



A STUDY OF AN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR ENHANCING WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE CONTEXT OF UNIFIED UNDERSTANDING OF WORKERS COOPERATIVE

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Abstract

In the present study, the efforts were made to understand the various employee engagement initiatives taken by selected worldwide renowned organizations to enhance workplace relationship in the context of unified understanding of workers cooperatives. There is a significant link between employee engagement and profitability. An employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement of an employee towards their organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context, works with colleagues to improve performance. Three basic aspects of employee engagement according to the global studies are: First to understand an employee and their own unique psychological makeup and experience. Second is to study the employers and their ability to create the conditions that promote employee engagement. Third is to ensure interaction between employees at all levels. In the present study review of an employee opinion survey conducted to understand the employees notion about their workplace. Top ten best Fortune 100 companies are selected and studied in the form of case study approach. The companies listed on the website greatplacetowork.com were selected. An Employee's opinion surveys studied and analyzed in the form of cases then utilized to derive standardized engagement metrics. To conclude happy and satisfied employees plays a significant role in enhancing workplace relationships. Successful workplace relationship by workers cooperative leads to progress and survival of any organization.

Keyword: *Employee Engagement, Engagement Metrics, Psychological Makeup, Worldwide, Workers Cooperatives.*

Introduction

The ability of the organization to attain its goals largely depends upon the effectiveness of its employee engagement program. 21st century is century of knowledge economy and work relationship plays vital role in the survival and growth of the organization. Therefore it deserves great planning and care to formulate and implement employee engagement strategies.

To measure employee engagement, organizations need to get the opinions of the employees in different ways. This survey can then be utilized to derive the standardized engagement metrics. In addition, efforts needs to be made to collect the information from various sources like official and unofficial meetings of workers, focus groups, manager's interviews and finally the performance measures instruments for assessing the employees engagement. The study is vital as an engaged employee gives best of their capabilities at the work place. Engagement is nothing but motivating employees to do their best. Engagement creates enthusiasm for their roles, their work ensure their well integration. This is an effective tool for realizing the long term goals of an organization. This entire exercise helps to overcome fear of change, increase acceptance of new ideas, and create a climate for achievement. The present study aims to achieve following.



Objectives

1. To study the role of employee engagement in enhancing workplace relations in the context of Workers Cooperative.
2. To review the employee opinion survey of worldwide best top ten fortune 100 companies to understand 21st centuries employee's notion about their workplace.
3. To identify the significant criteria's as a basis for framing best employee engagement practices to enhance work relationship. The scope of study includes study of employee engagement practices as a one of the tool to enhance workplace relationship and workers cooperative at large. Selected worldwide top ten fortune 100 companies listed were taken for study because of the time constraint.

Research Design

Research design is based on secondary data collected from various articles related to employee engagement. Research approach is case based, it includes study and analysis of ten selected cases of: opinion survey of an employees working in worldwide top ten Fortune 100 companies listed on great places to work. The companies selected are Sales Force, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. Ultimate Software, The Boston Consulting Group, Inc., Edward Jones, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Workday, Inc, Genentech, Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Kimley-Horn.

Conceptual Background of Employee Engagement

Engagement at work was conceptualized by Kahn¹, (1990) as the 'harnessing of organizational members' selves to their work roles. In engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The second related construct to engagement in organizational behavior is the notion of flow advanced by Csikszentmihalyi² (1975, 1990). Csikszentmihalyi (1975) defines flow as the 'holistic sensation' that, people feel when they act with total involvement. Flow is the state in which there is little distinction between the self and environment. When individuals are in Flow State little conscious control is necessary for their actions. Engagement is most closely associated with the existing construction of job involvement (Brown 1996) and flow (Csikszentmihalyi³, 1990). Job involvement is defined as 'the degree to which the job situation is central to the person and his or her identity (Lawler⁴ & Hall, 1970). Kanungo⁵ (1982) maintained that job involvement is a 'Cognitive or belief state of Psychological identification. Job involvement is thought to depend on both need saliency and the potential of a job to satisfy these needs. Thus job involvement results form a cognitive judgment about the needs satisfying abilities of the job.

