

Creating organization culture for employee engagement

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Abstract

This paper deals with creating organizational culture for employee engagement. The central theme of the paper is to promote qualitative organization culture to encourage better employee engagement in the organization which may leads to various productive outcomes for sustainable growth of the organization. Globalization and advancement in technology have brought intense pressure on the organizations to remain competitive, innovative, and creative to remain in the long run business. Today, the excellent corporations' managers are putting more emphasis in maintaining healthy organization culture for better employee engagement as they have realized the importance of it. This paper helps to understand the meaning of organization culture and employee engagement in the modern perspective. In addition, an attempt has been made to understand the dimensions of employee engagement which shows the association of organization culture and employee engagement and its connection with various productive outcomes in the organizations. It also exposes to the real world HR Practices and strategies on employee engagement. Data for the study was collected from various Articles, Magazines, Reports and Books pertaining to Organization Culture and Employee Engagement. Similarly, exploratory research design has been adopted to undertake this study.

Keywords: Organizational Culture, Employee Engagement, Organizational Productivity, HR Practices for Employee Engagement

1. Introduction

Organizational Culture has become top in priority for engaging employees as due to globalization and changing trends in demographics, now almost every organization consist of diversified workforce. These workforces are different in terms of language, religion, working style, nationality, preferences etc. Thus organization has a big challenge to create and maintain the work culture where these diversified employees can be groomed and unite together for the betterment of the organization. In this perspective, David Brown and Others (2015) ^[10] stated that Culture and engagement is the most important issue company's face around the world. Moreover, 87 percent of organizations cite culture and engagement as one of their top challenges, and 50 percent call the problem "very important". Moreover, if employees are groomed to reach their full potential by maintaining good organization culture then talents and innovative skills of employees can be developed. In this way they may feel highly engaged in the organizations and they may always feel motivated to get connected with their colleagues, and supervisors for the betterment of the organization. In addition, globalization has created intense pressure on businesses to succeed globally. In this regard, organization needs competitive, innovative and creative employees who are rich in their competency level for achieving competitive advantage for the organization. Moreover, employers are investing huge amount of money for training their employees so as to make them rich in their knowledge and skills so that they can bring success to the organizations. These things may be achieved by building healthy Organizational culture. In this perspective, Maruszar (2009) ^[24] pointed that "High performance culture creates stimulating work environment and processes where top

talents are inspired and have the support to provide extra effort. Good conducive work environment refresh employees from boredom and help them to remain always active in their jobs. In this regard, Chandrasekhar (2011) ^[7] stated that the good workplace environment impacts employee morale, productivity and engagement. Further, human beings have a basic need to feel valued. If that need is not supported, especially in the place where they spend the majority of their working hours, they will typically disengage, perform at less than peak levels, and feel defeated. Thus, if organization's culture is maintained and developed with a view to satisfy the needs of every employees then it becomes easier for new and tenured employees to learn and model the behaviors needed to be valued members of the team. And, when employees are valued, they will be engaged in their work, and feel encouraged to make contributions to the success of the organization. In this perspective, David Brown and Others (2015) ^[10] stated that organizations that create a culture defined by meaningful work, deep employee engagement, job and organizational fit, and strong leadership are outperforming their peers and will likely beat their competition in attracting top talent. The only thing that makes highly productive organizations stand apart from rest of the companies is the quality of the employees and the level of their commitment towards their work. The vice versa, the trust that an organization shows in their employees and efforts that it makes to keep them focused, motivated and satisfied, also is one of the many variables that distinguish between highly reputed workplaces and those that are not up to the mark. Furthermore, organization cannot achieve their goals just by defining their mission statement nor can they foster a high performing work culture until they take substantial steps. They need people to get the jobs done and that too with

excellence. For fulfilling of all their goals, organizations require actively engaged employees. Employee engagement happens only in those organizations which treat their people as their biggest assets and take care of their basic necessities and other psychological needs through fostering conducive organizational culture. Workplaces that meet all these conditions of employee engagement grow much faster and sustain much longer than those who fail to meet them.

