

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE AT MAYFAIR HOTELS AND RESORTS

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ABSTRACT

Employee engagement is one of the important trends in managing people. It has great significance and scope in the hospitality sector where the success of employee engagement is primarily dependent on the guest experience, which in turn is reflected by their interaction with the employees. If the hospitality sector is able to engage its employees the impact of this would be far-reaching and would result in a happier guest, which in return will translate into guest (customer) delight. In the hotel industry, an engaged employee's interaction with the guest would lead to guest engaging with the hotel and coming back to the hotel leading to an increased revenue for the business. "The hospitality sector of India is growing at an extremely fast pace" reports FNB news. And so it is considered as one of the highly lucrative industries, contributing a significant amount of foreign exchange to the Indian Economy. Hotels are an important component of the tourism industry and they contribute to the sector by offering services and facilities of extremely high standard. For the best services to be offered, efficient employees are the mainstay, for which employee engagement plays a key role in managing and retaining the workforce. In this paper, we have looked into the aspect of employee engagement at Mayfair Hotels and Resorts (a leading hotel chain), the outcome of the study not only surprises us but also makes us learn the HR practices that have been long used to engage the employees. The philosophy of human capital or human asset is more apparent in the organization rather than human resource as a work force. The study is qualitative in nature and uses the observational method along with expert opinion interviews. The analysis is presented through the illustration of the employee engagement practices at Mayfair Hotels and Resorts.

Keywords: HR Practices, Employee Engagement, Hospitality Practices

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Introduction:

Employee engagement is an organizational approach that provides an environment to all the employee, so that they give their best performance every day; they remain committed to the organization, values and goals: They are motivated to contribute to the organizational achievement, with an elated sense of belongingness. The important of employee engagement can be witnessed in the overall performance of the organization- reduced staff turnover, improved productivity and efficiency, Retained customers, increased profits and improved employee participation.

Employee engagement in an organizational philosophy that can be viewed in the passion of employees about their jobs, their commitment to their organization, their discretionary efforts to accomplish their work and the pride associated with being in the organization.

Importance of Employee Engagement:

To be more precise about the engagement process we must identify the importance of it. An engaged employee in the organization becomes an asset of the organization, as the engagement culture bring the best outcome for the organization. An engaged employee develops more clarity about the role for working towards the goal.

It has been noticed that an engaged employee complains less and contributes more. Employee engagement gives an opportunity to both the organization and employee for targeted results. More so this process outlines the boundaries for all the management verticals for performance. The sense of belongingness plays a key role in the engagement process. Satisfied employees bring laurels to the organization by productive engagement.

The Functions of Employee Engagement:

1. **Connect :** Connect is termed as the relationship between the

If this connect got fractured, then no kind of financial incentive or perks will persuade the employee to perform the best job.

2. **Career** : Managers should give employees the work that they love to do and that challenges their skill sets and ultimately lead to various growth opportunities. No one likes to do the same job repeatedly. Therefore, rotating the jobs can create more interest and enhance the confidence of the employees.
3. **Clarity** : Leaders must make the employees clear about their jobs. They should be conscious of their duties and responsibilities and also know about the goals, mission and vision of the organization and also the goals that department heads have for the division or unit.
4. **Convey** : Leaders should properly convey and clarify their expectations from the employees

so that they can work accordingly. The leaders ought to give timely feedback that encourages them to master important tasks facilitating goal achievement.

5. **Congratulate** : Congratulate is conveying opinion to the employees in both the cases- when their performance is low & also when they perform above the expectations.
6. **Contribute**: People want to know that how their input is affecting the revenue growth of the organization. It can be easily viewed in the hospitality industries but not in industries like retail. So, Performance Indicators i.e. how well the company is doing with its employees, customers and investors is important to take into account. The employees should have a clear cut connection between their work and the objectives of the company. They

also possess positive attitude towards their work.

7. **Control** : Employees value control over the flow and swiftness of their jobs and leaders can create opportunities for employees to work out the control. Do leaders make all important decisions? Do employees have a say in organization? A feeling of being involved in the organization creates trust and a best work culture, it also has a positive effect on engagement & performance of the organization.
8. **Collaborate** : When employees work in teams & have a good bonding with their team members, they excel as individuals & team. Surveys signify that being cared about by colleagues is a strong predictor of employee engagement.
9. **Credibility** : It is the duty of the leader to maintain company's reputation and ethical standards.

They should make the employees proud of their jobs, their performance so that they love the organization.

10. **Confidence** : A leader should create confidence in the company by maintaining the performance and ethical standards. Gaining competitive advantage also results in engaged workforce.

Factors of Employee Engagement:

1. Healthy work environment.
2. Medical benefits and recreation facilities provided by organization for workers' families help in raising their standards of living. This seeks employee attention towards work and thus increases their productivity.
3. Employers get steady work force by providing engagement initiatives. With a feeling of involvement and participation employees take active role in their

assigned work.

4. Employee engagement contributes to the productivity of organization and develops healthy relationship.

Objectives of Implementing an Employee Engagement Program:

- Ø To understand the strength and weakness of the employee.
- Ø To make realize the full potential of the employee.
- Ø To make understand the working environment better.
- Ø To increase the interpersonal skills of the employee by receiving timely feedback.
- Ø To prepare plan of action by improving his/her performance behaviour.
- Ø To understand the work dynamics of the employee in response to the situation.
- Ø To prevent complacency among the time-tested employee with regard to performance and learning.