Importance of Engagement: What makes one company more successful than another? Better products, services, strategies, technologies or, perhaps, a better cost structure? Certainly, all of these contribute to superior performance, but all of them can be copied over time. The one thing that creates sustainable competitive advantage in long-term is the workforce, the people who are the company. And when it

¹Kahn, W. A., 1990. Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, Volume 33, pp. 692-724

² Csikszentmihalyi M. (1975). *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

³ Csikszentmihalyi M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

⁴ Lawler, E. E., & Hall, D. T. (1970). Relationship of job characteristics to job involvement, satisfaction, and intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 54(4), 305-312

⁵ Kanungo, R. N. (1982). Measurement of job and work involvement. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 67(3), 341-349.



comes to people, research has shown that employees who are engaged significantly outperform work groups that are not engaged. In the fight for competitive advantage where employees are the differentiator, engaged employees are the ultimate goal. Some of the advantages of Engaged employees are: engaged employees will stay with the company, be an advocate of the company and its products and services, and contribute to bottom line business success. They form an emotional connection with the company. This impacts their attitude towards the company's clients, and thereby improves customer satisfaction and service levels. It builds passion, commitment and alignment with the organization's strategies and goals. Increases employees' trust in the organization creates a sense of loyalty in a competitive environment. Finally it provides a high-energy working environment, boosts business growth and makes the employees effective brand ambassadors for the company.

In a competitive and rapidly changing market, access to the best talent can spell the difference between sustained growth and prolonged struggle, lean operations and working smarter and not by harder, business owners understand that their companies' productivity and profitability will be driven by employee performance.

The most recent research, conducted in 2012, found a correlation between employee engagement and performance outcomes such as absenteeism, turnover, shrinkage, safety incidents, quality defects, customer ratings, productivity, and profitability.

With that in mind, business owners do well to add employee engagement to their list of priorities. Some of these engagement practices are described as follows: 1. Engage, Then Hire: Workforce engagement begins before employees join company and should be reflected in recruitment efforts. Ads and postings on social media are two components of a hiring campaign, but an employee referral program can be a more effective means of identifying and attracting applicants who will be a good fit for the company. Staff members who refer friends are also recommending you as an employer and are likely to have a strong understanding of and commitment to your core business principles and value. 2. The Culture Component: Matching the person to the culture is absolutely critical. How to get the most out of your best people? Talent selection and onboarding tool kit: How to find, hire, and develop the best of the best employee most suitable to company culture. During interview, ask interviewee to describe the way they handled a real-life example of a situation they might encounter at your company, their answer will offer insights into their problem-solving skills, grace under pressure, and character. 3. Recognition and Rewards: Just as staff referrals can increase company's recruitment success, employee recognition programs can strengthen employee engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction, each of which can help drive business growth.

Fostering an environment that treats all employees equally encourages communication between all levels of workers and it can be an effective means of earning trust from employees by increasing their job satisfaction 4. Communication and Connection: By forging strong relationships and communication channels, your company can hit those workplace satisfaction and performance targets. It's essential to ensure that communication channels run in two directions first employees have a clear understanding of your expectations and job performance standards, second they also feel welcome to offer insights, suggestions, and critiques. 5. Participation and Performance: In the end, employee engagement doesn't have a price tag. You can't buy it with salary increases and bonuses. In some cases, meeting the needs of employees, not only demonstrate concern for team, but also implement policies or practices that contribute to increases in efficiency, productivity, and profitability.