1.1 Meaning of Organizational Culture and Employee Engagement

Every organization has its own unique personality, just like people do. The unique personality of an organization is referred to as its culture. Organizational culture is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which governs how people behave in the organizations. These shared values have a strong influence on the people in the organization and dictate how they dress, act, and perform their jobs. Every organization develops and maintains a unique culture, which provides guidelines and boundaries for the behavior of the members of the organization. In this perspective, Kenneth Desson and Joseph Clouthier (2010) ^[13] stated that Organizational culture is the “personality” of an organization that guides how employees think and act on the job – is central to the values, beliefs, inter-personal behaviors, and attitudes to stakeholders that determine how the organization does its job. Organizational culture is an invisible but powerful force that influences the behavior of its employees. The culture is something which moulds the behavior of the people to act in a same way. Just like a family, school, or sports club, every entity has its own culture. The same is true for a business. When any employee joins an organization, they naturally bring their own cultural experience (family, geographic location, education, beliefs, language, etc.) to that company. If the company’s culture is not strongly rooted, it may be challenged every time a new employee joins the company. Due to globalization and demographic changes, now almost every organization has diverse employees in terms of religion, language, nationality, age etc. In this regard, organization has to maintain its culture to unite these diversified employees and motivate them to work in a team for its productivity and profitability.

Employee Engagement has become top in priority for the leaders of the organization. Employees are the main assets of the organization without which no company can survive. Company’s hires best talent and bank on them so that they can gain mastery in their respective field. However due to varied expectation, challenges and differences in employees in terms of age, quality, attitude, work value etc., it has become hard to retain such employees for longer period of time. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the management to foster good organizational culture to manage their differences and motivate them to unite together for productive outcomes. Engaged employees deliver better performance, which is critical for business success. They are clear with their roles and responsibilities and have a strong connection and commitment towards their organization. They are more involved, and strive to go above and beyond in their jobs. The bottom line is that employee engagement matters now more than ever and the solutions for maintaining or improving engagement is to foster conducive organizational culture where all employees feel valued and motivated to work.

Many Scholars/ Authors have defined Organizational Culture, among them few are listed below: Research by Pettigrew (1979), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Ouchi (1981), Peters and Waterman (1982), and Schein (1985) were primarily responsible for promoting the popularity of the concept of an Organizational Culture. Martins (1989) defined Organization Culture as an integrated pattern of human behavior which is unique to a particular organization and which is originated as a result of the organization’s survival process and interaction with its environment. He also explored that the Culture directs the organization to goal attainment. Similarly, newly appointed employees must be taught what is regarded as the correct way of behaving. Likewise, to Mobley (2005) the feeling of every member of organization towards every aspect of corporate life when counted together is organizational culture. Therefore organizational culture covers all the core values, beliefs and shared assumptions that help to get employees committed and motivated. Organizational culture are introduced to all employees once they are recruited, this helps them to be acquainted with the organization and the happenings in the system (Fakhar *et al.* 2012). Moreover, Organizational culture refers to a system of shared meanings held by members of an organization that distinguishes them from others (Robbins, 2001). To Richard Weeks (2010), organizational cultures is the enduring force and natural evolving living system that injects order and stability in any organization especially as regards organizational network of human interactions and activities. Thus, Organizational Culture

is a pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered or developed by given a group as they learn to cope with problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well and they believe it is valuable and could be taught to new members”.

Many Scholars/ Authors have defined Employee Engagement, among them few are listed below: Mercer (2007) define engagement as a state of mind in which employees feel a vested interest in the company’s success and are both willing and motivated to perform to levels that exceed the stated job requirements. It is the result of how employees feel about the work experience, the organization, its leaders, the work and the work environment. Suff, (2008) fined employee engagement as ‘an outcome “measured or seen as a result of people being committed to something or someone in the business”’. Hewitt Associates LLC (2004) stated that the employee engagement is the state in which individuals are emotionally and intellectually committed to the organization or group, as measured by three primary behaviors: Say – The employee consistently speaks positively about the organization to coworkers and refers potential employees and customers; Stay – The employee has an intense desire to be a member of the organization, despite opportunities to work elsewhere; and, Strive – The employee exerts extra effort and exhibits behaviors that contribute to business success”.

2. Methodology

A research design is a framework of the project that stipulates what information is to be collected from which sources by what procedures. The research design adopted in this study consists of Exploratory Study. The exploratory research design has been adopted to undertake fact-finding operation

searching for adequate information in the context of Creating Organizational Culture for Employee Engagement.

