Chapter 4
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

4.1  INTRODUCTION

“Mergers and acquisitions represent a significant and potentially emotional and stressful life event because they change an individual’s working life significantly but fail to provide an individual with any control over the event”

(Cartwright and Cooper 1992)

When one business acquires or is merged with another, the result is essentially a brand new organization. Managing that change is a complex and time-consuming process, with significant implications for all concerned. Employees of the two companies are affected in different ways. Employees that are affected by mergers and acquisitions are likely to undergo a period of instability and uncertainty. Regular, accurate, open communication is an important way to alleviate any work-related stress or anxiety. It becomes important for employees to have access to the right personnel to help them discuss any issues that concern them. As businesses merge, or if one is acquired by another, there is likely to be a lot of duplication of roles and responsibilities. The new organization may not need the same amount of people the two businesses needed separately. Employees are all too aware of this and experience reduced job security. Many employees look for opportunities elsewhere to avoid being
‘pushed’, which can lead to higher turnover overall. A merger or acquisition may result in changes to the employees’ terms and conditions, as new contracts of employment are likely to be drawn up. These changes need to be managed carefully, with appropriate consultation with employee councils or trade unions as appropriate. Mismanagement of these changes is almost certain to cause big problems\(^1\).

A merger or acquisition is likely to be the most significant business change to affect the organization and employees. It is important to be aware of the impact that will have on the people, as without their support the change is likely to be far harder and take much longer to bed down. Mergers and acquisitions create opportunities for development, growth and promotion. While business changes like this often result in job losses, there are also nearly always new roles and vacancies created by the changes. Increasing the size of the company may create roles in new departments and locations, which could appeal to many employees.

M&A situations in particular can cause many employees to feel confused or unsure about how they will fit in the combined organization. Uncertainty and role conflict may lead to increased turnover, new or additional job expectations, and delays in accomplishing goals while new decision processes and budgets are developed. Overall, during times of change it can be difficult for employees to simply keep their heads above water and stay productive. Employees are hardest hit by M&A and may take a long time to recover, because a large number of organizational change efforts fail to meet their stated objectives, a focus on how employees think, feel and behave during these transformational periods offers useful insights to employers. Maintaining employee engagement in the midst of organizational change is a key element in the success of a change initiative (Aon Hewitt, 2013)\(^2\).

The failure to adequately consider the human side of mergers can have a detrimental effect on the realization of merger synergies and benefits.
Increased stress and uncertainty which manifests itself as sickness and absenteeism and a fall in engagement quickly leads to a fall in productivity and performance. Employee engagement during the merger process is vital. Engaged employees will be more willing to take the fluctuations in workload in their stride. In addition they are more adaptable and willing to demonstrate pro-merger behaviours. The organizations restructure in order to increase productivity and gain competitive advantage, the essence is basically to enhance performance by realigning the organizational social structure and work attitudes of employees therein to ensure a proper fit in the work-situation; thus, the critical challenge facing restructured organizations is the ability of the employees to adjust to the prevailing work situation by diminishing of old work-roles and developing new and propitious work attitudes that are consistent with goals and standards in the work-situation.

4.2 DEFINITION AND DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

4.2.1 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organization’s goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being. Employee engagement involves commitment, loyalty, pride in the organization, a willingness to advocate for the organization and a sense of personal responsibility.

“This is about how we create the conditions in which employees offer more of their capability and potential.”

(David MacLeod)
Kahn and A, 1990 (as cited in Ramgade A, 2015, p. 330) was the first to coin the word engagement, in his article “Psychological Conditions of Personal Engagement and Disengagement at Work”, the author defined the words the words personal engagement and personal disengagement; which according to him referred to the behavior by which people bring in or leave out their personal selves during work role performances. He defined personal engagement as the harnessing of organizational members selves to their roles; in engagement people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances. Further, personal disengagement was defined as the uncoping of selves from work roles, withdraw and defend oneself physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances.

According to the International Survey Research, 2003 (as cited in Dicke, Holwerda and Kontakos 2007, p.5), employee engagement is defined as a process by which an organization increases commitment and contribution of its employees to achieve superior business results. The International Survey Research resolves that employee engagement is a combination of an employee’s cognitive, affective and behavioral commitment to a company. EE is also referred as a business management concept that describes the level of enthusiasm and dedication a worker feels toward his/her job. Engaged employee cares their work and about the performance of the company, and feels that their efforts make a difference. An engaged employee is in it for more than a paycheck.