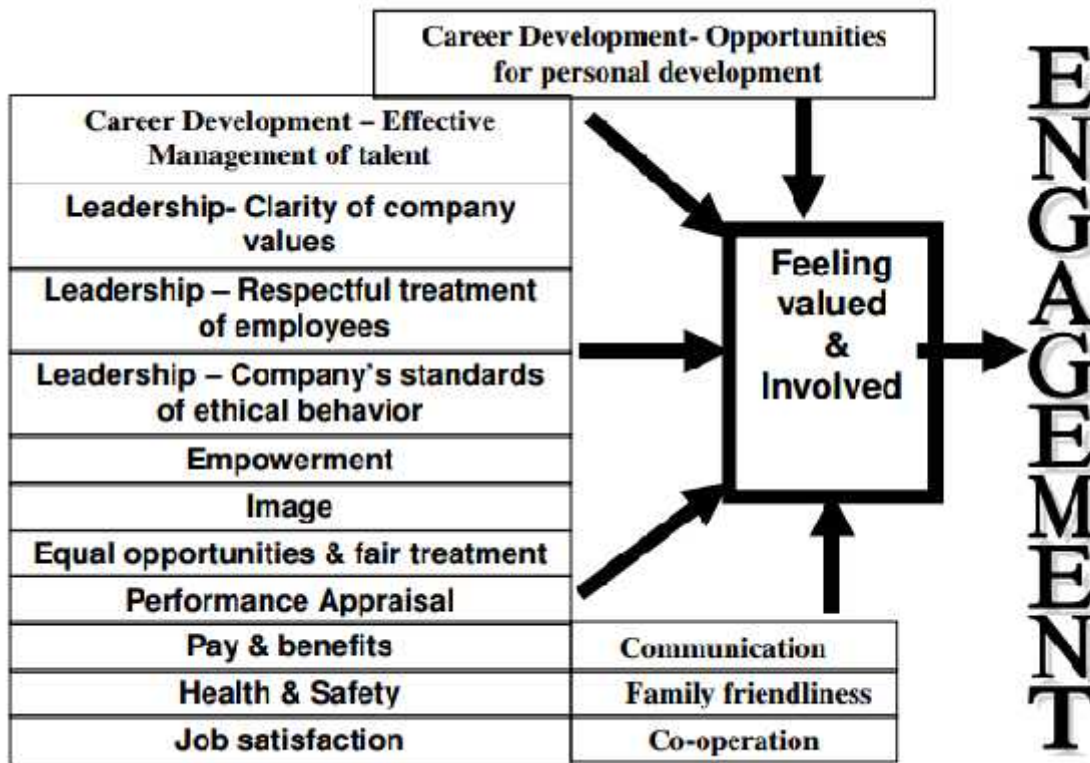


Figure - Factors leading to Employee Engagement (Source: IJSER © 2011)

HR practitioners believe that the engagement challenge has a lot to do with how employee feels about the work experience and how he or she is treated in the organization. It has a lot to do with emotions which are fundamentally related to drive bottom line success in a company. There will always be people who never give their best efforts no matter how hard HR and line managers try to engage them. Categories of employee engagement according to the Gallup, the Consulting organization as follows:-

Engaged: ‘Engaged’ employees are builders. They want to know the desired expectations for their role so they can meet and exceed them. They're naturally curious about their company and their place in it. They perform at consistently high levels. They want to use their talents and strengths at work every day. They work with passion and they drive innovation and move their organization forward.

Not Engaged: Not Engaged employees tend to concentrate on tasks rather than the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. They want to be told what to do just so they can do it and say they have finished. They focus on accomplishing tasks vs. achieving an outcome. Employees who are not-engaged tend to feel their contributions are being overlooked, and their potential is not being tapped. They often feel this way because they don't have productive relationships with their managers or with their coworkers.

Actively Disengaged - The "actively disengaged" employees are the "cave dwellers." They're "Consistently against virtually everything." They're not happy at work; they're busy acting out their unhappiness. They sow seeds of negativity at every opportunity. Every day, actively disengaged workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish. As workers increasingly rely on each other to



generate products and services, the problems and tensions that are fostered by actively disengaged workers can cause great damage to an organization's functioning.

Review of Worldwide Top Ten Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For 2018

Case 1: Sales Force: Industry-Information Technology, US Headquarters: San Francisco, California, 94105, Employees Worldwide: 27,070, Corporate Structure: Public, Founded: 1999. www.salesforce.com

Sales force is the Customer Success Platform and world's no. one CRM, empowering companies to connect with their customers in a whole new way. We work as a team to deliver success for our customers while giving back to our communities.

At Salesforce, 94 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 725 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.99 . It was published on Sep 8, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Sales Force:

- 97 % employees say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- 96 % employees say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 96 % employees say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 96 % employee say: People here are willing to give extra to get the job done
- 95 % employee say: People care about each other here.

Case 2: Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. Industry: Retail, US Headquarters: Rochester, New York, 14603, Employees: 47,084, US Employees: 47,084, Corporate Structure: Private, Founded: 1916. Website: www.wegmans.com.

We are a mission-driven, values-based, family company. Much more than a supermarket, we help people live healthier, better lives through food. Our caring, knowledgeable people provide incredible service and a warm welcoming atmosphere in our one-of-a-kind shopping experience across 93 locations.

At Wegmans Food Markets, Inc., 92 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1163 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.38 . It was published on Aug 16, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Wegmans Food Markets:

- 97% Employees Say: I am given the resources and equipment to do my job.
- 97% Employees Say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- 95 % Employees Say: Our facilities contribute to a good working environment.
- 94 % Employees Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 94% Employees Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.

Case 3 Ultimate Software: - Industry: Information Technology, Employees: 3,972, Founded: 1990, Corporate Structure: Public, US Headquarters: WESTON, Florida, 33326, US Headquarters: WESTON, Florida, 33326, Website: www.ultimatesoftware.com

Ultimate Software provide cloud-based human capital management solutions, including HR, payroll, talent, and time and labor management, to businesses, connecting people with the information they need to work more effectively. We support more than 33 million people records in our cloud.