2.1 Sources of Primary and Secondary Data

This study has utilized secondary sources of data. In this regard, secondary data was collected from, Articles, Magazines, Books and Reports pertaining to organizational culture and employee engagement.

2.2 Organizational Culture – Application

- Provides organizational members with a sense of identity and generates in them a commitment to beliefs and values that are larger than themselves.
- Controls the way organizational members make decisions, the way they interpret and manage the environment, what they do with information, and how they operate.
- Affects an organization's competitive position.
- Help achieve competitive advantage and organizational effectiveness through its effect on members' behaviours.

2.3 Developing Organizational Culture for Employee Engagement

- **Corporate Business Strategy must be connected to Talent Management Policy:** Develop organizational culture such a way where corporate business strategy must be connected to talent management practices of an organization as talent management practices do not operate in vacuum.
- **Personal and Professional Development of the Employees:** Organizations put emphasis on the personal and professional development of their employees in the long run. It will be turning as one of the key anchoring factor for retaining the talents in the organizations.
- **Make Employees 'own' their Learning, Training and Development:** Today, employees' skill set requirements change faster. Hence it is very difficult to give an employee an exact learning plan. Just as with career progression, employee training and learning are primarily 'owned' by employees. Make employees to be self-reliant. The lesson is simple: providing target competencies and prescribing training can weaken employee self-reliance, an attribute problematic in a fast-changing environment. Employee ownership of development encourages employees to continuously learn in order to develop the skills that will be required for new opportunities.
- **Performance Based Promotion:** Organizations should develop career plan of each and every employee based on his/her performance on the job. There must be link between the performance and the career succession in the organization. Moreover, performance based compensation should be encouraged to motivate outstanding performers in the organization.
- **Well Trained and an outstanding boss:** Make sure that every employee has given a well-trained and an outstanding boss to work with. Boss should be undisputed king based on his/her achievements which helps an employee to develop their confidence and find a role model at work place. For example, Apple is not a democracy. Most direction and major decisions are made by senior management. "Twenty percent time" like that

found at Google doesn't exist. While in some organizations HR is powerful when it comes to people management issues, at Apple, Steve Jobs has a well-earned reputation for deemphasizing the power of HR. There is a concerted effort to avoid having decisions made by "committees." A good and professional boss is extremely necessary to groom and retain talents in the organizations.

- **Mutual Cooperation and Integration:** One of the primary goals of talent management is to ensure that the workforce is focused on the strategic elements that drive company success. That focus can be distracted with selfish or self-serving behavior that instead shifts the emphasis to the individual, a business function, a particular business unit or even a region. There should be cooperative work culture at macro level and integrating approach to work wholeheartedly for the success of an organization.
- **Team Work Approach:** Having said that individual recognition is important in the process of talent management process, it should not lead to individual driven approach. There should be team work approach to accomplish the tasks otherwise some level of arrogance occurs which hinders the performance and synergy effect in the organization. There can be progressive competitiveness among the various teams within the workforce for greater productivity and innovativeness as well. But no employee should feel that he/she is indispensable for the organization.
- **Dynamic HRP:** Organization should adopt the dynamic human resource planning to meet the required talents of an organization. Leading corporations like Capital One and Dow Chemical have abandoned long term talent forecasts and moved toward short term simulations: Operating executives give talent planners their best guess as to what business demands will be over the next few years; the planners use sophisticated simulation software to tell them what that will require in terms of new talent. The executives often decide to adjust their business plans if the associated talent requirements are too great. If talent cannot be build; purchase the talents.

2.4 HR Practices and strategies on Employee Engagement

It is evident from different literatures and organizations reports that different industries are providing various kinds of opportunities and benefits to their employees for motivating and engaging them effectively. Some of the unique practices and strategies adopted by different industries are mentioned in this study. In this perspective, Vodafone India (2011) stated that the Vodafone has a unique employee portal namely, Ask HR programs which help in providing necessary information to all the employees regarding HR Updates, Policies, Processes, Employee Self Service and Manager Self Service etc. Moreover, the company focuses on building leadership for tomorrow. For this the company follows a program namely, Young Leaders Program. Similarly, Cynthia Rodrigues (2009) ^[6] stated that the Tata Teleservices provides unique recognition policies. These policies include Spotlight (for on-the-spot recognition), Star of the Month, Super Stars for achievers, Customer First Reward, Valuable Reward, and Long Service Award on completion of five, and 10 years of service. Likewise, to increase interaction with managing