EE is the emotional connection an employee feels toward his or her employment organization, which tends to influence his or her behaviors and level of effort in work related activities. The more engagement an employee has with his or her company, the more effort they put forth. Employee engagement also involves the nature of the job itself- if the employee feels mentally stimulated; the trust and communication between employees and management; ability
of an employee to see how their own work contributes to the overall company performance; the opportunity of growth within the organization; and the level of pride an employee has about working or being associated with the company\(^7\).

The company definitions tend to view engagement as an outcome, something given by the employee. They often refer to the employee’s attachment, commitment and loyalty to the organization. They refer to the effort and time they are willing to expend, whilst constantly finding ways to add value and use talents to the fullest. Several of the definitions refer to the employee as an enthusiastic advocate showing pride and support for the organization’s values and goals. Many see engagement as a step higher than satisfaction or motivation at work. There are several key differences between these definitions of engagement dependent upon their source. Company definitions focus heavily on what the organization gets from the ‘engagement’, without acknowledging the role of the organization or explaining the state of engagement. Academic and consultancy definitions acknowledge that it is a mutually beneficial relationship.

Blessing White (White 2011)\(^8\), a research consultancy published the Employee Engagement Report in 2011 which revealed interviews with HR Managers/leaders and conducted online surveys in six different countries including India as per the ‘X Model’. As a result of the findings, the top three drivers for Indian employees across all engagement levels were career development opportunities and training, more opportunities to do what I do best and more challenging work.

**The X Model:**

BlessingWhite’s engagement model focuses on an individual’s:
contribution to the company’s success

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**Full Engagement**

Full Engagement occurs at the alignment of maximum job satisfaction and job contribution.

### Fig 4.1: The X Model


#### Table 4.1: Levels of EE

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<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The Engaged: High contribution &amp; high satisfaction &lt;br&gt;These employees are at “the apex” where personal and organizational interests align. They contribute fully to the success of the organization and find great satisfaction in their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Almost Engaged: Medium to high contribution &amp; satisfaction &lt;br&gt;A critical group, these employees are among the high performers and are reasonably satisfied with their job. They may not have consistent “great days at work,” but they know what those days look like.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEVEL</td>
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| C     | Honeymooners & Hamsters: High satisfaction but low contribution  
      | Honeymooners are new to the organization or their role — and happy to be there. They have yet to find their stride and clearly understand how they can best contribute. Hamsters may be working hard, but are in effect “spinning their wheels,” working on non-essential tasks, contributing little to the success of the organization |
| D     | Crash & Burners: High contribution but low satisfaction  
      | Disillusioned and potentially exhausted, these employees are top producers who aren’t achieving their personal definition of success and satisfaction |
| E     | The Disengaged: Low contribution & satisfaction  
      | They are the most disconnected from organizational priorities, often feel underutilized and are clearly not getting what they need from work. |


According to MacLeod report (2013); there are differences between attitude, behaviour and outcomes in terms of engagement. An employee might feel pride and loyalty (attitude); or go the extra mile to finish a piece of work (behaviour). Outcomes may include lower accident rates, higher productivity, fewer conflicts, more innovation, lower numbers leaving and reduced sickness rates. But we believe all three – attitudes, behaviours and outcomes – are part of the engagement story. Engaged organisations have strong and authentic values, with clear evidence of trust and fairness based on mutual respect, where two way promises and commitments – between employers and staff – are understood, and are
fulfilled. An engaged employees freely and willingly give discretionary effort, not as an ‘add on’, but as an integral part of their daily activity at work as well as experiences a blend of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job involvement and feelings of empowerment\(^9\).

Thus, some of the advantages of EE can be outlined as following (Suan, 2009)\(^{10}\):

- Engaged employees will normally perform better and are more motivated.
- There is a significant link between employee engagement and profitability.
- Engaged Employee form an emotional connection with the company.
- They impact their attitude towards company’s clients and thereby improve customer satisfaction and service levels.
- Engaged employee builds passion, commitment and alignment with the organization’s strategies and goals.
- Engaged employees will increase employee’s trust in the organization.
- Engaged employees creates a sense of loyalty in a competitive environment.
- Engaged employees will provide a high-energy working environment and boosts business growth.
- EE makes the employees effective brand ambassadors for the company.
4.2.2 KEY DRIVERS OF ENGAGEMENT

To engage workers as well as to benefit from that engagement, organization must invest in its human resource practices, able to weigh how much engagement and commitment the company wants and at what cost. Most important, organization must truly understand what are the factors that determine the employee engagement so that they can implement more effective human resource practices to enhance their EE in the organization.

