

Employee Engagement v/s Employee Experience

The fourth industrial revolution is here; and it is changing how we live, work and interact with each other as well as 'things'. Cloud, social, mobility, and analytics were buzzwords only a few years ago. Today, these are mainstream technologies that have redefined human interactions and service delivery in every domain. More specifically, they have transformed human resource organizations, giving rise to the new employee experience paradigm.

The field of behavioral science has also evolved over the last decade. Behavioral theorists believe that studying human behavior at work will throw light on how an individual adapts to an organization's culture. The applications of such studies

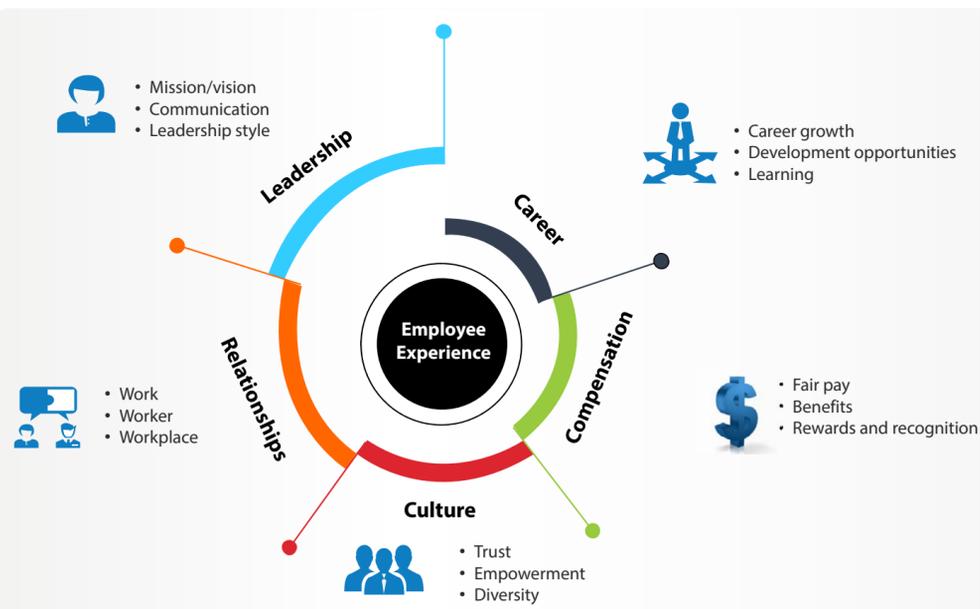
can help organizations enrich the employee experience in the enterprise. In fact, behavioral science can and will be applied in areas like job analysis, recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, quality of work life, workforce diversity, etc., all of which constitute the overall employee experience.

Until now, organizations used employee engagement-based approaches to reduce turnover and improve employee productivity. However, these approaches are largely short-term. Employee experience focuses on the larger picture. It goes beyond mere engagement and evaluates business practices, policies

and procedures from the employee's perspective. It is about creating a reality where employees feel truly empowered. The winning companies are those that are proactive in creating good employee experiences where employees are empowered to work in the best and most satisfying way possible.

Thus, organizations are shifting from traditional engagement models to the employee experience approach. Let us examine what are the key dimensions of employee experience and how they help organizations increase returns from their human capital.

In this article what we are going to focus on is the approach part which is how more and more organizations are moving towards the Employee Experienced based approach from the traditional employee engagement based approach. We would analyze this approach using different dimensions and explain how organizations can get better returns from their Human Capital with this approach.



1. Career

A recent survey indicates that 83% of employees consider career growth as an important aspect that affects their experience within the organization. Hence, HR managers are increasingly adopting critical roles such as becoming a coach or advisor to help employees map, plan and develop their careers.

<p>01 Career Path</p>	<p>Giving employees visibility into their growth along with alternate career options within the organization enhances the employee experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertical career ladders Dual career ladder Competency-based paths Lateral movements
<p>02 Development Opportunities</p>	<p>Employees view career development opportunities as a significant value addition to help them succeed in their current job and prepare for future roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job shadowing (buddy programs) Job rotation Job enhancement/enlargement Career coaching/workshops
<p>03 Learning</p>	<p>Employees tend to stay longer with organizations that promote a culture of continuous learning so they can enhance their abilities, perform better and grow professionally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team or network learning Micro learning Gamification Personalized/contextualized content

2. Compensation

Employees want to know that their remuneration is fair, at par with industry standards and performance-based. Perceived fairness and consistency are essential elements in a performance-based compensation strategy. An effective compensation strategy not only attracts, retains and motivates talent but also encourages behaviors that are aligned to an organization's goals. Given below are the different aspects of an effective compensation strategy:

<p>01 Fair Pay</p>	<p>Fair compensation schemes and policies help organizations recruit and retain talent; increase employee engagement, experience and morale; and reward or encourage high performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertical career ladders Dual career ladder Competency-based paths Periodic market surveys
<p>02 Benefits</p>	<p>Targeted incentives and benefits improve employee experience and engagement in most workplaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to work remotely or from home Improving the physical work environment Health and retirement benefits Company ownership and profit sharing
<p>03 Rewards and Recognition</p>	<p>While employee recognition costs nothing, it has a huge impact on the employee experience by encouraging employees to continue to perform well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person recognition A company or team-wide email recognition Title promotion, raise or monetary bonus Competition and leaderboards

3. Culture

As social beings, humans are affected by their environment and interactions with others. Thus, the environment and culture within an organization has a significant impact on employee engagement, thereby directly affecting the employee experience. The following illustration describes critical values that are necessary in any corporate culture to improve the employee experience:

<p>01 Trust</p>	<p>Acting truthfully in line with human values has a significant impact on employee experience and, builds loyalty to the organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of responsibility and accountability Fulfilling HR policy-related promises Making internal communication a priority Value sharing
<p>02 Empowerment</p>	<p>Empowerment is about making employees responsible and accountable for their jobs while equipping them with all the resources they need to perform better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charting growth based on employee performance Ease of access to information Mobility and ability to work remotely Support system and backing
<p>03 Diversity</p>	<p>According to a recent study, 78% of executives see diversity as a competitive advantage. Workplace diversity drives innovation as different groups of people brainstorm new solutions and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focused hiring and retention policies Training to create inclusive environment Diversity councils Continuous feedback

4. Professional relationships

According to Gallup, people who forge close relationships at their workplace are seven times more likely to be engaged in and satisfied with their jobs. In today's competitive environment, it is imperative for organizations to adopt a holistic view to employee experience. This approach should integrate three key aspects, i.e., work, worker and workplace.

<p>01 Meaningful Work</p>	<p>Through fair compensation strategies, organizations can recruit and retain the right talent, motivate and reward high performance, and increase employee engagement, experience and morale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertical career ladders Dual career ladder Competency-based paths Periodic market surveys
<p>02 Co-worker Relationships</p>	<p>Employees who cooperate with each other to achieve common goals and objectives create a pleasant work environment and are more productive than those who compete with each other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce recognition programs Introduce employee referral programs Organize group events, lunches, team outings Promote hobby clubs
<p>03 Workplace of the Future</p>	<p>Since employees spend more time at their workplaces, a positive workspace environment is crucial to improve morale and productivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety Use technology to provide flexibility Collaboration technologies, communicators Hygiene, cleanliness and open space

5. Leadership

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way." - John C Maxwell

Leaders play a pivotal role in maximizing efficiency and achieving organizational goals. Thus, a leader must create the right environment, forum and procedures to listen to and resolve employee grievances. He or she is a brand ambassador for the organization who should inspire teams to excel at what they do. Hence, communication is very important. Effective leadership and the right example from senior management are key factors that affect the employee experience as they demonstrate fairness across all levels.

<p>01 Mission/vision</p>	<p>The mission and vision statements give employees a higher purpose for work and attract top talent. A leader should reinforce the company vision by tying it to team and individual goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using terms like 'we' and 'together' give employees a sense of belonging Share success stories Acknowledge employee contributions
<p>02 Communication</p>	<p>Effective communication is important across all levels in an organization. A leader must be able to communicate the strategic direction of the organization and productivity expectations from employees to achieve organizational goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online and collaborative tools Newsletters and mailers Blogs and internet postings Meetings and information sessions
<p>03 Style</p>	<p>The leadership style should drive performance outcomes, encourage performance-based delivery, empower employees, and help them solve issues and concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the right leadership style as per the situation Transformational and democratic leadership styles are the most effective Authoritative and coercive styles are least effective

"Our assets walk out of the door each evening. We have to make sure that they come back the next morning"
- N.R Narayan Murthy, co-founder Infosys.

This statement truly underlines the importance of employees in any organization. We predict that advancements in technology and behavioral science will soon place employee experience at the center of HR strategy. Further, new roles will emerge wherein Chief Employee Experience Officers (CEEOs) and behavioral scientists become integral to the functioning of HR organizations. Consequently, these changes will transform how HR applications and processes are designed.

At Infosys, we clearly recognize the shift to the employee experience paradigm. Our Digital HR solutions offering is designed to help customers improve the employee experience so they can derive greater value from their human capital.

Look out for our next issue where we discuss how organizations can prepare for this change with the help of technology enablers and process transformation.

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