Literature Review:

As the Indian economy is growing, organizations practising an active employee engagement program will prosper. The era is now for HR and talent management professionals to do more effort for helping everyone to achieve highest level of satisfaction and motivation. Enhancing the level of employee engagement to re-engage workers is supposed to be the 1st step in this retention process to ensure survival of the fittest i.e. only the best and brightest attain success in the organization. The paper by Cataldo (2011) also discusses about the attributes of different employee engagement levels. It is basically based on the Gallup's survey of Employee Engagement. According to the Gallup organization, the cost for keeping actively disengaged workers over a five-year period

was approximately \$300 billion lost in productivity and employee performance. Additionally, a good employee engagement program should focus on five best practices.

1. Integrate engagement into the company's human capital strategy.
2. Use a scientifically validated instrument to measure engagement.
3. Understand where the company is today, and where it wants to be in the future.
4. Look beyond engagement as a single construct.
5. Align engagement with other workplace priorities

Employee Engagement in Hospitality Sector:

By and large Hospitality sector is dependent on 24X7 work culture, so this includes lot of initiatives from the management towards employee wellbeing for rendering services to the

of hotels have been engaged in employees' satisfaction activities which is a part of employee engagement.

Example: Job Rotation, Flexible working hours, better supervisory control, 1 to 1 counselling, better growth opportunity in career graph.

Activities of employee engagement at Mayfair:

Every company does some activities so as to engage the employees to gain competitive advantage. A company must possess an engaged workforce having creative thinking and doing extraordinary efforts. MAYFAIR also does certain engagement activities to enhance their level of employee engagement. The activities undertaken by Mayfair includes Associate appreciation week, Training's, Departmental meetings, Internal transfers/ Promotions, Associate meet, Associate/ Executive/ Manager of the month, Thank you Cards, High Notes, Exit Interviews, Family Day.

If you ask an ex-Mayfair the one thing he

remembers about Mayfair, the answer will be celebrating associate appreciation week. It is a MAYFAIR Global initiative to celebrate for and with the employees. Mayfair is celebrating associate appreciation week once every year and marks the anniversary of its founding; by setting aside a week to express appreciation to their family of associates who play an essential role in building enduring relationships externally and internally.

a) Internal Transfers and promotions: Mayfair provides opportunities to its employees to grow while they work in the organization. After successful completion of one year in the organization, the employee is free to apply at in any of the Mayfair resorts or department. Whenever a vacancy is out, it is displayed on the notice board of HR, under the section, Post Vacancy Advice and is also exhibited in the daily rehearsals.

- b) Associate/ Executive/manager of the month: These rewards are given in the associate meet only. The breakup is 4+3+1 i.e. 4 associate employee of the month, 3 executive employee of the month and 1 manager of the month. This is just a way to give recognition to the employees for the extra hard work that they do or any extra ordinary work that they do. This motivates them to work more and inspires other employees to work more to achieve those rewards, A gift voucher is given to the winners along with the certificate of appreciation.
- c) Family day : It is celebrated once in a year. On this day, every employee can bring his/her family to the organization and tell them the work they do, the place where they work. There are refreshments served for the family members and the day is

celebrated with a great joy. The family also can meet the GM. In short, it's a fun filled day.

Employee Engagement Activities at Mayfair:

1. Employee Appreciation Day Celebration : It is a day for

strengthening the bond between employer and employee. The company believes that Employee Appreciation Day has become an opportunity for managers, company leadership and HR to remember the importance of appreciating employees. The Company celebrates this day by letting employees leave early,



Mayfair to thank their employees for their hard work and effort throughout the year. This day was created for the purpose of

offering gifts, events or special recognition for workers. It shows that recognition and appreciation

are growing in importance as drivers of employee happiness and engagement. This has resulted in establishment of a bond between the employees and the company.

2. **Employee of The Year :** The employee of the year is selected

from each department. A star employee is chosen from the best employees. In the town hall meeting best employee and the star employee are rewarded with a fixed amount of cash.

4. **Women's Day Celebration :** Every year on 8th March Mayfair



based on 9 criteria which includes grooming, standards, attendance, performance, behavior, efficiency, work, knowledge, involvement.

3. **Star Employee :** Every month Mayfair selects best employee

celebrates to say thank you and give respect to all the women employees working over there. On this day women employees are provided with gifts and cake is being cut by them.

5. **Picnics and Tours :** Higher level

employees and executives of Mayfair decide to go for a tour or set out for picnic.

6. **Marriage Function :** If an employee gets married during his or her working tenure they receive gifts from the executives



and HR department.

7. **Food Festival :** In the end of every month Mayfair celebrates food festival. On this day, the food has to be prepared on different themes which is decided by the HR department and the Chief Chef.
8. **Yoga session :** Mayfair conducts a

two month yoga session for all the staffs and executives.

9. **Town Hall Meeting:** Mayfair conducts Town hall meeting every month. It is organized by HR department on this day birth days of the employees are



celebrated. Best employees and star employees are rewarded as well as profits and revenues of the hotel is discussed.

Outcome

It has been, time and again, noticed that higher employee engagement practices lead to lower attrition rate and improved productivity which is again a welcome

development paving way for employee loyalty. The practices have helped to retain employees more than a decade and the management has been able to run smoothly due to employee retention. The increased participation of the employees shows the positive sides of employee engagement practices. Overall the organization has been able to expand its footprint pan India due to the engaged employees and revenue maximization. Engaged employees have been able to translate their happiness into customer delight. The guests have been on repeated visits due to high standards hospitality rendered to them by the employees.

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Conclusion:

As the observation in the above article has been qualitative in nature, it has been able to identify the industries' best practices show cased by Mayfair Hotels and Resorts, Bhubaneswar. As a learning from the leading hotel chain in the country, these practices can be emulated elsewhere too, given the size and amount of resources applied for the same. But as an observational study the outcome is not conclusive in nature. So further research is advocated to establish an objective link between employee engagement practices and the factors that keep them engaged.