EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MODELS: ELEVATING SERVICE EXCELLENCE IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS

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ABSTRACT

The level of employee engagement is one of the most important factors that determine a company's level of success in the hospitality business. This is especially true in the context of notable five-star hotels that are known for providing high service standards. This research investigates the methods and approaches utilised by five-star hotels to foster high levels of employee engagement, which ultimately results in improved visitor experiences. This research investigates the important elements that influence employee engagement. These aspects include leadership styles, training programmes, remuneration systems, and work-life balance efforts. The research draws upon a large body of previous research as well as empirical findings. This research suggests an employee engagement model to boost the commitment, motivation, and pleasure of workers working in five-star hotels by offering a thorough review of effective engagement practises.

INTRODUCTION

The level of engagement of an organization's workforce is one of the most important predictors of that organization's overall performance, and this is especially true in service-oriented fields such as the hotel industry. Engaged staff who are able to provide remarkable experiences for guests are highly valued at five-star hotels, which are recognised for the high levels of service and elegance they provide. This literature study investigates the many strategies that five-star hotels put into practise to improve employee engagement and the effect that this strategy has on the overall performance of the organisation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Employee Engagement Definition and Dimensions

Cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects of an employee's life are all included in the multi-faceted concept of employee engagement. First described by Kahn (1990) as "the harnessing of organisational members' selves to their work roles," this concept was further expanded upon. According to Rich et al. (2010), it requires emotional engagement from workers, as well as identification with organisational goals and extra effort on their own time.

Drivers of Employee Engagement

Leadership, organisational culture, job features, opportunities for training and development, and a healthy work-life balance are among the factors that have been shown to influence employee engagement in the hotel sector (Harter et al., 2002; Bakker & Albrecht, 2018).

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS

Leadership and Management Style

Leadership and management that are effective play a critical part in creating an environment that encourages employee engagement. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leadership, which is characterised by vision, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation, has been associated to better levels of engagement in an organisation. In addition, Seibert et al. (2011) found that leadership styles that empower people by providing them with autonomy and decision-making authority had a favourable impact on employee engagement.

Organizational Culture

According to Schein (2010), a positive organisational culture that places an emphasis on values such as respect, trust, and openness is one of the most major contributors to employee engagement. According to Shuck et al. (2017), five-star hotels often have robust cultural frameworks that prioritise the happiness of guests and the well-being of employees, which results in increased levels of employee engagement.

Training and Development

According to Guest (1999), an investment in employee training and development programmes results in improved skills, as well as increased work satisfaction and dedication on the part of the employee. According to Lee et al. (2015), five-star hotels often offer their workers

comprehensive training programmes that make it possible for them to flourish in their positions and cultivate a sense of competence and confidence in themselves.

Employee Recognition and Rewards

According to González-Romá et al. (2006), recognition and incentives programmes recognise the efforts of employees and reinforce their impression that they are valuable to the organisation. According to Kim et al. (2017), five-star hotels commonly use extensive recognition systems, which might include prizes for employee of the month, performance incentives, and possibilities for career growth.

Work-Life Balance Initiatives

According to Bakker and Albrecht (2018), engagement may be improved by making efforts to enhance work-life balance through initiatives such as flexible scheduling and employee health programmes. According to Hancer and George (2003), five-star hotels acknowledge the demanding nature of the sector and frequently provide programmes to assist staff in striking a good balance between their personal and professional lives.

Leadership Development Programs

Leadership development programmes are frequently funded by five-star hotels in an effort to cultivate management techniques that are both efficient and successful (Rocha, 2019). These programmes are designed to provide leaders the tools they need to actively involve and inspire the members of their teams.

Employee Well-Being Initiatives

According to Rasdi et al. (2018), a supportive work environment is associated with the presence of wellness programmes. These programmes might include exercise facilities, counselling services, and stress management courses. These programmes improve both the physical and emotional well-being of participants, which in turn has an effect on participation.

