



DLC TRAINING FOCUS: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is about the level of dedication and enthusiasm an employee has towards their role within an organisation. It's important for many different reasons; it increases job satisfaction, employee morale, motivation and employer loyalty. This in turn contributes to a more productive and higher-performing workforce.

The departments within an organisation concerned with employee engagement are human resources (HR) and learning and development (L&D).

HR's Role in Employee Engagement

HR plays a big part in enhancing employee engagement by using the following mediums:

- Policies and procedures
- Rewards and recognition
- Performance management

Policies and Procedures

HR can introduce policies and procedures with the purpose of enhancing engagement. An example of this would be to introduce a coaching and mentoring training session as standard procedure for all leaders and managers. This allows managers to develop better leadership skills and stronger relationships with their employees, which in turn supports engagement at every level.

Rewards and Recognition

Recognising employees for their strong performance, motivation and general positivity towards their workplace is a great way to encourage more of this behaviour. Recognition can include anything from publicly thanking an employee for their work through to financial incentives such as a bonus.

Performance Management

One of HR's many important roles includes collecting and providing performance feedback. When employees receive positive feedback, they are likely to feel empowered and will continue working to a high standard. Additionally, when HR collects feedback from employees, they can find ways to improve their processes to further enhance engagement.

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L&D's Role in Employee Engagement

L&D professionals enhance employee engagement by encouraging career development. People want to work for employers that invest their time and resources in them, so supporting employees with their knowledge and skill development is extremely important. There are several forms of development that L&D can support, including:

- Upskilling
- Reskilling
- Cross-skilling

Upskilling

Upskilling is the process of strengthening existing skills and knowledge, or learning complementary skills. This is a useful way to support employees who would like to develop their capabilities within their role. This could also prepare employees for progression opportunities within the company.

Reskilling

Reskilling is the process of learning new skills to do an entirely different job. If employees feel passionate about working in another department within the company, this is the perfect way to support them and maintain engagement.

Cross-skilling

Cross-skilling is the process of developing new skills that can be utilised across a number of different functions within the organisation. For example in a warehouse setting, when a despatch team is exceptionally busy such as at the end of the month, the goods-in team which is less busy can be trained to support the despatch team. For the employee, it widens their skillset which will in turn increase engagement.

Because employee engagement is a goal of both HR and L&D departments, working in collaboration will lead to better results.

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Engagement Levels

To understand how engaged employees are, their attitudes and behaviours towards the organisation can be categorised into one of three levels:

- Actively Engaged
- Not Engaged
- Actively Disengaged

Actively Engaged

Employees who demonstrate active engagement in the workplace are heavily invested in their role as well as the company itself. They are motivated to work and drive the company towards success. These employees are more likely to offer creative ideas, exceed expectations and show pride in what they do. Employers should aim for this level of engagement from all employees throughout the organisation.

Not Engaged

Employees who are not engaged are emotionally disconnected from their work and indifferent to their workplace's success. With this attitude towards their work, they carry out the bare minimum of what is required of them and are reluctant to do anything that goes beyond their role. They do not contribute to idea generation, and may even criticise the company from time to time.

Actively Disengaged

Actively disengaged employees are extremely dissatisfied with their workplace, to the point where they are willing to cease performing their tasks and waste the company's time. These employees are likely to criticise their colleagues, management, and the company as a whole. It's very likely that this type of employee is actively seeking opportunities with other organisations.

There is usually a reason as to why employees are not engaged or are actively disengaged. For example, they may feel underappreciated or unsupported. By focusing on employee engagement, organisations can build stronger relationships with their employees which will result in a more actively-engaged workforce.

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The 4 E's of Employee Engagement

When it comes to strengthening the relationship between the organisation and its employees, it's important to understand the drivers of engagement.

Workhuman has established the following four key drivers:

- Enablement
- Energy
- Empowerment
- Encouragement

Enablement

To enable employees is to provide them with the tools they require to succeed in their role. This can be difficult as it is different for each person and role. In an office environment for example, one employee might prefer to use a laptop while others might find it easier to work from a computer with a separate keyboard and mouse. Providing employees with what they need to suit their preference in ways of working is key to engagement.

Energy

Instead of demanding higher performance from employees, employers should focus on supporting employees with their energy. This approach was established by Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy in the Harvard Business Review. Individuals have four types of energy including physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

Physical – this relates to the amount of energy individuals have available to carry out their role.

Emotional – this is the quality of energy, which can be positive or negative.
Mental – this is about the ability to focus on a task through to completion, which significantly enhances productivity.

Spiritual – the energy that derives from the individual's belief that their work matters.

While time is a finite resource, energy can be expanded and renewed. This makes concentrating on energy a much better strategy for improving employee engagement as well as organisational performance.

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Empowerment

Providing employees with the resources they need to make decisions and take responsibility can improve engagement. This is because empowerment allows employees to work in a way that suits their preferences. This leads to a better experience for the employee, which results in an increase in engagement and also productivity.

Encouragement

Lastly, encouragement in the form of gratitude is a key contributor to employee engagement. This can be anything from a small gesture to a large display of appreciation. Encouragement reinforces employees' confidence in their abilities and motivates them to continue thriving in their role. It's therefore crucial for enhancing employee engagement.

Want to know more? Discover how DLC Training can support your organisation's engagement through tailored training courses to suit their career development. Access our training and development brochure for full information on what you can receive as a business partner.