At Ultimate Software, 98 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1921 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 1.33 . It was published on Sep 4, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Ultimate Software:

- 99% Employee Say: We have special and unique benefits here.
- 99% Employee Say: People celebrate special events around here.
- 98% Employee Say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- 98% Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 98 % Employee Say: People care about each other here.

Case 4 The Boston Consulting Group, Inc.: Industry: Professional Services, Corporate Structure: Private, US Headquarters: Boston, Massachusetts, 02108, Founded: 1963, Website: www.bcg.com
BCG is one of the world's leading consulting firms. We are dedicated to solving our clients' hardest problems and transforming them to compete in the 21st century. We integrate leading-edge innovation through multi-disciplinary, dynamic and supportive teams, striving to unlock the potential of both our clients and our employees.

At The Boston Consulting Group, Inc., 95 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1136 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.11 . It was published on Sep 5, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Boston Consulting Group, Inc:

- 98 % Employee Say: We have special and unique benefits here.
- 98 % Employee Say: People here are willing to give extra to get the job done.
- 98 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 98 % Employee Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 98 % Employee Say: Management is competent at running the business.

Case 5 Edward Jones: Industry: Financial Services & Insurance, Employees Worldwide: 44,039, US Headquarters: St. Louis, Missouri, 63131, Corporate Structure: Partnership; Private, Founded: 1922 Website: www.edwardjones.com.

Our 15,000 financial advisors provide financial services to individual investors. From the types of investment options offered to the location of branch offices, all we do is designed for individual investors in the communities in which they live and work.

At Edward Jones, 93 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1216 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.32 . It was published on Jul 31, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say Edward Jones:

- 96 % Employee Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 96 % Employee Say: I believe management would lay people off only as a last resort.
- 96 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 95 % Employee Say: Management is competent at running the business.
- 95 % Employee Say: I am given the resources and equipment to do my job.

Case 6 Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants: Industry: Hospitality, Employees Worldwide: 8,265, Corporate Structure: Public, Founded: 1981, US Headquarters: San Francisco, California, 94108, www.kimptonhotels.com



Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants operate 61 boutique hotels and 55 chef-driven restaurants, lounges and bars in 35 cities across the U.S. At Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, 93 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 903 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.58 . It was published on Sep 11, 2017.

Following are the details of what employee say about Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants

- 96 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 96 % Employee Say: I can be myself around here.
- 95% Employee Say: Management trusts people to do a good job without watching over their shoulders.
- 94 % Employee Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 94 % Employee Say: People care about each other here.

Case 7 Workday, Inc., Industry: Information Technology, US Headquarters: Pleasanton, California, 94588, Corporate Structure: Public, Employees Worldwide: 7,060, Founded: 2005 [www. workday.com](http://www.workday.com)

Workday is a leading provider of enterprise cloud applications for finance and human resources. Founded in 2005, Workday delivers financial management, human capital management, and analytics applications designed for the world's largest companies, educational institutions, and government agencies.

At Workday, Inc., 96 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1494 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 1.82 . It was published on Sep 11, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Workday Inc.

- 97 % Employee Say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- 96 % Employee Say: I am given the resources and equipment to do my job.
- 96 % Employee Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 96 % Employee Say: People celebrate special events around here.
- 97 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.

Case 8: Genentech: Industry: Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals, US Headquarters: South San Francisco, California, 94080, US Employees: 15,064, Corporate Structure: Private, Founded: 1976, Website: www.gene.com

Genentech is a leading biotechnology company that discovers, develops, manufactures and commercializes medicines to treat patients with serious diseases. We have multiple products on the market and a promising development pipeline.

At Genentech, 92 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1154 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.33 . It was published on Sep 11, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Genentech

- 95 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 95 % Employee Say: People celebrate special events around here.
- 93 % Employee Say: I am able to take time off from work when I think it's necessary.
- 92 % Employee Say: We have special and unique benefits here.
- 97 % Employee Say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.



Case 9 Hyatt Hotels Corporation: Industry: Hospitality, US Headquarters: Chicago, Illinois, 60606, Employees Worldwide: 97,828, Corporate Structure: Public, Founded: 1957, Website: www.hyatt.com.

We are in the business of caring for people so they can be their best. Our aim is to create long-term relationships built on being the most loved and preferred brand, employer and partner throughout the world.

At Hyatt Hotels Corporation, 93 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1452 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 2.11 . It was published on Sep 18, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Hyatt Hotels Corporation.

- 95 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- 92% Employee Say: People celebrate special events around here.
- 92 % Employee Say: I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- 92% Employee Say: We have special and unique benefits here.
- 92 % Employee Say: I am able to take time off from work when I think it's necessary.