director (MD) various initiatives are taken in Tata Teleservices, such as Lunch with MD, MD Online and Phone your MD. Likewise, Bharti Airtel (2010) [10] state that the Bharti Airtel has come up with a plan namely, Talent First to connect with their employees. Through this program, the company will build a high performance culture, people capabilities to deliver and grow, and enable the functioning of cross-functional teams across Airtel. Further, PepsiCo (2016) stated that Pepsico supports ethical and legal compliance through annual training, which outlines PepsiCo's steady commitment to its human rights policy. In this regard, they treat every employee with dignity and respect. Furthermore, Kurian and Ankita Sharma (2015) [2] stated that Mahindra has come up with a unique program, namely, Young Mahindra Program. This program is the forum where youngsters participate to form a parallel governing council. Here they debate on company issues and come up with solutions and their recommendations are communicated through various programs which are duly noted by senior management. Similarly, on a monthly, quarterly, 6-monthly and yearly basis, each product unit has a 'Man of the Month' which is an employee that stands out. The achievements of this individual are highlighted with the team and his/her family is invited to join in the celebration. This recognition is not just limited at plant level, but also at the sector level where the company ensures to felicitate his/her spouse too for their success. In addition, Dani (2012) [21] stated that the Hyundai creates a secure environment within which employees and business partners can help fight with crime and corruption. Besides, Sonal Pandey and Shine David (2013) [22] stated that the Accenture has come up with an idea that is "An hour that

helps" where employees can donate their unused leaves to colleagues who needs additional paid leave. Similarly, in a bid to strengthen its communication processes, Tata Consultancy Services has introduced a new Human Resources practice called 'Proactive Employee Engagement Program (PEEP)'. Moreover, Samsung Electronics (2014) stated that the Samsung has made the Dynamic Plaza for its employees, which includes Cafeteria, Dynamic Café, Medical Room, Video Conferencing Room, Technical Lab, and Training Rooms etc. Furthermore, General Motors (2016) avowed that the General Motors applies different unique strategies to engage their employees. These are growing early-career functional rotational programs, Providing rotational and lateral experiences to mid- and late-career employees, Launching global mentoring resources, Establishing an effective, functional career advisor network to encourage ongoing career conversations with peers and GM (General Motors) leadership. Now workplaces consist of employees from different generations and cultures. They differ in their work attitude, work value and different motivational factors. These differences create conflicts in the organizations which degrade the productivity of the organization. Thus, companies all over the globe are formulating different strategies and practices for creating superior organizational culture for effective employee engagement. In this regard, an attempt has been made to study the HR Practices and strategies of different industries to have a deeper understanding on this topic.