According to Gallup (Gallup Journal, 2006), supported by Aon Consulting and Hewitt Consulting, key drivers of employee engagement typically include the following: (Werner, Karel and Jan, 2011)\textsuperscript{11}.

![Fig: 4.2: Drivers of EE](http://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/employee-engagement.asp)
1. **Encouragement to develop skills** – focus on career planning and individual growth and development.

2. **Work-life balance** – establishment of a culture where leaders are role models of a balanced work-life. Engaged employees don’t feel like they have to choose work or life. The company supports the whole person knowing that the effort put in at the office will increase if employees aren’t beating themselves up over missing another dinner with the family.

3. **Belief in the organization’s direction and leadership** – awareness and understanding of the strategic direction of the organization. Leadership needs a thoughtful, committed strategic plan designed to guide the company and the employees toward the larger vision.

4. **Praise/recognition for good work** – reward and recognition mechanisms, nothing turns a company around faster than a great feedback program. Employees want to perform well; everyone does when they think about it. Yet all too often we hold employees back by not providing critical information to let them know how to improve and remind them that we know they exist.

5. **Being cared about as a person** – culture of caring.

6. **Competitive compensation and benefits programs** – formal mechanisms in place, e.g. incentive programs.

7. **Clear job expectations** – awareness and understanding of what is expected of them.

8. **Resources for effective job performance** – availability of sufficient equipment and resources to all employees.
9. Opportunity to use skills – equal opportunities to utilize current skills and develop new ones.

Employee engagement can be critical to a company's success. Engaged employees are more likely to be productive and higher performing. Employers can encourage employee engagement in many ways, including communicating expectations clearly, offering rewards and advancement for excellent work, keeping employees informed about the company's performance, and providing regular feedback\textsuperscript{12}.

Not all employees have the same sources of motivation or can be influenced to initiate action and change behavior by considering the same factors. Engagement is an individual construct and if it does not lead to business results, it must first impact on individual-level outcomes. Therefore, one of the biggest challenges that leaders face in the 21st century, is how to motivate effectively, initiate change and sustain improved performance among employees. Factors that contribute to an employee's level of engagement are specific or variable for each individual. It then becomes imperative for leaders to determine which organizational factors contribute to employee engagement and must be able to enhance and maintain these factors, both at individual and group level as said by Harter et al., 2002(Werner, Karel and Jan, 2011).

\section*{4.3 TYPES OF EMPLOYEE}

Engagement levels can vary according to different biographical and personality characteristics. Younger employees may be positive when they first join an organization, but can quickly become disengaged. Highly extravert and adaptable individuals find it easier to engage. Engagement is a choice; dependent upon what the employee considers is worth investing themselves in. Engagement levels vary according to seniority, occupation and length of service in an organisation but not by
sector. The more senior an individual’s role, the greater the chance of being engaged. Presidents, managers, operational and hands-on staff tend to be the most engaged, professionals and support staff the least, but this varies between organisations.

According to a recent study from global research organisation Gallup\textsuperscript{13}, there are only three types of employees:

i. **Engaged**

Employees who are engaged are often passionate about the tasks they perform. They are likely to drive innovation and take positive steps to help move the organization forward. Engaged workers are usually easy to spot as they are typically enthusiastic and committed to their job, and will be the employees most likely to create new customers.

ii. **Not engaged**

Not engaged workers are more difficult to identify. They are not actively disruptive, nor are they enthusiastic. These workers blend into the background and their motivation usually relies on looking forward to their lunch break or the end of the working day.

Those not engaged employees possess positive attitude towards work and may engage in productive behaviours, but they are not fully invested in terms of commitment and significant discretionary behavior; and can therefore unintentionally sabotage the company's profitability.

iii. **Passive**

Employees simply come to work and go through the motions without any particular interest in work. While not as problematic as actively disengaged, passive employees do not create a positive environment for innovation and progress.
iv. Actively disengaged

Staffs that are actively disengaged go beyond being unhappy with their job; they will project their unhappiness on to other's performance. They tend to purposefully attempt to disrupt the work day and will actively undo and undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish. These workers can often be identified by their high rate of sick days and workplace accidents, and low rates of retention.

4.4 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT VS EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

‘An employee that is not engaged at work might indicate a high level of satisfaction with their organization. This employee is getting everything they wish: a steady pay check, benefits, sick leave and paid vacation. Their actual contribution to the well being of the organization in terms of innovation, creativity and productivity is negligible. But they are satisfied.