Performance Recognition Systems

According to Kim et al. (2017), five-star hotels are more likely to have sophisticated recognition systems than other types of hotels. These systems may include prizes for employee of the month, incentives, and possibilities for career promotion. These

methods recognise and thank those who have made significant contributions.

Continuous Training and Development

According to Lee et al. (2015), five-star hotels often offer comprehensive training programmes that cover a wide range of topics, including both technical and "soft" skills. workforce are able to flourish in their positions as a result of these programmes, which also build a sense of competence and confidence in the workforce.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MODELS FOR FIVE-STAR HOTELS

The following models are the most prevalent frameworks for understanding employee engagement , despite the fact that every organisation takes a somewhat different approach to the surveys and methods they use. Each model takes an approach to employee engagement that is a little bit different from the others, but there are lessons to be taken away from all of them. When developing an employee engagement plan for five-star hotels, either select the model that is most suited to the organisation as a whole or mix the employee engagement best practises from a variety of different organisations.

The Zinger Model

By putting an emphasis on the fundamental requirements of the workforce, it contributes to the gradual but steady strengthening of employee engagement.

Figure 1: The Pyramid of Actions for Managers to Take to Increase Employee Engagement

The Zinger model of employee engagement places a primary emphasis on the ten critical steps that must be taken by managers before employees can be considered engaged.

Image depicting the Zinger model of employee engagement, which identifies 10 fundamental steps that managers need to perform in order to successfully engage their staff members.

The paradigm of employee engagement developed by David Zinger is organised in a pyramidal fashion. It highlights the reasons why employee engagement is vital, as well as the importance of employee needs, such as having meaningful work and a healthy lifestyle, and then works its way up to results like five-star hotels. In order to encourage employee participation in the workplace, each "building block" of the pyramid represents an action that has to be done.

Bottom row: the necessities

At the base of the Zinger pyramid is an emphasis placed on the fundamentals that are required for every individual to be productive in their profession. At this point,

the most important things to do are work on improving well-being, capitalising on strengths, finding meaning in life, and reviving vitality. The following are some strategies for staff engagement that five-star hotels should put into practice:

- **Enhance well-being.** If employees are willing to put their mental and physical health at risk for the sake of the company, they cannot be expected to provide their best performance. Employee engagement may be improved by creating a culture based on psychological safety (not fearing harassment or discrimination), having managers who respect their employees, providing adequate vacation time, and making provisions for sick leave. This will set the foundation for success .

- **Enliven energy.** The objective here is to strive towards the creation of a working environment in which employees are able to inject energy into their job while also drawing energy from it. The first one has a significant bearing on one's state of health. The second component relies on the management. Maintain consistent contact with staff members to assess their levels of energy. After that, look for trends to determine what the obstacles and energy drains are.

- **Make meaning.** Finding meaning in one's job is essential to maintaining long-term employee engagement. In point of fact, ninety percent of individuals consider having meaningful employment to be more essential than how much money they make. In order to maintain employee motivation, leadership has to ensure that workers are aware of the "why" behind their job and how it fits into the bigger picture of the company's overall mission and influence on the world.

- **Leverage strengths.** The leadership team is responsible for cultivating an atmosphere in which individuals may play to their particular strengths and continue to develop those talents. This not only encourages employee participation but also helps the five-star hotels organisation become more robust by capitalising on the capabilities already possessed by its personnel.

Second row: uniting the company

The second row of the pyramid expands upon the fundamentals in order to establish connections between people and the whole organisation. In this context, the most important things to do are master moments, cultivate recognition, and establish connections.

- **Build relationships.** We are all aware that effective collaboration is necessary for accomplishing goals; nevertheless, traditional methods of team building and cliches are insufficient to ensure engagement. It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to provide opportunity for workers to cultivate connections with one another while on the job, whether those opportunities take the form of in-person or online team building activities. People who are more than twice as likely to be involved in their job when they make friends at work compared to those who don't make friends at work.

- **Foster recognition.** This strategy does not just providing an employee with an occasional promotion or a favourable performance evaluation;

rather, it entails establishing a culture in which employees and management collaborate to come up with constructive ideas for employee recognition in order to maintain a high level of employee engagement.

