Employee Engagement Practices in IT Sector Vis-à-Vis Other Sectors in India

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement is an important notion built around the concepts of job satisfaction, employee commitment, retention of talent, that impacts organizational performance. The disengaged employees lead to loss of productivity, procedural imbalances, and decreased efficacy. Organizations are addressing the work force and their job performance, task performance, organizational citizenship behavior, productivity, discretionary effort, effective commitment, and continuance commitment. Engaged employees are emotionally connected with their organization, and are enthusiastic about their job and success of the organization. The employment engagement practices are soulfully needed to understand the employee, give them healthier environment to work, let them grow professionally, award them, and keep them happy, irrespective of the business sector. This study intends to explore the employee engagement practices in Indian IT Sector and compare them with the engagement practices in other leading sectors in India. The study also assesses various engagement attributes in Indian IT organizations.

KEYWORDS


INTRODUCTION

Human asset is a key component of any organization and is core to its competitiveness and success. HR practices are designed to address job performance, task performance, organizational citizenship behaviour, productivity, affective and continuance commitment of its manpower to keep them engaged. The investment in people is one key area that lean organizations are focusing on (Maskell et. al., 2011).

Employee engagement is a key driver for organizational success (Lockwood, 2007). A strong engagement translates into retention of talent, foster customer loyalty, and improve organizational performance (Lockwood, 2007). It impacts productivity, profits, and customer satisfaction (Harter et. al., 2002), and make employees happier, satisfied, and more fulfilled. Organizations use employee’s talent, knowledge, skills, and vigour. Knowing engagement levels of the enterprise workforce can impact success (Havill, 2010). Organizations assign competency based roles to cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally invest employees in their work. Employees proactively use novel information to modify their work environment to stay engaged (Baker, 2011). Organizations are realizing that advancements will be fruitful only with wilful involvement of the employees. Concepts like OCB advocate that efficiency and productivity lie within the employees’ ability and commitment. The enterprises are solicitous in investing resources to improve engagement (Xu & Thomas, 2011)

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and prioritize employee involvement and empowerment (Maskell et al., 2011). The resources invested are reckoned necessary for enterprises’ growth (Brás & Rodrigues, 2007) Enterprises are adopting techniques like gamification and persuasive technologies which impact people’s behaviour, motivate them, engage them and impact work environment (Herranz et al., 2015).

Employee engagement may lead to vital job creation in Asian countries (Gallup, 2013). It is higher in double-digit growth organizations which exceed average industry growth (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In a developing country like India, good engagement practices may increase organization’s efficiency to contribute towards holistic growth of economy.

**Definition: Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is contextually defined and there is no single definition. It seems more associated with the JD-R (Job Demand – Resource) model which suggests that resource requirements depend on job demands and support available to the employees. The contextual paradigm is supported by Freeney & Fellenz (2013). Employee Engagement is an emotional, physical, and cognitive connection of employees with their profession (Kahn, 1990), and dedication for their work (Schaufeli et al., 2006). It is a multi-dimensional approach based on diverse factors leading to employee satisfaction (Saks, 2006). An engaged employee has positive work attitude, is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance. The organization must adopt a two-way relationship among employer and employee to nurture engagement (Robinson et al., 2004). Engagement is the level of employee’s commitment with their organization (Sadique, 2014), especially an emotional commitment (Baumruck 2004, Richman 2006). It’s a ‘passion for work’ that employees have (Truss et al, 2006) justifying the psychological state (Kahn, 1990) and is viewed as an individual’s sense of purpose to meet organizational goals (Macey & Schnieder, 2008). Engagement is a work related positive mind set exemplified by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al, 2006). Engaged employees are connected to work, fulfil job’s demand, involved, satisfied, and enthusiastic about their work (Harter at. el., 2002).

Employee engagement is beyond employee satisfaction and refers to willingness of an employee to commit himself for the success of the organization (Macey & Schnieder, 2008). Merely employee satisfaction will not retain the best talent (Fernandez, 2007). The job engagement vanguards the organizational performance and it is an employee’s gist of purpose, initiative, effort, and persistence directed towards organizational goals (Soni, 2013). Employee satisfaction and OCB are not the independent attributes of human resource management but are integral part of employee engagement (Robinson et al, 2004).

Employee engagement is defined heterogeneously in numerous studies, hence determining a single definition is difficult. Unless it cannot be universally defined, efforts to improve and manage it will be difficult (Fergusson, 2007). On the contrary, the definitions are visibly identical to exhibits like ‘organisational commitment’ and ‘OCB,’ thus it could be considered as an improved trend that is ‘one step up from commitment’ (Robinson et al, 2004).

**Employee Engagement: Benefits**

There are multifarious benefits of investing in employee engagement. Engagement is a positive experience (Schaufeli et al., 2006) which impacts employee productivity (Lockwood, 2007). The top performing employees are highly engaged and have long tenures (Levinson, 2007) and this figure is almost 85% (Blessing White, 2008). Engaged employees are determined, proactive, committed and their self-efficacy is an outcome of their engagement (Seijts & Crim, 2006). Higher employee engagement impacts business success since employee engagement, customer satisfaction, productivity, and profit are correlated (Harter et al., 2002). Higher engagement leads to higher productivity, customer satisfaction, and sales (Hewitt Associates, 2004). Engaged employees promote the organization and its product & services, better understand the customer needs (Right Management, 2006), and create
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