2.5 Dimension of Employee Engagement

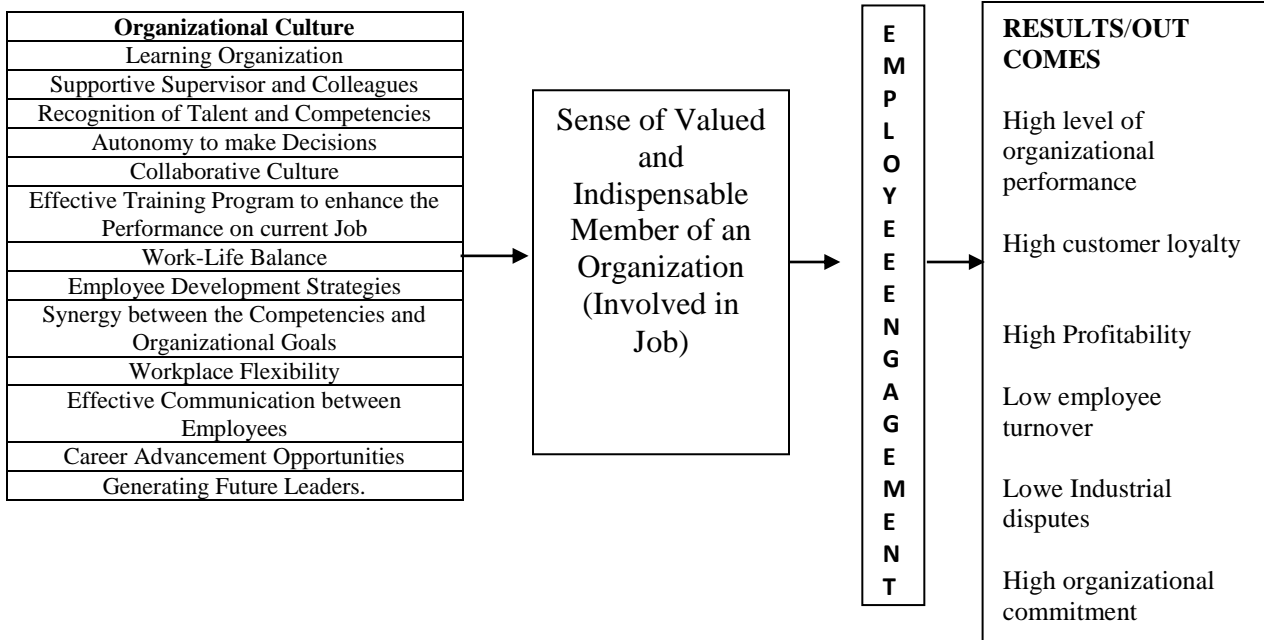


Fig 1: Dimensions of Employee Engagement

Aforementioned dimensions of employee engagement and their outcomes in the organizations are explained below Organizational culture is a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, which govern how people behave in the organization. As today's workplace consist of employees from different cultural background who differ in their language, religion, dress, food, dance, music, etc. so these

shared values will have a strong influence on the people in the organization and will dictate how they dress, act, and perform their jobs. In this regard, Denison (2010) [12] revealed that organizations with strong culture scores had significantly higher engagement scores. This suggests a strong relationship between the health of an organization's culture and their employee's individual level of engagement. Similarly,

Richard S. Wellins and Others (2004) ^[18, 19] stated that People are more likely to be engaged if their jobs and the culture of the organization match both their abilities and skills, and their motivation and values.

Moreover, the company creates learning culture for their employees by providing knowledge regarding organizational values, conventions, processes, and practices which are important to know the organization in a better way. Good learning culture increases knowledge and skills of employees, which guides them to perform their job efficiently and they feel connected towards their organization. In this perspective, Laura (2015) ^[15] found that the Learning and Developments play vital role in nurturing engaged employees.

Similarly, supportive boss and good colleagues are essential to engage employees as the employees in their job have to interact with them daily. In this regard, Apeksha Kaushik (2015) ^[1] revealed that when employees were asked about what will be the key factor for them to continue in a job, the majority of employees i.e., 38 percent said it would be a good boss. Likewise, Employees who are recognized for their superior performance and capability at their workplace are more likely to be engaged. In this regard, Towers Perrin (2009) ^[25] stated that like adding a turbocharger to a car's engine can significantly increase its horsepower without needing to increase engine size or weight, in the same way recognition from supervisors and managers can 'Turbocharge' employee engagement for better productivity and performance. Moreover, engaged employees are builders and should get authority to take decision independently. Many times the decision making process is too slow in the organization and in some case because of unsupportive boss the employees can't perform their task continuously because of awaiting a decision so the autonomy of decision is a very important factor for employee engagement. In this regard, Amanda Shore (2015) ^[3] found that a sense of autonomy is an element of intrinsic motivation that contributes greatly to their engagement.

Further, collaborative culture is very important for employee engagement as it guides employees to work in a team, value relation and manage differences, etc. In this regard, Powel (2015) stated that Collaboration is a powerful tool that organizations can use to boost employee engagement as working together toward common goals creates a sense of shared values and identity, and strengthens relationships among employees and teams. He further adds culture of collaboration leads to innovation and higher levels of productivity.

Moreover, providing effective training is the best ways to ensure employee efficiency and devotion towards their jobs. Employees who are trained are more likely to engage because they gain mastery in their job which makes them satisfied and increase their future employability. Similarly, skilled and knowledgeable employees always perform better and climb the corporate ladder more easily.

Further, Work-Life balance is not only important for employees but also employer has to focus a lot into it. The employees who have balance in their work and life are more likely to perform better for their organization. The workplace and family are two important aspects of employees of all generations. To remain happy they work hard to devote their time and energy in both parts and at the same time. In this regard, the policies of the organization should support them.