- **Master moments.** Employees need to be both cognitively and emotionally present in their job for them to be considered engaged in their employment. The use of routine encounters by managers to strengthen connections, ask opinion, and get a better understanding of difficulties might help enable this. The goal is to maintain employee presence throughout the workday by establishing relevant and helpful touchpoints at various times.

Third row: boosting performance

In the third row of the pyramid, the fundamentals of individual and communal participation are transformed into actionable strategies for achieving results. Monitoring progress and achieving maximum performance are the primary focuses here.

- **Maximize performance.** When an employee believes that management is preventing them from producing

their best job, they may experience feelings of frustration. At other times, this manifests itself in procedures and technologies that make things more difficult for staff members. The majority of the time, the issue is that management fails to convey performance expectations effectively, if they communicate at all. Provide a goal and an explanation of the rationale behind that aim to employees so that they remain interested in their work.

- **Mark progress.** Everyone enjoys being recognised for their efforts and having success, but sometimes achieving success requires a lot of hard work. In order to maintain staff engagement, even in the lulls between promotions and realised objectives, five-star hotels need to have a method for monitoring and conveying the status of ongoing projects. Employees are able to further enhance their talents and gain a sense of mobility and purpose when there is an emphasis placed on growth in the workplace.

Top of the pyramid: Achieving results

The final objective of engagement activities carried out by five-star hotels is, of course, to have engaged staff. These are the employees who contribute to the increased profitability and productivity that was discussed previously. When five-star hotels first embark on this path, they should make it a point to articulately identify the strategic engagement goals they have for their establishments so that they can ensure they reach their destination successfully. If you want to measure the performance of a five-star hotel, you should focus on hard metrics like eNPS, staff engagement and retention, and team KPI progress. Additionally, you should gear the activities of a five-star hotel towards producing a measurable result. Five-star hotels will be able to better manage these parameters and use them for growth with the assistance of intelligent internal email systems such as Contact Monkey.

The practise of tracking emails is one of the most essential internal best practises for email. Through the monitoring of staff newsletter and email data, five-star hotels are able to identify the material that performs the best, fresh corporate newsletter ideas, the ideal times to send email

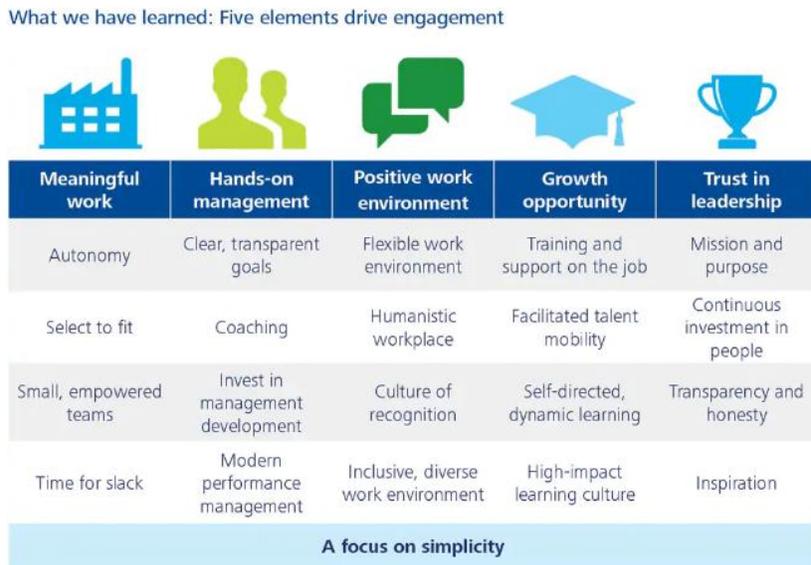newsletters, and the receivers who are the most engaged.

The Deloitte Model

It does this by cultivating an environment in which individuals are active, valued, and given challenging work to do.

The Deloitte employee engagement model is based on the idea that a workplace should be designed in such a way that it is "irresistible" to employees; that is, it should be a place where people desire to go to work each and every day.