Case 10 Kimley-Horn: Industry: Professional Services, US Headquarters: Raleigh, North Carolina, 27601, Corporate Structure: Private, US Employees: 3,000, Founded: 1967. www.kimley-horn.com.

We are a full-service planning and design consulting firm that provides a wide range of planning and engineering services to public and private clients. Though we have more than 3,000 employees in over 75 offices, we pride ourselves on our small-company feel.

At Kimley-Horn, 97 percent of employees say their workplace is great. This review is based on 1632 employee surveys, with a 90% confidence level and a margin of error of ± 1.32 . It was published on Sep 11, 2017. Following are the details of what employee say about Kimley-Horn.

- 99 % Employee Say: Management is honest and ethical in its business practices.
- 99 % Employee Say: People here are willing to give extra to get the job done.
- 99 % Employee Say: Management is competent at running the business.
- 98 % Employee Say: We have special and unique benefits here.
- 98 % Employee Say: I'm proud to tell others I work here.

Cases Analysis & Summary

Response of Employee Opinion Survey	Case No.1	Case No 2	Case No 3	Case No 4	Case No 5	Case No 6	Case No 7	Case No 8	Case No 9	Case No 10	Total No. of cases	Avg. %
Management is honest and ethical in its business practices	96	94		98	96	94	96			99	7	96.14
People here are willing to give extra to get the job done.	96			98						99	3	97.66
Management is competent at running the business				98	95					99	3	97.33



We have special and unique benefits here			99	98				92	92	98	5	95.8
I'm proud to tell others I work here.	96	94	98	98	96	96	97	95	95	98	10	96.3
People celebrate special events around here.			99				96	95	92		4	95.5
I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.	97	97	98				97	97	92		6	96.33
I am able to take time off from work when I think it's necessary.							96	93	92		3	93.66
I am given the resources and equipment to do my job		97			95						2	96
I can be myself around here.						96					1	96
Management trusts people to do a good job without watching over their shoulders.						95					1	95
People care about each other here.	95		98			94					3	95.66
I believe management would lay people off only as a last resort.					96						1	96
Our facilities contribute to a good working environment. Our facilities contribute to a good working environment.		95									1	95

Findings & Discussions: From the study following unique engagement practices carried out were identified for setting the benchmark practices under the selected parameters of study:

Employee engagement practices plays significant role in strengthening workplace relationship. Engagement creates enthusiasm for their roles, their work ensure their well integration. This is an effective tool for realizing the long term goals of an organization. This entire exercise helps to overcome



fear of change, increase acceptance of new ideas, and create a climate for achievement in the context of workers cooperatives.

It is observed from the cases analysis and summary mentioned in table no.1, the most important parameters according to the employee which makes the workplace great to work for are listed as follows:

1. The proud feeling of the employees to be the part of the organization plays significant role in making the workplace great as it is the reason coated by an employees in all the 10 cases discussed above with an average 96.3 % of an employee opinion.
2. Management is honest and ethical in its business practices: This parameters helps employee to create faith in the management and organization at large hence this is one of the major employee concerns regarding great workplace to work for. This is the opinion discussed by majority in 7 cases out of total 10 with an average 96.14%. of an employee opinion.
3. Contribution to Community Development: The concern is to what extent the organization is involved in contributing to community. This was discussed in 6 cases out of 10 with an average 96.33% of an employee opinion.
4. Special and Unique Benefits for Employees : This reason was coated in 5 cases out of total 10 with an average 95.8% of an employee opinion, so employee benefit /welfare forms the basis for the great workplace to work for.

Following significant criteria's were identified as a basis for framing best employee engagement practices to enhance work relationship.

1. Employer Branding: Leadership, Clarity of Company values, Empowerment, Image of the organization
2. Honest & Ethical Business Practices: Company's Standard of Ethical Behavior, Equal Opportunities and fair treatment, Transparency in Performance Management Program, Reward & Recognition.
3. Community Development: CSR activities undertaken and Sustainable Development Initiatives
4. Special & Unique Benefits to Employees: Career Development Opportunities for Personal growth, Pay & Benefits, Health & Safety, Job Satisfaction, Cooperation and Communication.

Conclusion

Best engagement practices needs to be identifies and implemented on a continuous basis to maintain the competitive pace. Employee engagement activities are a companywide work improvement programme to enhance employee involvement in effective goal completion. It helps to enhance personal accountability, self-management skills and to strengthen workplace relationships in the context of workers cooperatives.

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