Koscec, 2003

Satisfaction is a “one-way street” (what can you do for me), and Engagement is a “two-way street” (what can we do together, in partnership). Engagement is a two-way contract. Engagement is more of a multi-dimensional construct and has greater validity and linkages to business outcomes such as revenues, profitability, growth, attrition etc. (Mittal, 2011).
Managers must understand that an engaged employee is an employee who is deeply involved and invested in their work. This occurs when an employee is simultaneously satisfied, effective, and motivated. Employee satisfaction is not the same as employee engagement; it is only one of the three essential components.

An employee can be satisfied with a job without being engaged in the job. Employee engagement is much more than being content with pay and the ability to leave on time. That contentedness is merely job satisfaction, and though satisfaction is generally enough to retain employees, it’s not enough to ensure productivity. On the other hand, employee engagement does promote increased productivity. An engaged employee is an employee who is deeply involved and invested in their work, whereas, Employee satisfaction is the foundation upon which employee engagement can grow and thrive. Employee satisfaction is the minimum entry fee that needs to be met in order for an employee to be fully engaged (Posted by Charles Rogel).15
Organizations with genuinely engaged employees have higher retention, productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, and quality. They also require less training time, experience less illness, and have fewer accidents. Satisfaction is related to employee engagement, but the behaviour that occurs as a result of stressors does not fall under the domain of engagement. It could be argued that an individual under pressure may display similar dedication and absorption, but it seems unlikely that they will experience the vigor and passion that tend to characterize engagement. Particularly if the employees feel they have to ‘knuckle down’, it seems that this is an enforced sense of concentration rather than engagement. Further research in this area is required to determine how the behaviour of individuals under stressors differs, if at all, from engaged employees. Similarly, the exact connection between satisfaction and employee engagement is yet to be defined.
Today’s global economy has clearly had a big impact on the way organizations operate. Although successful organizations are often distinguished by a modest, continuous level of change, the last few years have been marked by significant business and talent survival tactics in response to increasingly complex and interrelated economic, regulatory, business and demographic trends. Some organizations have sought to transform their strategies ahead of, or in response, to changing economic conditions by restructuring or taking on a merger and acquisition. The increasingly competitive market pressure and changing business environment have necessitated management in organizations to continuously search for high commitment work-system. It is almost impossible to implement organizational restructuring without impacting either negatively or positively on the prevailing employee attitudes within the organization. Regardless of how the change occurs, the associated loss of status, certainty, control and familiarity that come with this change may be met with resistance from employees. When a company is acquired, even if there is no significant impact on people’s jobs, the number of actively disengaged employees increases by 23%, according to a recent study by HR consulting firm Aon Hewitt. It takes three years to reach the pre-merger level of highly engaged employees (Aon Hewitt 2013).
M&As situations in particular can cause many employees to feel confused and unsure about how they will fit in the combined organization. Uncertainty and role conflict may lead to increased turnover, new or additional job expectations, and delays in accomplishing goals. For this reason, most employees in post-restructuring context are incessantly dissatisfied with the changing condition of work and find it more difficult to sustain loyalty by adjusting positively to the discomforts which accompanied restructuring in the workplace. Many organizations that restructured in order to increase productivity and gain competitive advantage find that what they have gained is a depressed, anxious and angry workforce at a time when they need spirit and creativity to ensure future success (Longe and Olukayode, 2013).  

Researchers, managers, and employees have become familiar with a new lexicon to describe these changes: downsizing, reengineering, core competencies, outsourcing, and off shoring, for example. Despite the frequency with which these terms are used, they often fail to connote what it is like for those working in these large corporations to live through these turbulent times. Thus, the critical challenge facing restructured organizations is the ability of the employees to adjust to the prevailing work situation by diminishing of old work-roles and developing new and propitious work attitudes that are consistent with goals and standards in the work-situation.

During a merger or acquisition there is notably concern, led by uncertainty, unrest, anxiety, and fear. Fear puts the company and the careers of the employees that represent it at risk. 90% of this is unwarranted worry that can be mitigated by transparent communication. Keeping the team positive and focused is your most important responsibility at this juncture. It requires a steadfast approach to balancing the needs of the business while acting as a liaison between the new parent company and the entire team. Because a large number of organizational
change efforts fail to meet their stated objectives, a focus on how employees think, feel and behave during these transformational periods offers useful insights to employers. Maintaining EE in the midst of organizational change is a key element in the success of a change initiative Nguyen and Kleiner, 2003 (as cited in AON Hewitt Report 2013, p.2). According to Aon Hewitt report (2013), within the group of employees going through M&A with significant impact on their jobs, the proportion of actively disengaged employees increased, but the percentage of highly engaged employees was nearly cut in half during an M&A event. The data also suggested that acquiring another organization was easier on employees than being acquired. Thus, it was not just the M&A activity that influenced engagement, but rather the extent to which the M&A impacts an individual’s job and whether one works for the acquiring organization or for the acquired.