According to Deloitte, culture is the most important factor in successfully implementing this strategy. This culture is comprised on five essential components, each of which is accompanied by a specific set of behaviours.

What we have learned: Five elements drive engagement

Meaningful work	Hands-on management	Positive work environment	Growth opportunity	Trust in leadership
Autonomy	Clear, transparent goals	Flexible work environment	Training and support on the job	Mission and purpose
Select to fit	Coaching	Humanistic workplace	Facilitated talent mobility	Continuous investment in people
Small, empowered teams	Invest in management development	Culture of recognition	Self-directed, dynamic learning	Transparency and honesty
Time for slack	Modern performance management	Inclusive, diverse work environment	High-impact learning culture	Inspiration
A focus on simplicity				

Figure 2: Model of employee engagement developed by Deloitte.

Meaningful work:

The idea that employees should be doing work that they find meaningful is at the core of Zinger's model of employee engagement.

According to Deloitte, there are four primary components that should be present in order to assist individuals in discovering meaning in their job:

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- **Autonomy:** When individuals are granted a higher degree of autonomy and control over their job, they flourish. Make the job that workers do more meaningful by allowing them to take ownership of their work.

- **Cultural hires:** Academic honours and remarkable work histories are not sufficient for five-star hotels to determine whether or not an individual will relate to the organization's aims and purpose. Employers should give priority to candidates who are culturally compatible with five-star hotels and who are interested in the work itself .

- **Small, empowered teams:** Camaraderie, autonomy, and quick decision-making are all qualities that may be fostered more effectively in smaller teams than in larger ones. If you want to maintain the most productive size for your five-star hotel workforce, Jeff Bezos's "two-pizza rule" should be followed.

- **Time for slacking:** Employees who are constantly pushed to their limits are more prone to experience burnout. Make space for rest, whether it's through a policy similar to Google's 20% rule (which allows employees to use work time on personal projects) or by something as simple as mandating time off and offering personal days.

Hands-on management:

The employee experience strategy of five-star hotels is made or broken by the managers. Engage staff of five-star hotels in these efforts by aligning management with them and giving them the authority to do so:

- **Setting clear, transparent goals:** The goals that managers have for their teams and their employees need to be straightforward and addressed on a consistent basis. If this doesn't happen, it's easy for employees and supervisors to find themselves out of sync and frustrated. Think about using a goal-setting method called goals and key outcomes, or OKRs for short. Companies like Google and Intel have made OKRs popular.

- **Coaching:** It is likely that managers who collaborate with their employees on projects and offer constructive criticism on a regular

basis will observe increases in employee performance and engagement. Provide managers with the necessary training and employee engagement tools in order for them to effectively coach their teams .

- **Investing in management development:** Considering the significance of managers to the level of employee engagement, organisations ought to place a high priority on developing the most capable leaders they can. The first step in doing this is to hire qualified managers. However, this should not be the end of the process; first-time managers should be assigned a mentor, and continued training and development should be given high priority.

- **Managing performance:** Traditional performance evaluations are conducted too seldom and are too formal to be of any meaningful use to managers or workers in their professional growth. Rethink how performance management is done such that it places more importance on learning opportunities than "grades."

Positive work environment:

If five-star hotels want their workers to enjoy going into the workplace (whether it's virtual or physical), they need to cultivate an atmosphere in which their workers feel comfortable, respected, and valued. For five-star hotels to develop this sort of working environment, they will require the following:

- **A flexible, humanistic work environment:** Employees at five-star hotels are not robots, and their personal lives do not evaporate the moment they walk through the workplace door. Recognise that the staff members working at five-star hotels are still human, and that they may experience terrible days, have too much on their plates, or struggle with balancing their professional and personal lives. Provide people with options (such as working from home or having flexible schedules) so that they can work in the manner that is most conducive to their own personal success.

- **A culture of recognition:** Create a programme that allows for acknowledgment to be given by

peers in order to cultivate a culture that regularly acknowledges and celebrates growth and achievements.

