate employees to take up fitness challenges and complete them.

- A very effective way to make employees take up fitness challenges is by incentivising those challenges. When you reward employees for every task completed, they feel better about fulfilling those tasks and in fact, feel motivated to do more challenging activities.

Personal And Professional Development

A study by Randstand found that 30 percent of employees leave their jobs due to lack of challenging work. When employees feel that the expectations with which they joined an organisation aren't being fulfilled, they leave. Moreover, new-age employees will only do work that enables them to enjoy life as much as work. Thus, it becomes important for them to work at places which will advance their personal and professional career.

HOW TO ADVANCE THEIR CAREER

- Well-defined and clear-cut roles and responsibilities will help employees understand their work easily which will enable them to perform and produce more.
- Conducting training programs and enabling them with adequate skills to fulfill their tasks will help them in advancing their professional career.
- Encourage passion projects in your organisation. This means giving your employees the time and opportunities to pursue things they're passionate about. For instance music clubs, drama clubs and so on.

Roles and Responsibilities

This is an essential feature of well-defined orientation and onboarding programs. When you pre-define responsibilities in a clear and concise manner, there's no room for misunderstandings and confusion. Employees can understand what their daily responsibilities will include and how they can become contributing members to the company.

HOW TO DEFINE ROLES

- Having detailed job description manuals highlighting their day-to-day responsibilities and how they can achieve them. It will also include the skills and the educational qualifications they need to possess for the role.
- Having great onboarding programs is another way to go about it. Onboarding programs will help them familiarise with the company's culture, allot them to their teams, assign them mentors who will guide them.
- In order to define roles, you first need to set every employee's goals and objectives that need to be fulfilled. Goals make it easier to lay down the work that needs to be done and divide who needs to do which tasks exactly.

Practice Feedback And Evaluation

Feedback is one of the key components of employee engagement. Studies say that 43 percent of highly engaged employees receive feedback at least once a week! Feedback and evaluation improves performance and therefore, productivity. And they don't want you to just praise them. They want you to break down their actions and suggest them on where they can improve.

HOW TO DO IT

- To start with, be proactive with your feedback. Don't wait for bi-annual or year-end reviews. When you provide your employees with regular feedbacks, it shows that you notice what they're doing and that you care. It also makes room for discussion, guidance for where they can improve and better communication.
- Be very specific with your evaluation. Don't be vague or beat around the bush. Tell them specifically where they can improve and the exact situation which has made you arrive at a particular conclusion. This can be both positive and negative, but it's important that you explain your evaluation clearly.

- Personalise your feedback for each and every employee. Not everyone is the same and will have different methods to understand what you're saying. In fact, 70 percent of Gen Y wants strength based feedback. But, 50 percent of older employees think constructive criticism works for them.

Work Environment

Workplaces are evolving as organisations are moving towards personalized spaces and the emergence of various styles of working like gig workers, remote workers. Traditional workplaces with wooden cubicles and white-washed walls have been replaced by open working spaces and standing desks. Workplace designs improve productivity, reduce stress and enable employees to work harder.

HOW TO DO IT

- Help employees to personalize their workstations. Adjust their workstation as per their preference. This can mean bean bags for some, or high bar stools for others. Other adjustments can be done with the type of chair, picture frames, personalized coffee mugs and so on.
- New workplaces are all about breaking traditions. You can conduct meetings outside board rooms and conference halls. Meetings outside such rooms can actually help employees to take the edge off and converse much more freely with you.
- Another technical aspect that employees are now looking into is actually quite non-technical. Companies are now designing spaces which let the natural sunlight come in during mornings. Natural light helps employees relax and not feel congested. Also, painting the walls with warm colours and putting plants around the organisation is another new thing taken up by companies.