Employee disengagement is a key sign of post-merger dysfunction. The symptoms of disengagement – alienation or loss of identity with a company/organization/group/team — result in the following outcomes (Hill and Weiner, 2008):

- Day-to-day decision-making grinds to a halt as overall decisions from the top are awaited.
- People don’t know where they are going to end up or how they will contribute.
- Employees feel that their security and future are threatened.
- They no longer feel a vital part of the company.
- Worker morale plummets.
- Battle lines are drawn. An “us vs. them” stance emerges where cultural, corporate, country and continental differences are magnified and feared.

- Personal value is lost or at least undermined. The dominant question in most peoples’ minds is: Where do I fit?

Transformational changes such as M&As affect EE, but many organizations struggle with effective strategies and actions to help improve engagement during change. The drivers of EE have different priorities depending on the presence of change as illustrated in the table below.

**Table 4.2: EE drivers during times of Change vs. No change.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank Order</th>
<th>Top 5 drivers of Engagement during Times of Change vs. No Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Change (M&amp;A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Involved in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Co-workers make personal sacrifices to help the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senior leadership is visible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Provided proper training to do job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Understand career path</td>
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*Source: Aon Hewitt Report 2013.*
The AON research and consulting experience both indicate that during times of change, great leaders do four things extremely well.

First, they inform, meaning that they define a vision of what the future looks like and they share that vision, repeatedly, with employees in highly engaging ways, often through storytelling. And they communicate as many specifics as possible, transparently acknowledging what is not yet known.

Second, they engage, meaning that they find opportunities to involve employees, generate energy around the change by personally modeling the future state, stay visible and accessible, and encourage dialogue, responding proactively to feedback received.

Third, they enable, meaning they identify and address barriers to change, create opportunities to learn new skills that will be needed in the future state, and work to build an organizational culture that sustains change over time.

Finally, they build trust and influence others through their own behavior. By that we mean they are authentic with employees, which inspires confidence and respect.

It’s human nature to fear and resist change, at least initially. And few experiences invoke more stress or uncertainty than a workplace merger or acquisition. No matter how rosy corporate’s official line might be, a merger is among the most stressful situations that employees face. Disinformation, rumors and fear of the unknown can affect even the most highly engaged employees (Coy, 2014).19

When employees do not engage in a change, the result is often resistance and non-participation. Employee resistance can be active or passive. It
Employee Engagement

can be observable or discreet. But regardless of how resistance manifests itself, it erodes the value of the change and creates additional barriers and work for the project team. Some resistance comes from poorly managing the change, but some resistance is "good resistance" and represents an informed disagreement with the solution or direction of the project. This type of resistance is important to understand and an important input for project teams, but if we do not engage employees and encourage their participation, we are never able to surface this "good resistance" or separate it out from other resistance.20

Employees are the hardest hit by M&A and may take a long time to recover. Employees want to see and hear from their senior leaders to help understand where the organization is going, and how the change influences their jobs and the organization as a whole. The employees also value skill development that is vital for the newly integrated business model. Thus, in addition to the requirements of strategy transformations, employees also need to understand the new work groups, cultures and business processes of the combined organization.

Mergers and acquisitions can be threatening for employees and produce anxiety and stress. Hunsaker and Coombs (1988, 58) found identifiable patterns of emotional reactions experienced by employees during a merger or acquisition; they have labelled this phenomenon the ‘merger-emotions syndrome.’

- **Denial:** At first employees react to the announced merger with denial. They say it must be ‘just a rumour.’

- **Fear:** When the merger becomes a reality, employees become fearful of the unknown. For example, workers become preoccupied with job loss.
• **Anger:** Once employees feel that they are unable to prevent the merger or acquisition from taking place, they begin to express anger towards those who are responsible. In many instances, employees feel like they have been ‘sold out’ after providing the company with loyal service.

• **Sadness:** Employees begin to grieve the loss of corporate identity and reminisce about the good old days before the merger.

• **Acceptance:** Once a sufficient mourning period has elapsed, employees begin to recognize that to fight the situation would be useless, and they begin to become hopeful about their new situation.