- **An inclusive, diverse work environment:** Develop a culture in which everyone has a greater sense of agency and is more willing to share their ideas, information, and skills. Everyone will benefit in the long run if you make an effort to create a more welcoming environment for work.

Growth opportunities:

Employees who find themselves in a rut at work eventually lose the motivation to perform their duties. You may prevent this from happening by supplying the following:

- **Training and support on the job:** It is crucial for the success of both the organisation and its employees to have comprehensive employee onboarding processes, ongoing peer and managerial support, and proper training.

- **Facilitated talent mobility:** Employees at a firm that operates five-star hotels need to feel as though they are making progress in their careers while working for that

company; if not, they are likely to search for possibilities to advance their careers with other companies. Place an emphasis on hiring from within, and maintain open communication with staff members on career advancement possibilities.

- **High-impact learning culture:** Provide your staff with the means (such as a stipend for schooling, for example) and the cultural support they need to expand their expertise independently. Give them the chance to pick up new skills from other teams, try out new activities, and develop their existing skill sets.

Trust in leadership:

The fourth and most important component is leadership that is devoted to the success of its workforce. This dedication may be broken down into four different aspects:

- **Mission and purpose:** The mission of the organisation needs to be crystal clear in the minds of its leaders, and they need to express it effectively. According to the findings of a study conducted by Deloitte, "mission-driven companies have 30 percent higher levels of

innovation and 40 percent higher levels of retention, and they tend to be first or second in their market segment."

- **Continuous investment in people:** It is necessary for leaders to make time and financial investments in the people they lead. We have already discussed how vital it is to learn new things and advance one's career, but time is also quite significant. Executives at firms with strong employee engagement make the effort to get to know their employees on a personal level, provide constructive criticism, and get involved in the day-to-day operations of the business.

- **Transparency:** Employees in today's world aren't content to merely do their jobs and punch a clock. Transparency in the workplace makes employees feel more invested in the organisation and builds trust amongst coworkers.

- **Inspiration:** The leaders of an organisation are responsible for determining its culture. Employee morale is driven by their words and deeds, as well as their vision for the organisation.

Using the Deloitte model as a guide for how to boost employee engagement, five-star hotels should place an emphasis on developing a culture in which people are enthusiastic about going to work. This should be an environment in which top leadership, middle management, and business policies all work together to support staff members.

The AON Hewitt Model

It accomplishes this in order to develop employee engagement plans that are more complete by measuring the relationship that exists between engagement drivers and the results of company operations.

The overall equation of the model for employee engagement that was established by Aon Hewitt takes into account the results of the business. It admits that the amount of employee engagement inside a firm has a direct influence on a number of indicators within the organization, including the level of profitability, the level of customer happiness, and other indicators. The study provides abundant evidence that this link exists; despite this, it is still much too easy

to become mired down in the particulars of engagement programs and lose sight of the greater goal.

Because it uses engagement results as a mediator, the Aon Hewitt method is able to bridge the gap between the goals of the firm and the elements that encourage employee engagement. In essence, these are the goalposts that executives may utilize in order to better measure the level of engagement that exists within their workforce.

Figure 3: Aon Hewitt Employee Engagement Model

There are three possible results of interaction, which may be summarised up in the popular shorthand phrase "say, stay, and strive." Each describes a trait of an individual who is involved in their work:

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- An engaged employee is one who promotes the organisation in a favourable light, whether it be to their coworkers, their network, or their customers.

- The employee is interested in remaining employed by the firm. They are not simply there for the money; they have a sense of loyalty to the company, a connection to the other employees, and a sense of accomplishment in their work.

- Lastly, but certainly not least, actively engaged workers consistently endeavour to improve their performance. They are highly driven and inspired, and their contributions are typically above and above what is expected of them.

When conducting employee engagement surveys, these are the results that should be tracked and evaluated. Keep an eye on these outcomes and evaluate them in comparison to the trends in the business KPIs. An employee engagement tool such as ContactMonkey may be used, for instance, to monitor the Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) in five-star hotels.