If either of these aspects remains unfulfilled, then it will affect other aspects too. For example, employees who are not satisfied with their job in terms of their working schedule, work load is more likely to remain unhappy in their home and this will results in an unproductive environment at the workplace. In this perspective, Crainer, S. and Dearlove, D. (1999) found that almost 90% of Generation X and Generation Y workers and more than 75% of Baby Boomers have either a primary focus on family, or they divide their focus between work and family. Similarly, Krug, J. (1998) found that Boomers maintains less work/life balance, whereas Generation X and Generation Y employees are more bothered about work/life balance. This may be the case that younger generation employees are in their early career of their job. So in this regard, they have to settle down and have more personal responsibilities back to home. Hence, they need work/life balance.

Furthermore, employee development strategies are essential to engage and retain the employees of different generations for the betterment of the organization. Similarly, employee development basically aims at improving the value, attitude and motivation of people to positively contribute to better performance at the individual level, encouraging teamwork at group level and favorable climate for innovation, value addition and performance orientation at the organizational level. It should be understood in a broader framework which includes maintaining healthy and productive work culture and improvement in organizational and technological discipline. In this perspective, Richard S. Wellins and Others (2004) ^[18, 19] stated that engagement is about creating passion, it's about focusing on what people do well, and it's about development and recognition.

In addition, Competencies are all about an opportunity to learn, improve and grow in the organization. In this regard, employees should be provided good training and development under human resource development standards to make them competent enough so that there can be synergy between their competencies and organizational goal. Employees are engaged, if there is a match between their ability and organization standard. In this perspective, Chandrasekhar Sripada (2011) ^[7] stated that employees who know that their current jobs are helping them become competent for future jobs will stay engaged.

Besides, Workplace Flexibility is about changes made in the work environment to suit the comfort of employees and employers to meet their needs. This helps employees maintain a work/life balance and can help employers improve the productivity and efficiency of their business. With the retirement of Elder Generation employees, the entry of the Younger Generation employees has drastically increased. These Younger Generation employees are quite different from other generations of employees in terms of their working style. They are very energetic at work and technology savvy, thus, they need flexibility with a stress free environment in the workplace to fulfill their job responsibilities. Job flexibility may motivate Younger Generation of employees to be more productive and loyal to their companies. In this regard, Bond, J. T., Thompson and Others (2002) stated that the flexible workplace results in positive mental and emotional health outcome. This healthy environment will motivate them to work better for productive results. Similarly, Bates, B. B. and Others (1999) ^[5] reveals

that workers with schedule flexibility are less likely to miss work, more satisfied with their jobs, and more productive. Similarly, today's employees are more focused on career development as it is linked to their future success. Organizations should provide various opportunities to their employees such as training and development, international exposure of dealing with business, job rotation to gain expertise in various jobs, learning environment, polishing communication skills etc., to advance their career that can make their future secure with the company. If employees do not find career development opportunities in the organizations, they may be disengaged and leave for working elsewhere. Hence, Career development is essential for making people engaged. In this regard, Sean Conrad (2013) stated that Career development is the second most impactful way of increasing employee engagement, after recognition. Moreover, generating future leaders has been essential, since day by day organizations are facing more global competition as advancement of technology is growing and people are coming with more innovative ideas to make their customers more satisfied. So if such things continued then it is obvious that the future is going to be more difficult and competitive. Hence, generating future leaders to cope with competition and achieve competitive advantage for the organizations is essential. Now various organizations are providing different kind of training to inherent leadership skills in employees, among them Sony is one. In Europe, Sony's development program for future leaders requires promising management-level employees to work on a project supporting external social enterprises. Similarly, in the Pan-Asia region, they have introduced an MBA-based training system and enhanced training in leadership and management skills for key personnel. Likewise, in China, Sony offers the Sony CEIBS Management Development Program, which is designed to train key personnel for leadership and midlevel management roles.

3. Conclusion

The study evidences the importance of creating organization culture for engaging employees. Due to intense competitive business environment, organizations are facing lots of challenges for sustainable growth in the global market. Globalization has brought drastic changes in the organization. Now almost all organization has diversified workforce pertaining to religion, nationality, language, life style, working style etc. Hence, excellent corporations are focusing more on human capital. The modern successful managers are very much committed to foster conducive organizational culture to engage their employees and harvesting their talents for the sustainable growth of the organizations. Employee engagement ensures smooth operation of the organization. The excellent corporations have to remain competitive, innovative, and creative as well, to remain in the game.

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