• **Relief:** Employees begin to realize that the situation is not as inauspicious as they had envisioned and that the new employees they interact with are not as bad as they had predicted.

• **Interest:** Once people become secure with their new positions or with the organization, they begin to look for positive factors and for the benefits they can achieve through the new entity. They begin to perceive the new situation as a challenge in which they can prove to their organization their abilities and worth.

• **Liking:** Employees discover new opportunities that they had not envisioned before and begin to like their new situations.

• **Enjoyment:** Employees discover that the new situation is working out well and feel more secure and comfortable.

Figure 4.4 below illustrates the stages in the syndrome, showing the downswing, plateau, and upswing.
The merger-emotions syndrome provides management and researchers with the opportunity of pinpointing the emotional stage of the employees of an acquired corporation. Management should recognize that these emotions exist among the employees and deal with them as expeditiously as possible. At a minimum, managers should provide positive feedback to employees, emphasizing that their performance is commendable under the stressful situation brought about by the acquisition, in order to alleviate negative work-related feelings. Calm, grounded managers can help temper the turmoil during the uncertainty of a change, but it’s not an easy task. Managers play a crucial role in trying to beat the dismal odds. The first step is to maintain morale.
and employee engagement in the face of uncertainty. Employees can feel a complete lack of control over their careers during a change. Even the simple act of listening to employee’s concerns can go a long way toward giving them a semblance of power. Communicating in tough times is difficult but the best approach is to be open, honest and say as much as possible. If an issue has not been decided, then say so – and, if possible, explain why – rather than keep quiet and let people think the worst. Organizations that communicate with staff regularly through times of change experience greater levels of acceptance and engagement. Employees going through a change seek clarity and certainty, and it is even more vital to ensure change communications are received and understood to minimize uncertainty\(^2\).

Managers should clarify or re-clarify organizational goals, mission and values. If those things have changed, be sure employees understand how that change affects them and their role. Involve employees in decision-making. Revive their self-esteem and optimism by setting clear, achievable objectives and offering the proper tools to achieve results. The most fundamental need people have in times of change or crisis is always the same: support, from one another and from authority figures. Thus, organizations should give employees ways to emotionally connect with each other and with leaders. Once senior leadership provides the vision on what change is needed, the organization must then set out to develop and execute a change management plan and engage their workforce in the process (Jacobsen 2012)\(^3\).

Engagement is consistently shown as something given by the employee which can benefit the organization through commitment and dedication, advocacy, discretionary effort, using talents to the fullest and being supportive of the organization’s goals and values. Engaged employees feel a sense of attachment towards their organization, investing themselves not only in their role, but in the organization as a whole.
Engaged employees are more likely to stay with the organization, perform 20 per cent better than their colleagues and act as advocates of the business. Engagement can enhance bottom line profit and enable organizational agility and improved efficiency in driving change initiatives. Engaged individuals invest themselves fully in their work, with increased self efficacy and a positive impact upon health and well being, which in turn evokes increased employee support for the organization. Being satisfied at work is a weaker predictor of business outcomes than engagement and lacks the two-way reciprocal relationship characteristic of engagement. There is a very strong relationship between organizational citizenship and engagement, as both focuses upon going beyond the expected. Both engagement and the psychological contract have a cognitive and emotional element and can depict the two-way employee-employer relationship. Nevertheless, there is an increasing awareness that employee engagement is pivotal to successful commercial and business performance, where engaged employees are the ‘backbone of good working environments where people are industrious, ethical and accountable’.  

Employee engagement being a relatively new concept has remained untouched by the academicians, there has been limited work done in India which tries to correlate employee engagement with communication, organizational climate and leadership style. Organizations have realized the importance of EE and are implementing various engagement programs especially in the private sector. Thus, EE needs to be studied in relation to change management and readiness to change in engaged employees. It is important to have a medium to long term vision so as to properly understand the basic tenets and advantages of EE and how to use it effectively for achieving organizational objectives through the best possible utilization of the human resources. Truly engaged employees turn out as invaluable assets for the organization as they aim to contribute more than 100% through positive articulation about organization, working
whole heartedly for its continual improvement and also by putting in extra efforts for managerial effectiveness. Since, the quality and efficiency depends to a large extent on the quality of human assets, it is essential that organizations work for ensuring the effective engagement of their employees. Ensuring EE is thus considered to be the cornerstone for successful human resource management in any organization. It is a win-win proposition leading to a healthy organization and happy employees.
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