The next step is to search for the linkages that exist between a rise in eNPS and a rise in the Net Promoter Scores (NPS) of consumers. This research will assist five-star hotels in measuring their level of performance and demonstrating the return on investment (ROI) of their engagement activities.

In order for five-star hotels to accomplish both business and engagement results, they will need to change the engagement drivers for five-star hotels, which are a set of six operational "levers" that define the culture of five-star hotels. These drivers are classified by Aon Hewitt as falling into one of two categories: foundations or differentiators.

The basic engagement drivers put an emphasis on the fundamental infrastructure of the firm. These are the essential, game-changing components that five-star hotels require for guest engagement:

- Why Employees at five-star hotels won't if the establishments don't cater for their fundamental requirements. Employee satisfaction may be increased by providing benefits such as job stability, competitive salary, a safe working

environment, and an appropriate balance between work and personal life.

- Company practises, such as communication, personnel, tools, and inclusion initiatives, offer an excellent chance to help people working at five-star hotels. Evaluate and bring these up to date while keeping in mind what would be most beneficial for guests of five-star hotels.

- The job itself needs to be adapted in order to encourage participation, which is not the least important point. Foster an environment that values teamwork and individual initiative, and make sure staff have mental challenges to tackle.

The distinguishing engagement drivers are factors that set five-star hotels apart from other five-star hotels rivals and make a five-star hotels organisation a place that people are pleased to work for. These drivers also make the five-star hotels organisation a desirable place to work. These are the qualities that will make staff at five-star hotels desire to remain in their jobs, strive to produce the best work possible, and speak positively about the firm:

- The brand of a five-star hotel has an impact on more than simply the guests that stay there. Employee loyalty is directly proportional to a company's attention to its corporate social responsibility. Establish a solid reputation in order to increase the likelihood of the "say" engagement result.

- It is common knowledge that leadership plays a significant part in building trust. In order for leaders to make the most of this opportunity, they need to be active in the lives of their employees, sensitive to the input that they provide, and committed to improving the employee experience.

- An employee's level of engagement increases if they are aware that their performance is being evaluated. Companies that thrive in generating career possibilities, cultures of recognition, and learning and development programmes will drive considerably higher employee engagement than their competitors.

- Why Keep an eye out for recurring patterns in engagement outcomes in order to evaluate the efficiency of

five-star hotels' engagement drivers; after doing so, evaluate those engagement outcomes in light of evolving tendencies in business results for five-star hotels.

This will make it easier for five-star hotels to justify the charges, and it will also help them continue to create their culture in a way that is beneficial to their staff as well as their commercial goals.

CONCLUSION

Practises for employee engagement at five-star hotels are varied, including aspects such as leadership styles, organisational culture, opportunities for training and development, recognition programmes, and measures to promote a healthy work-life balance. These practises contribute to increased levels of engagement, which in turn have a favourable effect on the performance of the organisation. It is necessary to do more study in order to investigate the intricacies of employee engagement within the context of certain five-star hotel brands and cultural environments. Employee engagement at five-star hotels is impacted by a number of elements, including leadership, organisational culture, job characteristics, opportunities for training and development,

salary, and activities geared towards achieving a better work-life balance. In this cutthroat field, having an understanding of and a commitment to putting these best practises into action are necessities for maintaining a motivated and dedicated team. This study provides a glimpse of the changing landscape of employee engagement practises in five-star hotels in the form of a framework that was explored in this research. Hotels can continue to provide unrivalled experiences for their guests and keep their employees engaged and working at a high level if they align themselves with the trends described below.

The employee engagement methods offered for five-star hotels have the potential to improve employees' levels of commitment, motivation, and overall job satisfaction. In order to cultivate a happy and productive work atmosphere, these models have been adapted to meet the particular requirements of luxury hotels as well as the obstacles they encounter. The success of any model is contingent on the degree to which it is congruent with the unique history, core beliefs, and long-term objectives of any individual five-star hotel. It is essential to modify and personalise these models so that

they correspond to the specific qualities of the hotel and the people who work there.

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